

Interested Party Ref No. : [REDACTED]

Karl Owen

Additional information for the Planning inspectorate

April 10th, 2026

New badgers in Ancient Woodland (Roman Encampment)

I would like to report a badger set that is not yet known to the planning inspectorate as I only discovered it a few weeks ago on my family's land. Having found the badger den I placed a trail camera and have recorded hundreds of video and photos of a male and heavily pregnant female badger currently occupying the den. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As I have stated on numerous occasions both in writing and verbally to National Grid 'The Thickett' is ancient woodland, not least when I brought up the fact in the last meeting of the planning inspectorate when I noted that the ancient woodlands in Essex were given (a very small) amount of grace by the red line boundaries whereas the red line boundary literally butts up to and surrounds 'The Thickett' on three sides here in Suffolk. It may be that my father-in-law who owns the woodland and adjacent field to the south of it may not have registered it as such but that does not negate the fact that it is ancient woodland, if you look up any map of the area that predates 1600 you will see on it both 'The Thickett' and my home [REDACTED] which is a few hundred metres north-east.

With my father-in-laws blessing I have been conserving and managing 'The Thickett' for the last thirty years, clearing out fallen trees and branches, which we use as firewood, to clear open spaces for new saplings to grow in and also monitoring the abundant wildlife, both in person and with trail cameras. The only entrance to 'The Thickett' is in the north-east corner accessed by a dirt track alongside an ancient hedgerow that joins up with Lambert lane. As the pylon route crosses this track going north/south the red boundary lines will completely cut off my access to 'The Thickett'. I need to be able to get into 'The Thickett' twenty-four hours a day, three hundred and sixty-five days a year to continue my stewardship of this ancient woodland and my conservationist role with the wildlife, which is obviously going to be a problem during the years-long construction phase. Additionally we do not have central heating in our ancient home so rely on the dead wood we collect from 'The Thickett' to heat our house during the winter. Therefore we must have access to 'The Thickett' or my family will freeze to death.

In a countryside that is full of irregular shapes of fields that date back to medieval and even Saxon times 'The Thickett' stands out as a perfect rectangle of several acres. It is surrounded by a ditch with a raised bank on the inside, a classic Roman defensive boundary known as a 'fossa' and it has clear sightlines of the surrounding countryside for miles. It has an ancient thoroughfare running adjacent to it going north/south called One Hundred Lane. Along with Ash and Oak there is a large number of European Hornbeam trees in the woods which were the trees Romans planted as it is a very hard wood which was ideal for their tools. There are a large amount of Roman artefacts that have been found by metal detectors in the area, less than a mile away, that I know of, both by [REDACTED] on his land and by an independent expert metal detector on fields adjacent to [REDACTED]. 'The Thickett' is almost certainly a Roman encampment from the time of Boudicea's revolt in AD60 as this is the very heart of the Iceni tribes land and the circumstantial evidence continues to stack up. This could be one of the greatest archeological finds of the century shedding light on one of our great british icons, however you cannot go into 'The Thickett' right now to conduct any archeological survey as there are [REDACTED] and many nesting birds, breeding mammals and insects from stag beetles to fallow deer.

Either way I will need access to 'The Thickett' and will be going in with or without National Grid's permission, it would be better for both of us if we can come to some sort of arrangement and as the foremost nature expert in this particular area, as noted by the Cotton Parish council, perhaps National Grid should start trying to work with me rather than ignoring me. Also I would be happy to describe to the planning inspectorate the shambolic PEA where the ecologists spent 15 minutes at the roadside on Lamberts Lane surveying a drainage ditch. God help the wildlife with that sort of disdain and unprofessionalism.

Old House with Heritage

I notice that National Grid have made no mention of my home [REDACTED] in their list of heritage properties along the route. Although the property is not grade 1 or 2 listed it is still hundreds of years old, as the wattle and daub walls and ancient oak beams or the worn down step of the stone kitchen floor, or even it being named on ancient maps of the area, all confirm the longevity and standing as an old heritage building. While lacking national legal protection [REDACTED] heritage significance must be considered during the planning application. [REDACTED] should be treated as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset and given its close proximity to the pylons National Grid should give due attention to the harm that will be done to this valued landmark that sits uniquely at the mid central point of the three surrounding villages of Cotton, Mendlesham and Mendlesham Green. People have been living and working at [REDACTED] for centuries providing vital services for the community. For more than fifty years at the start of the 20th Century it was the cottage for the signalman for the Mid Suffolk Light Railway Line but it was [REDACTED] role in the middle ages that was its greatest contribution. In historian Roy Colchester's book 'A Landscape and General History of the Parish of Mendlesham, Suffolk', he says '[REDACTED] is a corruption of Windmill', standing high on the Suffolk uplands the windmill took advantage of the prevailing winds sweeping up from the Gipping valley to grind the grain into flour and help feed the local community. Given [REDACTED] historical and geographical part of this landscape that National Grid wishes to blight they could have the common decency to acknowledge the effect the project will have on this ancient heritage asset and respect the ancient woodland 'The Thickett' and the wildlife that rely on this vital habitat, and maybe the volunteers who look after it. And do look into the Roman camp hiding in plain sight.