

Comments on NG response at DL4 to Action Pt 34 (8.5.8 – SIH2 Action Points (A) COLNE VALLEY

- The Applicant's mention of an already (accepted as) rejected "western route" is irrelevant to the Action Point 34. The request from the Panel at the ISH was for NG to justify their lack of similar consideration for Colne Valley as for Waveney Valley – i.e. why was underground not considered in the same way at the appropriate time Their explanation at Deadline 4 still fails do so.

- There appears to be no mention by the Applicant of the importance of the settings of heritage assets, which is crucial to the positioning of any infrastructure which would interfere with their historical context.

- NG: "and across Mill Road at a point where the Project is able to avoid the Roman Villa excavation site and potential impacts on buried archaeology"

My reply: I understand that the position of pylon TB047 is still not clear: NG statements and maps are at odds, the pylon appears still to sit on top of this sensitive archaeological site.

- NG: "at this stage, and bearing in mind the cost and programme implications of change at this stage, it is appropriate to note that the Application should be judged on its merits and against the relevant policy. It does not stand to be judged against the perception by some that one or other alternative is in some way better".

My reply: [ i ] If suitable alternatives had been considered at the appropriate point in the process, there would not have been "cost/programme implications at this stage". And it is being judged by the Panel (as appropriate) against "the relevant policy".

[ ii ] Bearing in mind the number of methodology failures with regard to surveys/assessments by the Applicant, it seems unreasonable that we should be asked to accept that the Application should be "judged on its merits". If that was the case, there would be no need for the DCO; it is those purported "merits" which are being discussed.

- Through flawed judgement, the Applicant has failed to prove that the project would not cause widespread significant adverse effects to the Colne Valley.

**10 June 2026 Deadline 5. Penny Lang, [REDACTED]**

OVERVIEW from a Layman

A LETTER to the INSPECTORS – A LITANY of FAILURES by the Applicant – N2T

We are approximately midway through the Examination and I would ask your leave to submit the following summary of the main points from what I've heard, seen and read from the Hearings so far, and from the last four years. All of which go to strengthen my original objections to this deeply unsound project.

The need for green transmission is agreed, but NSP EN-5 does not decree the method chosen by the applicant.

National Grid (NG) appear totally unprepared and nothing has convinced me that they should be allowed to take this misjudged project forward. Please bear with me because [REDACTED], and don't find it easy working with the thousands of documents online so I will omit the endless reference numbers to verify my statements. You will have been exposed to the same evidence as me, and much more, so will recognise to what I refer. I am strongly concerned about the impact of this erroneous project, and object with future generations in mind.

**GENERAL**

This, misguided, pylons project was wrongly pre-determined many years ago, with no choice for consumers.

There are better alternatives, and a strategic offshore grid should have been planned many years ago as infrastructure improvement, together with more coordination, rather than shareholder dividends. But HVDC is best for long runs, and it now looks as if we are lumbered with underground as best option. The costs are similar when pylons are estimated correctly and honestly.

*[PylonsEastAnglia (EssexSuffolkNorfolkPylons) have submitted to you the lengthy "Report on Deficiencies of N2T Formal Consultation" Apr-June 2024, based on the Statement of Community Consultation, so I need not repeat. As shown by many independent reports submitted to you, NG have fallen short on: Legal Opinions, Heritage, Soils, Landscapes, Flooding, Archaeology, Bird Strikes and many others. It is also clear they have failed to take into account community feedback, and the cumulative effects of N2T on many areas.]*

The huge amount of time, effort and money being expended by the DCO Panel and their back up teams, other companies, councils, businesses, thousands of residents, interested parties, the Applicant and all others involved is unnecessary. An HVDC agreement (undersea does not require a DCO) years ago would have saved so much of that, and construction could be WELL under way by now.

The following is like a case study for the entire route. It appears after a long hearing discussion that just one residence, [REDACTED] is a frightening example of NG's inept assessments, and what so many people are going through. There appear to be such a huge number of unwieldy obstacles around which NG have to work. And they make the Horlock Rules hard to adhere to. Thus, it makes more sense underground.

And a case study of how businesses are being handled by NG across the route, could be Palmer & Klein. Not enough discussion, lack of replies from the Applicant to questions, all leading to a frightening uncertainty as to where their business might be headed.

As it is, I fear yet another UK infrastructure fiasco like HS2, which like so many, was wrongly approved before details were ironed out. (You will no doubt know “How Big Things Get Done”, an excellent book by Bent Flyvbjerg and Dan Gardner - “THINK & PLAN slowly, then ACT fast”). Whistleblowers fell by the way as they issued warnings, but were ignored, leaving people with egg on their faces, residents with lives wrecked, huge financial losses, only half a railway, not high speed, and not due for probably a decade or more.

