

Response to Questions by Examining Authority's Written Questions of National Grid

Project: Norwich to Tilbury Electricity Transmission Project (EN020027)

Interested Party: Caroline Homewood – [REDACTED], Aldham and Fordham in Colne Valley

Interested Party Reference number: [REDACTED]

I will also submit as a word document because the table enclosed my distort and become difficult to read

A less harmful alternative route exists and has been rejected without adequate justification. National Grid (NG) fails to properly assess impacts on heritage assets, including designated buildings. NG omits and underrepresents key local receptors including community assets. The assessment of landscape, visual and cumulative effects is inadequate and unreliable.

An alternative route west of Ford Street, Fordham and Aldham was identified. This alternative reduces residential impacts, landscape and visual harm and reduces impacts on public rights of way but was rejected. NG fail to demonstrate that the chosen route represents the least harmful viable option.

The Environmental Statement does not:

- provide asset specific assessment of heritage assets
- assess setting or key views within the Colne Valley
- evaluate long distance visual effects of pylons on top of hills
- consider group value of heritage assets
- loss of habitat, biodiversity and amenity within the Colne Valley

Ford Street, Aldham, Fordham form part of the Colne Valley. The Environmental Statement relies on limited viewpoints and has not fully assessed the landscape and visual impact pylons and cables will have within the Colne Valley on its footpaths, long-distance views and historic landscape character.

The ExA has acknowledged that "weighting should be given to harm to multiple assets." NG fail to identify key assets in their Assessment. I list them as follows:

PROPERTY GRADE LIST ENTRY

FORDHAM

Church of all Saints	I	1239789	Worshippers, community and All Saints primary school
Fordham Hall	II	1267740	
Fordham Hall barn	II	1273566	Used by the community and primary school
Fordham Hall barn East	II	1239812	Used by the community
Oak House	II	1239790	
72 Church Road	II	1239819	
Three Horseshoes pub	II	1239808	Popular with locals and tourists. View of Church and valley
Fordham war memorial	II	1452952	A focal point at Remembrance day
Idols cottage	II	1267711	
Rams Farmhouse	II	1239837	
Rams Farmhouse barn	II	1239876	
Barn Fletchers Farmhouse	II	1222605	
Moat Hall	II	1239833	
Archendines Farmhouse	II	1267737	
Cattles Barn	II	1239788	
Suttons Farmhouse	II	1267747	
Old Timbers	II	1266270	
Valley Cottage	II	1267736	
Plummers Farmhouse	II	1239831	
Thriffs Cottage	II	1239832	
Threshers	II	1267751	
Plummers Cottage	II	1267750	
Penny Cottage	II	1239862	
Marks Gate	II	1267752	
Congregational Chapel	II	1239830	
Kenmore Fruit Farmhouse	II	1239829	
Rectory	II	1239828	
FORD STREET			Ford Street is a designated Conservation Area
Wash Farmhouse	II*	1239836	
Friars Farnhouse	II	1267731	
Friars Farmhouse Barn	II	1239835	
Barnards Farmhouse	II*	1239874	
Shoulder of Mutton pub	II	1239834	Community asset. Stop off for walkers around Fordham Hall
Shoulder of Mutton outbuilding	II	1239834	Estate and Colne Valley
Ford Street Bridge	II	1273567	Single bridge – pylon traffic will destroy
The Bridge House	II	1110890	
Riverdale Cottage Wall	II	1170044	
Riverdale Cottage	II	1110891	
The Old House	II*	1337411	
The Queens Head	II	1110886	
Queens Head Studio	II	1110887	
Threshers	II*	1110885	
Aldham Carpentry	II	1110888	
The Bunches	II	1110892	
Ferndale Valley House	II	1337410	

Rose Cottage	II	1110883	
The Malting	II	1110884	15.2.26 that land CPO'd land to the rear for works compound.
Fore Acres	II	1110889	

ALDHAM

St Margaret St Catherine Church	II*	1170063	Community and worshippers
Old Hill House	II	1110893	
Green Farmhouse	II	1170055	
Bentalls Cottages	II	1337412	
Crapes	II	1306225	
Old Rectory	II	1306223	
Mott's Cottage	II	1337414	
Half a Loaf Cottage	II	1110896	
Church House Farmhouse	II	1170085	
Hoe Farmhouse	II	1337413	
Hoe Farmhouse NE Barn	II*	1170078	
North Barn Hoe Farmhouse	II	1110895	
Peakes	II	1110897	
Peakes Barn	II	1306188	
Brick Cottages	II	1169966	
Aldham Hall	II*	1306270	Used by the community
Aldham Hall Wagon Lodge	II	1337391	

The Environmental Statement glosses over the archaeological sites around Fordham, Ford Street and Aldham and undermines the significance and importance of these sites.

