

INTERESTED PARTY NUMBER: [REDACTED]

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 both inadequate and unreliable.

Leaving aside that undergrounding or offshore still merit serious consideration, 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 from this immediate area 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
Thriffts 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

Wash Farmhouse	II*	1239836
Friars Farnhouse	II	1267731
Friars Farmhouse Barn	II	1239835
Barnards Farmhouse	II*	1239874
Shoulder of Mutton pub	II	1239834
Shoulder of Mutton outbuilding	II	1239834
Ford Street Bridge	II	1273567
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
Fore Acres	II	1110889

Ford Street is a designated Conservation Area

Community asset. Stop off for walkers around Fordham Hall Estate and Colne Valley
Single bridge – pylon traffic will destroy

15.2.26 proposed that land CPO'd land to the rear for compound.

ALDHAM

St Margaret St Catherine Church	II*	1170063
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
Aldham Hall Wagon Lodge	II	1337391

Community and worshippers

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 a beautiful countryside setting 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

HE1.4 "ES Chapter 11, Historic Environment – embedded mitigation Paragraph 11.6.4 of Chapter 11 [APP-208] states 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. Why can these lower height pylons not be used here as well?

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 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.**" Please require National Grid to include the Colne Valley, specifically Ford Street, Aldham and Fordham.

DCO 1.S8 Archaeology - there is no mention of the various significant 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 brief above, but in detail many times to 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.

HE1.9 No, not in agreement the applicant's assessment of harms to heritage assets. As evidenced above, there has 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*

HE1.15 no mention of Fordham All Saints Grade 1 listed church

HE1.15 no mention of the land at the Maltings (Grade II listed building) in Ford Street Conservation 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 are 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 any 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 engagement. I know that I am not alone in my concerns and the same issues have been brought to NG's attention but they are ignored. As 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.