Use of the Treasury Green Book (mandatory: Lord Banner’s Opinion) has been completely ignored. As you know, its guidance balances cost/benefits economically, environmentally, culturally and socially.

We are very conscious of the time limits of the ExA, and try to keep our oral contributions short and to the point. However, it often feels as if Mr Harris is talking for longer than necessary, & quite repetitively. It may just be his style, however if I were a cynic I might suggest there was an element of filibustering. In the face of so much repetition, he appears to have more than his fair share of floor time. It is a fact that many other NG personnel also have the chance to speak.

There also seems to have been a very casual approach by NG to agreements with the public, landowners, and Statements of Common Ground, hundreds of which seem to still to be incomplete, even as late as Deadline 4.

It was noticeable how often at the Hearings NG were unable to answer questions, considering the large battery of staff at their disposal either in the room or online. As just one example, there was long muddled discussion and worrying lack of knowledge over the effects of Percussive Piling (ISH2 Act Pt 1). They were also quite unable to give an answer as to why the Colne Valley had not been assessed like Waveney Valley.

There have recently (May) been three videos come to the notice of PEA of hedge cutting during nesting season (Mar-Aug) on the Bramford to Twinstead line, with questions as to the legitimacy of not only the timing but the necessary permissive paperwork. We need assurances that N2T will not be treated similarly. NG’s use of “where practicable” and other “get-out words” which the Panel have mentioned before, also featured in this situation.

The more trees/hedges taken out, the less visual mitigation from pylos is naturally available. Agriculture would be decimated: during construction 3,640 hectares of temporary land loss, and permanent loss 203 hectares of BMV land. The problems of many farms managing their land would be unsurmountable, for years.

When NG does deign to answer our questions in writing, either after Consultation feedback, or during these ExA Deadline exchanges, the answers are very long-winded, **mostly reiterating the correctness of their position**, including multiple acronyms and references to several other documents; and seem to achieve nothing new. The phrase “appropriate and proportional” is regularly and often deployed, often without further elucidation.

It is well known that most Statutory Undertakers, residents, landowners, businesses have continuously complained of prolonged waits for replies to their questions to NG, and often get no replies at all.

There was much time spent discussing NG and their 3-D Visualisation tools . These were often less than useful, and only available, in turn, at drop in centres, if you could get there ... Often less than representative scale with pylons too small, pylon colours too pale, often not clear as to whether before or after tree/hedge removals.

The Heritage Report by Virginia Brewer made it abundantly clear that the settings of the various assets had mostly not been given adequate consideration by NG . Similarly the Acid Soils issue has not been properly addressed – the skills of the new NG “soil expert” need to be known – and no more of the “where practicable” please.

It was good to hear the Panel question the reliability of the Drivers’ Information Pack; seeing all that we have so far, it’s hard to believe these will be accurately and regularly updated. The construction hours are also way too long.

## CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

These are just some:

ARDLEIGH, Essex, with a vast accumulation of industrialisation destroying this ancient village. Conjunction of N2T with BRAMFORD to TWINSTEAD, more cumulative effects. Apart from the destructive effect of so much electrical infrastructure within the same location, this could also prove a resilience problem to national defence.

SEALINK, SIZEWELL C, connections from LINCOLNSHIRE, NORTH FALLS, FIVE ESTUARIES, LION LINK and TARCHON interconnectors, EA 1,2,3. Many vast solar farms and battery compounds.

ALDHAM, FORDSTREET, FORDHAM, COLNE & ROMAN RIVER VALLEYS – Colchester blue/green status and special landscape, archaeology, heritage assets, conservation area. Pylons on hilltops, and on flood plain.

Landscape Partnership report on Colne valley, June 2026, conclusion:

8.7.6 .... Taken together, **the findings indicate the potential for widespread and significant adverse visual effects across the Area of Interest**, affecting a range of visual receptors including walkers, recreational users, road users and local communities. The findings are therefore relevant to the considerations set out within paragraphs 2.9.24 and 2.11.6 of EN-5,

Much of the farmland and countryside will be destroyed as a result of this destructive project, and food production decreased and damaged. Why should the impact of such devastation, which as a method is NOT for the greater or common good, be imposed on the communities of East Anglia (and much of the rest of the UK). As you know, there are better alternatives.

[END]

See also 2 Links to photos of Colne and Roman River Valleys  
And a still photo from NG Vizualisation of Aldham



