

Dear Sir/Madam,  
Interested Party [REDACTED]

I refer to National Grid's ("NG") response to the Inspector's questions following their submission of an application to construct pylons from Norwich to Tilbury.

In particular I refer to NG's comments in respect of two listed properties (to which it refers as "assets") in the Colne Valley in paragraph reference HE 1.34.

NG state that the Project amounts to a minor change to the wider rural setting and has selected several criteria to justify their contention that the Project would have minor impact or none on the rural setting and its inhabitants. Nothing could be further from the truth. The viewfall diagrams that NG produced showing the impact of the pylons were misleading because they depicted much smaller pylons than those proposed in the Colne Valley. Even so, the illustrations demonstrated clearly that the pylons would have a major impact.

NG's statements are selective and misleading and, in significant part, simply false. The information provided omits significant parts of the data available and they fail to mention some of the pylons that are very close. Specifically they make no mention of either pylon TB41 or TB42 both of which would have a very significant impact on the settings of both properties to which NG refers in their statements in HE 1.34.

The pylons as proposed will totally dominate the valley. Their size is such that they will be three times as high as any trees in the locality and the skies will be filled with cables.

Concerning [REDACTED], NG state that the project would "result in pylon TB40 entering the setting of the asset within its wider rural/agricultural element c. 340 m to the North west. The pylon would be partially screened by the mature tree cover of the asset's grounds and by a small copse and hedged and tree lined boundaries in the intervening landscape. A moderate proportion of the pylon would, however, be occasionally visible from at ground level from the asset" This statement from NG overstates the distance of the property from the pylon and dramatically understates the real consequence of this project; it suggests that it was written without ever visiting the property to consider the real impact. The size of the pylons is such that almost the whole structure would be visible at all times, in addition to the overhead cables.

As noted earlier NG make no reference to other pylons that will have a major impact on the setting of the listed [REDACTED], in particular pylons TB41 and TB42. The proposed position of TB41 is directly in front of [REDACTED] across the valley in an arable field with an uninterrupted view. There is no screening. Pylon TB42 is slightly to the left of the view from [REDACTED] across the open valley, again in an open arable field. The suggestion that the project would interrupt a long distance (860 m) view of the asset from an unnamed road seeks to suggest a minor impact. This is nonsense and intended to mislead; there is no unnamed road in the vicinity. This last comment from NG does refer to the valley being shallow; needless to say this adds weight to the fact that the project in this area would be so obtrusive.

NG comment that the asset ([REDACTED]) is not visible from the east; this is entirely irrelevant (and again intended to mislead) because the pylons as proposed will be constructed to the west of the property.

NG state that the project would have no impact on the relationship between the assets and its grounds, and its non-designated buildings nor with its neighbour to the east. NG further state that "the Project would not impact on the understanding of the asset and its outbuildings as a post medieval farmstead. The Project therefore amounts to a minor change to the wider rural setting of the asset only." These comments by NG merely confirm that the pylons will not be constructed within those properties, as a justification to conclude that the effect of the pylons will be minor. Consistent with their intent to mislead, they seek to ignore the effect of the pylons on the general environment which would significantly and detrimentally impact the quality of life in those properties.

There is no question that this project, as proposed, would entirely overwhelm the rural and historic setting of the Colne Valley, the quality of which is on a par with registered Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It would unnecessarily destroy another valuable resource for future generations.

To suggest that pylons "disappear into the distance" and that the effects are minor clearly cannot apply to properties that are in close proximity to pylons that are 50 metres (164 feet) high.

An offshore grid, preferably, or underground cables would be much better options than pylons and it is to be hoped that the Planning Inspectorate will ensure that NG changes its plans.

Yours faithfully,  
Mark Passmore