

REF: Interested Party Registration No. [REDACTED]

Submission for Deadline 6 – 2359 hrs 7th July 2026

We represent the residents and businesses located in the parish of Bressingham & Fersfield which lies in the Waveney Valley immediately to the west of Roydon. As a registered 'Interested Party' we wish to comment upon the Appendix 'A', Action Point 27, Waveney Valley (including Snow Street, Roydon Fen and Wortham Ling) – Draft Constraints Plan.

We wish to challenge the statements made by the applicant in the Draft Constraints Plan concerning visual impacts and other harms resulting from the installation of pylons and associated overhead cables across the Waveney Valley and adjacent land. We believe most of the 11 statements listed on the map on page 10 of the Plan to be flawed and potentially misleading in some way and this challenge is made in the interests of clarity and the pursuance of factuality.

Our area of primary concern is of course along the eastern parish boundary, where pylons RG76 to RG86 will be prominently visible in increasing degrees of visual nuisance. Pylon RG81 will be some 300 metres from the nearest property in Common Road, whilst RG82 will stand a mere 170 metres from the nearest property in Bressingham Road. Contrary to the claims made by National Grid (NG), the impact of these 50 metre-tall structures will not in all cases be “filtered by vegetation”. In any event, given that almost all local vegetation is deciduous, any so-called ‘filtering’ will be largely absent during the winter months.

Continuing southwards over and beyond the A1066 Thetford to Diss road, the pylons and transmission cables will maintain a highly prominent aspect until they turn eastwards and away from Bressingham. The project construction phase will cause significant disruption to the several businesses along our section of this highway, the negative financial impact of which should not be underestimated. Once the line becomes operational, the negative impact on our famous Steam Museum & Gardens will doubtless continue. It is important to note that at the last survey, this popular South Norfolk visitor attraction was deemed to have generated £1.7 million per year towards the local economy.

In item 3. of the NG statements, it states, “Views east from Bressingham Steam and Gardens filtered by vegetation”. Item 5. states, “Layers of vegetation filter views, including woodland within the valley”. As a Parish Council, we are reliably informed that these claims are either simply inaccurate or deliberately misleading. Yes, there is a modest element of seasonally varied ‘vegetation filtration’, but this is not high enough in most locations to fully obscure the proposed pylons from a ground-level viewpoint. Visitors to this significant heritage centre have a reasonable expectation of enjoying steam train rides around an historically pastoral vista. Pylons will be decidedly detrimental to this experience.

It is noteworthy that there is no mention in item 4. of the ‘Constraints Plan’ of the impact the pylons will have (particularly RG85) on the ‘Heron Meadow Centre’. This essentially relies upon its natural setting in the valley to provide its healing and learning services, thus is highly likely to face closure should either pylons or even a short section of underground cabling be installed.

At this point we must raise the issue of NG’s briefly promoted yet hurriedly disregarded “Waveney Valley Alternative”. This short-lived proposal for a short section of underground AC cabling across the River Waveney and its immediate surroundings was proposed to alleviate the long-term visual harm that will be caused by pylons. For reasons not fully explained but allegedly centred on unsuitable soil conditions in the valley, NG withdrew this proposal without any meaningful consultation. It appears that no significant alternative or practical mitigation has been properly considered by NG, despite ‘paper exercises’ such as this. Merely paying ‘lip service’ to the consultation process serves only to ‘add insult to injury’!

Whilst NG may reasonably argue that the originally planned pylon alignment was moved eastwards and a little away from being directly over the Steam Museum as a result of the first consultation in 2022, this did of course only serve to move the misery closer to our neighbours in Roydon. The visual impact on the Grade I Listed church is in direct contravention of the Holford Rules, as are the numerous direction changes. Scant regard has been shown to the wildlife corridor that joins the Ramsar site of Redgrave Fen, Bressingham Fen, the SSSI of Wortham Ling and the LNR of Roydon Fen. Nor does any consideration appear to have been given to the WaLOR project (item 9.) planned for this section of the Waveney Valley and intended to reinstate the natural fenland as an aid towards future flood prevention downstream. We question how concrete pylon bases or other subterranean infrastructure can possibly be compatible with this?

No overhead or even underground transmission line of any kind should be countenanced in this vulnerable and ecologically sensitive landscape. A joint survey commissioned in 2024 by Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils designated this area as a “Valued Landscape” – not a description respected by NG it sadly seems. Despite also contravening elements of “The Gunning Principles” and the “Treasury Greenbook” by failing to properly consider alternatives, NG are displaying an arrogant disregard for our rural communities. It appears that none of the aforementioned designations and ‘Rules’ afford us any protection whatsoever from this invasion of steel monstrosities and we can only therefore ask the Planning Inspectorate to maintain a robust oversight on our behalf.

We are minded to limit comment on the ‘Draft Opportunities Plan’ on page 11 of the Draft Constraints Plan. As with the repeated references to “vegetation filtration” on page 10, this rough and vaguely outlined small-scale sketch is of no real value to this argument and could be viewed simply as paying further lip-service to the consultation process. There are few, if any so-called opportunities that present themselves as a direct result of this sweeping industrialisation of our countryside. It is highly doubtful that Natural England will agree to tree planting on the dry heathland that is Wortham Ling as this could conflict with the very basis of its designation as a SSSI.

Along with a great many of our residents and those in neighbouring Roydon and Wortham, we contend that this proposed route, be it pylons or underground, is without merit on numerous counts. Partially encircling Roydon on three sides, passing close by homes, businesses, Grade I Listed buildings and visitor attractions, transgressing supposedly protected fenland and river valley and threatening wildlife – this is an egregious proposal which has no place here. An integrated offshore grid has always been the preferred and common-sense option long-since put forward by the well-supported campaign group that opposes N2T pylons.

Furthermore, a workable and financially viable compromise of underground HVDC has also been proposed, following the existing line of pylons running from Norwich to Bramford on the eastern side of Diss across largely open and more sparsely populated terrain. This would afford far easier access for construction, upset a lot less people and probably cost less. Certainly it would incur less legal fees, probably less community compensation payments and less 10-year discounts off electricity bills for those in close proximity to pylons.

Bressingham & Fersfield Parish Council wishes to register its concern over the long term impact of this current plan on our community. The mental health and well-being of our community is under threat, as well as all the visual and environmental harms it will inevitably bring. No significant consideration is being afforded us by NG, who are effectively employing ‘bully-boy’ tactics to achieve what they see as a ‘done-deal’ and no amount of spurious “vegetation filtration” or “opportunities for connective green infrastructure enhancements” can possibly hide that. We say a comprehensive “NO” to pylons!