There is no clear, asset-specific assessment of the impact of the proposed overhead line on Ford Street, Fordham or Aldham and the wider Colne Valley. In particular, the Environmental Statement does not include sufficient analysis of key views or the relationship between these heritage assets and the surrounding landscape.

This omission is significant and indicates that the Environmental Statement does not provide a reliable assessment of heritage impacts.

The ExA have identified NG's deficiencies in the Examining Authority's Written Questions. Please require NG to specifically respond. Referring to the ExA's numbering:

At DES 1.6 the Colne Valley has not been identified as an area of high amenity value (Holford Rule 1). It is. Not only is it packed with heritage assets, it is beautiful countryside on a par with the neighbouring Dedham Vale. Aldham falls within the local nature recovery strategy. The South of the parish is the Roman River Corridor and has been highlighted as an opportunity area and is in Colchester's draft local plan as a green/blue corridor. There are public footpaths and bridleways. An abundance of heritage assets, including Roman and Saxon sites and the listed buildings above.

In the ExA at LV1.6 and 1.7 – there is no mention of Ford Street, Aldham, Fordham, the Colne Valley or the Fordham Hall Estate. Please require National Grid to include them when responding to your questions.

BIO 1.21 No reference is made to the removal of trees at the Woodland Trust site at the Fordham Hall Estate

HE 1.4 "ES Chapter 11, Historic Environment – embedded mitigation Paragraph that lower height pylons are proposed for the section of OHL that passes between Great Waltham and Little Waltham conservation areas to reduce visibility of the alignment from various heritage assets. Again, no mention of Ford Street conservation area, Aldham or Fordham where pylons are located on hill tops and ridge lines, causing maximum .

DES1.12 No, not ... "satisfied that the applicant's approach to mitigating the adverse effects of the EACN in the wider landscape would be effective." NG propose pylons on hill tops and parallel to Ford Street conservation area. An alignment away from residential areas and utilising valley floors rather than hill and ridge tops would reduce visual harm. This was initially proposed, but then rejected.

CA 1.6 ExA have requested that NG provide a "Special category land schedule include the Colne Valley, specifically Ford Street, Aldham and Fordham.

DCO 1.S8 Archaeology - there is no mention of the various Roman remains around Fordham/Aldham

ALT 1.8 ExA have requested a table from NG to ensure they address specific requests – NG have ignored the requests from those questioning their scheme and have not engaged. Please require NG to address specific requests.

HE 1.8 "Weighting to be given to harm to multiple assets" As summarised in National Grid, Ford St, Aldham, Fordham and the wider Colne Valley requires specific consideration given its abundance of heritage assets, amenity land, high value landscape and communities. Please require National Grid to justify destroying the character of our villages and the wider landscape.

HE 1.9 No, not in agreement the applicant's assessment of harms to heritage not been any meaningful assessment in Ford Street, Aldham, Fordham or the wider Colne Valley.

HE1.13 Ford St is mentioned - Heritage visualisations – HE26 Ford St – query whether viewpoint is the most appropriate from the conservation area, but no mention of Fordham All Saints Grade I listed church or Aldham's II\* and other heritage assets

HE1.15 no mention of Fordham All Saints Grade I listed church

HE1.15 no mention of the land at the Maltings (Grade II listed building) in Ford Street Conversation Area being CPO'd for a compound

LV1.24 Concerns about landscape visualisations at Fordham – Only wireframe provided when seems to indicate that the pylons would be clearly visible

LV1.28 Aldham, Ford St and Fordham are collectively mentioned at as the Colne Valley. The ExA consider there is merit to request a coordinated masterplan is produced for the Colne Valley and that built heritage is also included in the plans.

Please require National Grid to address this. They have simply ignored all requests to date.

I have outlined these issues to NG in detail at every "consultation" and at the open days but there has been no meaningful engagement. I know that I am not alone in my concerns and the same issues have been brought to NG's attention by many and many times, but they are ignored. This is clearly shown by the lack of references to Ford Street, Aldham, Fordham and the Colne Valley in NG's Environmental Statement. It is obvious to anyone attending the area that pylons

should not be erected here. NG fail to justify why this route meets statutory and regulatory requirements.