

National Grid Masterplans

Response of Roydon Parish Council, Norfolk, to National Grid Document: 8.4.12.2: Response to ISH2 Action Point 27 - Masterplans. Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

Roydon Parish Council considers National Grid's masterplan in relation to the Waveney Valley to be inadequate, poorly thought out and potentially damaging to sensitive landscapes in our village. It fails to understand the nature of the habitats, lanes and neighbourhoods it refers to, and the suggested works actually threaten the future of some of these habitats, including a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a nature reserve.

This suggests that National Grid have failed to do any credible research in relation to mitigation in the village, and has seen the preparation of the masterplan as nothing more than a tick-box exercise. National Grid needs to return to the drawing board.

We stress that the parish council considers properly thought out biodiversity enhancements and mitigation to be essential in relation to the pylons.

Turning to specific proposed remedies for the Waveney Valley.

Roydon Fen. National Grid proposes the planting of trees and hedgerows at Roydon Fen. But this is a rare wetland nature reserve, managed by Suffolk Wildlife Trust, where it's important to control the spread of woodland to preserve the fen's characteristics. What National Grid is proposing would risk damaging the habitat.

Wortham Ling. Similarly, National Grid proposes tree and hedgerow planting at the Ling - a Site of Special Scientific Interest composed of acid grassland and dry heath. The Grid's proposal again completely fails to grasp the nature of the habitat they're referring to. Tree planting would fundamentally alter and damage this rare SSSI habitat.

Snow Street. The Grid proposes green infrastructure improvements but the western half of the highlighted section is already heavily wooded and / or with hedgerows and we question what additional work could be undertaken. The eastern end is Brewers Green, a County Wildlife Site, which is already managed to protect and enhance specific habitats such as ponds and open grassland. There is no indication of what green infrastructure the Grid is thinking about, but activities such as a significant programme of tree planting would again be considered inappropriate as it could threaten the future of these specific habitats.

Route planning: The applicant states in the document that it "considers that appropriate mitigation has already been incorporated into the Project development through route selection, design development, adherence to relevant national policy and guidance including the Holford and Horlock Rules". But, as Roydon Parish Council has stated in its submissions to National Grid and the Planning

Inspectorate, the Holford Rules have been repeatedly ignored in relation to the village - particularly Holford Rule 3. One of the key ways it could have used design development to protect the Waveney Valley, the undergrounding option, was quickly dispensed with by the applicant.

The masterplan proposes little relevant mitigation in relation to the 50m pylons to the north of Snow Street, which impact a key view listed in the Diss and District Neighbourhood Plan as well as several popular footpaths. Neither is there any mitigation in relation to pylons impacting the Angles Way footpath in the valley, which they cross, or views of the Grade 1 listed St Remigius Church. The Grid's suggestion that existing greenery protects views of the church is a falsehood.

The parish council points out that we were not consulted in relation to this masterplan. Perhaps if its staff had spoken to us, they would not have made the errors and proposed such potentially damaging solutions in this masterplan.