

Karl Owen

RG138

I have a number of issues that I feel have not been addressed by the applicant or the Planning Inspectorate. I hope that there is some truth in the repeated claim by the Planning Inspectorate that written representations carry the same weight as the spoken word. I feel strongly that despite speaking about many issues in my three minutes in February absolutely none of my many issues with the applicant's proposal have been addressed.

Person with Protected Characteristics in our Home

When the project leader Simon Pepper visited our home and made changes to the route that was part of the Suffolk 3 route change from the 2024 alignment it was because there is a person with Protected Characteristics living here. The haulage road was moved from outside our front door, however the pylon RG138 was actually moved closer to our property. How can this be, I thought people with protected characteristics were supposed to be protected, it's in the name! I ask the examining authority to move the pylons and the intrusive construction with its noise and vast numbers of strangers to be moved further west from our home to protect the person with protected characteristics who has stated that they will not be able to cope. I am extremely concerned for the personal safety of this person as the stress on their emotional wellbeing will be catastrophic and life threatening. It appears that the applicant could care less. Surely this is something that the planning Inspectorate should act on.

2. The [REDACTED] is Heritage

Our home is hundreds of years old and yet the applicant refuses to give it heritage status. Before the industrial revolution it was a windmill turning crops into food for your ancestors to eat. That to me speaks of heritage, we still have the old grinding stones that were dug up in the garden and many medieval potsherds lie scattered around the place. This chocolate box cottage has dominated the landscape for centuries, standing alone in the flat, open fields on the highest point of the Suffolk uplands like a monument to a bygone era. The pylons come unacceptably close and do so by the applicant refusing to accept the reality of the cottage's age and history. You will not find the property listed as my father-in-law who holds the deeds to the property as part of his wider farm estate has no truck with that sort of thing.

You can find the [REDACTED] identified on the following maps:

Bryant's Map 1826 (Suffolk County Council SCC held copy or National Library of Scotland www.maps.nls.uk),

Railway plan book for the Mid Suffolk Light Railway from Haughty to Halesworth dated 13th May 1899,

Mendlesham Tithe map 1839 and apportionment 1841,

Ordnance Survey 25-inch to the mile map 1st County Series Published 1885, 2nd County Series Published 1904 (Suffolk Sheet XLV.8 for West sheet and Suffolk Sheet XLVII.5 for East sheet or National Library of Scotland www.maps.nls.uk),

Ordnance Survey 6-inch to the mile map 1st County Series Published 1884 for East sheet & 1885 for West sheet 2nd County Series Published 1905 (Suffolk Sheet XLVI.NE for West sheet and Suffolk Sheet XLVII.NW for East sheet or National Library of Scotland www.nls.uk)

If you wish to dig deeper you will find The [REDACTED] annotated on even older maps but I think I make my point that this is a property steeped in history.

3. We are Permanent residents in family owned home, Not 'tenants'

My wife and I are not merely tenants of [REDACTED] who can or would simply move and rent somewhere else away from the pylons. We have lived here for thirty years and will be here for the rest of our lives. Not that it should be anyone else's business but we pay a peppercorn rent and have leave from my father-in-law to live here in perpetuity. When we slip this mortal coil our children will continue to live here at The [REDACTED] especially our child [REDACTED], it will always be a base or a place they can return to as will our grandchildren, it will never be sold. As such if the applicant wishes us to live with and host its pylons carrying six million homes worth electricity right over the top of our forever home then it must compensate us in a way that reflects our unique situation, as we are unable to pick up our home and move it somewhere else. If tenants can receive a five figure sum then I believe we should have a seven figure sum to reflect our unique circumstances. The applicant should recognise and recompense those of us who have to live with this imposition for generations. The leader of the project stood outside our home and stated that "All The Holford Rules are broken here"! I agree that nearby villagers should receive money off their electricity bills for having pylons near to their community, but for those of us who have the overhead lines over our heads and the pylons towering literally over our home we should be properly compensated and that should be a commitment made by the applicant before this proposal is granted approval, not after when they can slime their way out of it.

4. The Thickett is Ancient Woodland

The Thickett, situated next to RG 141 is an Ancient Woodland. I still see no recognition from the applicant of this fact. Again, as in issue number 2, my father-in-law owns this woodland and has never sort to get it any official recognition, he is an old fashioned farmer, he gets firewood from The Thickett, he doesn't need it registered on some national ledger, he's not that type of guy.

That does not negate the reality that The Thickett has been there for millenia as its rich tapestry of flora and fauna will tell any ecologist. I have seen The Thickett, along with Gipping little and Great woods on ancient maps that also feature The [REDACTED]. It should be incumbent on the applicant to accept that The Thickett is ancient woodland, which it is, or prove that it is not, surely, not the other way around. I therefore request that the pylons be moved further away from The Thickett. For decades I have been maintaining the upkeep of The Thickett, clearing out fallen trees to allow saplings the space and light to grow, coppicing hazel and monitoring the abundant wildlife, including with trail cameras.

