

To the Planning Inspectorate,

I confirm my objection to the National Grid's (NG) Norwich to Tilbury Pylons (N2T) Development Consent Order as stated in my submission of November 2025 the contents of which remain largely unanswered although they are still entirely relevant.

Many thousands of words have been written by NG since then purporting to address the concerns of residents and others but there is little to suggest that apart from a few peripheral tweaks to NG's original submission and concepts that much has changed. This has still been a sham of a consultation with only lip service given to the consideration of alternative schemes or methods including, inter alia:

- Undersea cables
- Upgrading of existing overhead cable with updated high capacity cables
- Underground routing using plough techniques
- HVDC in lieu of HVAC

For example, responses to the very many alternative solutions and challenges raised by the Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons (ESNP) action group during this period have contained errors and patent misunderstandings and, in many cases, have just failed to respond at all. What one takes away from this is that NG has no real intention to contemplate any solution to the upgrade of the grid except its own solution. It has repeatedly obfuscated in its responses or just failed to give adequate respect for the arguments being raised.

Why NG has stuck to its technical solution so rigidly has become patently clear in recent months. It has rejected undersea cables and underground HVDC on cost and time grounds for N2T but at the same time has promoted these very same technologies as an economic solution for its EGL 3 and 4 schemes in Scotland and northern England. Why would this be? Well certainly one answer is that you can't sell off revenue raising connections for land based solar energy power stations if the cable route is under the sea. The same factors that are the reason for East Anglia's agricultural industry also suit covering the landscape in solar panels, namely reasonably flat topography and high sunshine hours – it's not the same in Scotland of course. This gives NG the opportunity to generate even more profit for its shareholders at the consumers' expense – there's now a multitude of small special purpose vehicle companies that have sprung up to develop these PFI like solar schemes. No account is being taken of the cumulative effect on the community and the landscape of this scheme with the very many solar panel, battery installation and Data Centre projects that are coming forward.

It's impossible to see how approval for the DCO as it stands can be given based on NG's current proposals. A few examples, as responded to in ESNP's Deadline 7 submission:

- The very fundamental issue of the need for a Water Resources Agreement is raised. The project is an area with huge population increases (South Norfolk had the fourth largest population increase in England and Wales between 2011 and 2021) which show no sign of subsiding; massive housing construction projects; new data centres being proposed and the continuing need of irrigation for agriculture to feed the nation. Hence bland statements by NG about assuming there will be no need for new temporary or permanent abstractions should not be acceptable. The current drought highlights this issue even more vividly.

- NG's failure to even comprehend the points being raised about the use of TS Conductors to either upgrade the capacity of the existing grid or to enable the use of lower and fewer towers. NG uses the incorrect comparator.
- The calculations of the underground cable corridor and trench dimensions – fundamental dimensions when calculating their costs. NG inflated depths, widths etc., when compared to similar construction details from their own EGL3 and 4 projects which would inevitably inflate the comparative costs.
- One of the most destructive elements of the Pylon proposal is the use of a double lane concrete haul road for the full length of the project. This will result in a massive land take and the destruction of many kilometres of hedgerow. Wildlife and the environment will suffer through the loss of hedgerow and the land under the haul road will take years to recover. NG claims that the haul road would be required for underground cable ploughing solutions but for the great majority of the project length this would clearly not be the case. Again, removing the majority of this cost would change the cost comparison very significantly.

These are just a small number of examples where it must raise serious questions about NG's calculation of comparative costs in the justification of its desired solution. I fail to see how approval of the DCO could proceed when there are clearly so many fundamental flaws in the proposal and its cost comparisons and I trust the Inspectorate will act accordingly by rejecting the DCO.

It is also worthy of note that NG is hardly acting in good faith by its stated intention of making numerous local planning applications for enabling works for the Pylons in the coming weeks – this gives the local community the distinct impression that this is regarded as a 'done deal' and that this current process is once again merely lip service. Hardly gives the impression of a democratic process? I hope this impression is misplaced.

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