

Interested party reference [REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to questions raised in your review of the proposed pylons project through East Anglia. Locally, the original route was proposed to the north of Fordham but was changed because of the presence of a gliding club on a local airfield. This site will no longer be an airfield and the route could easily revert to that originally proposed. This would certainly avoid the destruction of the Colne valley.

In HE 1.34 the Inspectorate has questioned National Grid's assessment of the damage to [REDACTED]

We strongly disagree with the assessment of harm and raised this with NG at the first consultation.

The nearest pylon, as proposed, is a corner pylon and therefore more substantial than most. The proposal is to site it in the middle of three listed houses and this must be in contravention of the planning regulations relating to listed properties. The proposed site of this pylon will not be accessible from the planned purpose built road which will be the far side of the river and a small bridge. The access to this part of the Colne valley is only along [REDACTED], a single track road on a hill and not suitable for HGV's.

We have no doubt that the impact of the proposed pylons on these properties would be very significant and the screen shots of National Grid's own visual representation are very misleading. The height of the proposed pylons is such that they would totally dominate the surrounding area – the tallest trees within the vicinity are some 20 metres high compared with pylons of fifty metres, i.e. an additional 30 metres.

The NG assessment stated that it was probable that the pylons would be seen – this is clearly an inappropriate assessment as there is no doubt that they would not just be seen but would have a huge and unpleasant impact.

[REDACTED] is a Grade II listed building with a peg tile roof and overlooking the Colne valley. Planning regulations require that the nature and setting of such a property be preserved.

It is a landmark for photographing "big sky" vistas – the proposed pylons would destroy that benefit.

Specific points that relate to the property at [REDACTED] are as follows:

The nearest proposed pylon is a corner pylon and directly beside the boundary of this property, within 10 metres. All activities pursued in this space will be overwhelmed by its presence. It would seriously affect the use of the house and its outbuildings including an Air BnB business.

The area surrounding [REDACTED] has a wide variety of flora and fauna including hundreds of types of wild flower, veteran trees, and many species of animals, such as stoats, foxes and deer, and of birds including owls, woodpeckers and buzzards.

It should also be noted that, [REDACTED] I have not received any communication to organise a visit from NG or their agent to discuss the prospective impact and damage of this project on my property.

LV1.14 asks councils to say whether they agree with NG's assessment that damage to the Dedham Vale National Landscape will be "minor / not significant" once the project is in operation.

Dedham Vale is an AONB and includes wide open historic landscapes not blighted by modern infrastructure. The environment remains as it has been over hundreds of years.

The views have been captured by artists such as Constable and Gainsborough, both famous artists, and are a national treasure. Much of the eastern end of the National Landscape is associated with the celebrated landscape artist John Constable RA, and many of the views he painted so long ago remain recognisable today.

The Dedham Vale and other areas such as the Colne Valley are peaceful and quiet and free from modern development. National Grid's own baseline assessment records that the National Landscape's tranquillity is a defined and formally assessed special quality, identified through the Natural Beauty indicators framework.

The elevated viewpoints, with their characteristic "big sky" quality, are integral to the designation. They were specifically identified by the Dedham Vale National Landscape Authority in the EIA scoping process as requiring assessment through the ZTV study.

The vale provides facilities for so many people to relax which is very important for their personal and mental wellbeing.

This proposal will result in considerable permanent damage in this respect.

It should also be noted that a high proportion of properties in the Dedham Vale are listed.

The Dedham vale also attracts very large numbers of visitors to the area each year and is a major contributor to the financial value of tourism in Essex, currently estimated at £3.5 billion per year. Millions of visitors come to the area each year and thousands of people are employed in the tourist industry.

The Project as proposed would cause significant lasting harm.

The project includes approximately 159 km of new overhead line supported on approximately 510 steel lattice pylons at approximately 50 metres in height, with approximately 25 km of underground cabling, some of which is located through the Dedham Vale National Landscape, and six new Cable Sealing End (CSE) compounds.

National Grid has demonstrated that their proposed pylons, sealing end compounds and the EACN whilst not built within the vale will be very visible from within it. They themselves say that as many as 23 pylons will be visible from up to half of the vale and up to 35 pylons from some places.

Regulations state that pylons should not be visible from within an AONB but in these proposals it is well documented that this will not be the case and therefore that these proposals are not compliant.

The construction would take several years and would create vast amounts of destruction to the environment and to natural habitats. It would severely dislocate the lives of people living along the route and further afield. Tourism would be badly affected and as a tourist attraction the area will be destroyed. Such damage would still be evident during the foreseeable future and much would be permanent.

This cannot be described as "minor" or "insignificant" damage. It is enormous and would destroy the natural beauty and most social qualities of the vale for all future generations.

The route MUST be modified to 'avoid altogether' both the Vale and its setting as required in planning policy specifically set out to protect it. 'Even residual damage is unacceptable'. Similarly the project should not be permitted to destroy other rural settings including the Colne Valley.

The destruction and collateral damage that will inevitably arise from the project as currently proposed is simply not

necessary and should not arise. It is most regrettable that NG have not properly assessed other options, in particular an offshore route.

Yours faithfully,
Penelope Richards