

Harrison Coles
Case Officer
Planning Inspectorate

25th June 2026

By email to NorwichtoTilbury@planninginspectorate.go.uk

Our Ref: SSK/HW

Dear Harrison,

Re: Planning Inquiry - Open Floor Hearing 4 – Chelmsford Racecourse Tuesday 23rd June at 10.00Hrs Statement given orally to the Planning Inspectorate by Stephen Knight

Your colleagues asked for a written copy of the statement given to the Inquiry today. This follows:

“Good morning. My name is Stephen Knight. I am employed by Stanfords who are agents for Gent Fairhead and Co Ltd who operate through Blackwater Aggregates for sand and gravel (mineral) extraction. Gent Fairhead and Co own the mineral rights and hold the Option for mineral extraction over Monks Farm Kelvedon.

Surveys over Monks Farm show substantial mineral deposits lie within an area of about 55 Hectares (137 acres) of Monks Farm contained within a broadly rectangular shaped block of land on the southwestern side of the farm. Current plans show the line of the pylons and cables to run through this block of land. If the alignment of this route is confirmed there will be some sterilisation of mineral. This area is designated as a Mineral Safeguarding Area by the Mineral Planning Authority.

If the pylon locations are as shown on the current plans, we believe the mineral sterilisation by virtue of the protection of the pylon bases could amount to up to 130,000 tonnes. Alternatively, if the excavation machinery is not allowed to work beneath the overhead cables (due to safety concerns) then we consider that the loss of mineral through sterilisation then rises up to about 650,000 tonnes

We have raised this concern with National Grid and are currently in discussion with them as to seeing if it can be agreed with them to relocate the position of 2 pylons so that one pylon particularly is relocated approximately 200metres in a southerly direction. In so doing the alignment still remains within the application boundaries. If the route is realigned in

this way we consider that the loss of mineral will be minimal assuming that excavation and haulage can continue beneath the span of wires between pylons.

This realignment has been suggested by National Grid in order to mitigate the partial sterilisation on the current route. We support the minor realignment and wait for their confirmation. If this confirmation is not forthcoming, we shall need to pursue an Objection to the scheme.

In summary:

- My clients have been on site producing locally won sand and gravel investing heavily in modern infrastructure for more than 25 years.
- Gent Fairhead and Co hold the legal right to extract and process sand and gravel at Monks Farm.
- The current proposal results in lost reserves which can be easily avoided.
- Over the years and currently my clients have employed staff, supported local business', local groups and local amenities – future contributions for which are all put at risk if mineral reserves are wasted.
- We believe that future green field developments within the area can easily be accommodated around a minor change in alignment.
- The suggested realignment can be made within the scheme boundary.
- The suggested realignment can be built at nominal or very small additional cost to the scheme/applicant.
- We do not wish to obstruct the applicant's scheme. Merely make it "fit for purpose"

Accordingly, we ask that your Inquiry recommends the minor realignment of the route at Monks Farm in place of the current published route.

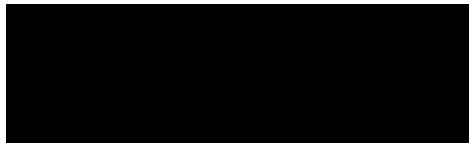
Thank you."

By way of additional comments:

1. I attach Figure 8.2 Diagram from the Document 5.15 Design Development Report August 2025 – showing the suggested route amendment (whereby the cable route is moved approximately 200

metres in a southwards direction) in Monks Farm that I referred to for ease of reference.

2. Permitted sand and Gravel reserves can only be excavated from the location in which they are found. As such they cannot be moved to accommodate new developments which can be adjusted during design.
3. The mineral rights within Monks Farm are contained within an Option Agreement which provides for their extraction as a priority over other land uses.



Email

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Figure 8.2 Alternative considered at Feeringbury