[REDACTED] A mink was also recently caught on camera demonstrating the diverse and rare wildlife we have here. To be able to properly maintain and manage this habitat and woodland I need access to The Thickett at all times by vehicle. The only access is via a track from Lamberts Lane that enters in the North-East corner. This is completely severed by the pylon alignment and so the applicant needs to allow me permanent access across the construction site. It is also critical that I have access to The Thickett as the firewood I harvest is the only source of heat to keep our non-central heated house warm in the winter.

The other feature of The Thickett is its uniquely almost perfect rectangular shape which is unusual in a landscape of irregular fields and woodland. Also it is surrounded by a ditch with a far higher embankment on the inside and has an unusually large number of European Hornbeams, is a mile west of the Roman road the A140, adjacent to the ancient thoroughfare One Hundred Lane, has clear sightlines in all directions, is the highest point of the Suffolk Uplands sits next to the source of the river Gipping and looks down through the Gipping valley. It is also in the very heart of what was the Icenii territory two thousand years ago. It is also exactly 85 yards wide which was the common width that Roman legionnaires built their encampments. Several Roman camps have been discovered in this area including one just down the road at the bottom of the A140. Given all of this strong, collective circumstantial evidence it is almost certainly an undiscovered Roman camp or fort from one of the most iconic times in British history, the rebellion of Boudicca two millennia ago, which should hold national and international significance. Certainly if you put this evidence to an archaeologist they would bite your hand off to investigate as it would be the archaeological find of the century. I urge the Planning Inspectorate to have this properly investigated before the site is permanently ruined by the applicant.

5. Inept Bat Surveys

Bat surveys!! What bat surveys!!! I observed a bat survey where two young ecologists peered at an oak tree on Lamberts Lane for five minutes and also in a ditch at 9:30 in the morning. Had they come at half nine that evening there would be a flurry of bats flying up and down Lamberts Lane as I have repeatedly told the applicant for three years. It has reached the point now where it is blatantly obvious that the applicant does not wish to know about bats, skylarks, great crested newts or any other wildlife species and if the examining authority cannot see this then unfortunately you must be wearing blinkers. Despite numerous attempts to inform the applicant of the vast biodiversity in the kilometre north and south of where I have lived and observed for thirty years they have made no effort to properly record this. I note that this behaviour of refusing to properly record the wildlife that will be directly affected by the applicant's proposal is going on across the whole 112 miles of the route. Shameful and [REDACTED]. The Planning Inspectorate must get to grips with this diabolical behaviour.

6. Access to National highway from driveway and Access to The Thickett for Firewood/management

I may have missed my opportunity on this subject on May 1st at the end of the meeting in The Bobby Robson suite when the Examining authority threw open to the floor any issues on access. I was present but there didn't seem to be any site specific issues discussed and I thought there must be loads so thought it was not the time to speak. If so I apologise for my naivety in these matters. The issues I have are access to The Thickett to maintain the woodland, manage the wildlife and bring out firewood, the pylon building site entirely cuts across my access route from Lamberts Lane. I will be going into The Thickett regardless, but will work with the applicant to make things less confrontational than it might otherwise be. Also at my home just north at The [REDACTED] (next to RG138) the red line boundary cuts across the top of my driveway and blocks access to the country lane and the national highways. This is clearly unacceptable to have control over whether and when I can leave my home by car, accentuated by the fact that we live amongst fields in the middle of the countryside, miles from the nearest village and public transport. Again I will leave my house by car when I need to regardless of The applicant but will work with them if they wish this to be non confrontational.

7. Conclusion

I hope that you, the examining authority will help the applicant to finally recognise me and the very serious side effects their little project will have on me and my family's lives as so far I have been completely ignored despite writing and speaking out at your meetings. The applicant seems to have worn down everyone else with their team of thousands and relentless paperwork; death by desktop. I am still willing to work with the applicant to resolve ALL of the issues I have raised. In terms of the person who has protected characteristics, for example, they have always dreamed of becoming a veterinary nurse, so if the applicant paid for them to attend vet college during the day that would remove them from the ongoing works (and noise/ strangers etc) during the daytime hours. This is an example of me trying to find solutions to the problems the applicant is creating to show I did try and find ways where we could work together.

I will be recording everything the applicant does on our family land for the full construction period of however many years using trail cameras, CCTV and drone cameras to document the destruction and create a film to highlight what net zero done wrong looks like. In particular there will be a number of cameras set up in The Thickett to try and prevent workers from abusing it and protect the flora and fauna that abounds within this delicate ecosystem. I would like to think that the applicant will now fix all the problems they have created. No greater harm has been done to the people and the land in the Suffolk Uplands since the Romans came up the A140 and beat and raped Boudicca's daughters. Now it is the applicant who wants to rape and desecrate this land with their giant erections, to further their empire and I feel the same sense of outrage at the injustice of this prospect. Whether or not I am Tacitus or Boudicca is entirely in the applicant's hands.