

Final Deadline for Norwich to Tilbury - Registration Number [REDACTED].

During the last four years I have owned land directly impacted by the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Route, both within the Waveney Valley and again at the top of the valley in Roydon at Darrow Lane. My experience throughout this period has led me to the firm belief that National Grid has consistently struggled to carry out this project in a way that meets its own stated standards or the expectations of affected communities.

National Grid continues to fail in its ability to comply with the Holford Rules through the Waveney Valley. The landscape here contains an exceptional number of obstacles, constraints, and designated sites, both local and national, which should have guided them towards a more sensitive and appropriate solution. Instead, they have attempted to force an overhead route through an area where those rules simply cannot be met. National Grid has not shown that it can meet the standards required for a project of this scale and sensitivity. The clear designations and constraints in this beautiful valley have been well-documented, this inability to comply with the Holford rules should have triggered a genuine consideration of undergrounding.

National Grid acknowledged these designations and constraints temporarily and indicated that undergrounding would be considered. However, this option proved to be little more than lip service. It was dismissed quickly without meaningful explanation, clear evidence, and without weighing up the environmental, cultural, and community impacts against cost. Apart from in the AONB, National Grid only offered one option, an overhead route; other options were consistently ignored. The much more cost-effective option of cable ploughing was never even mentioned. It begs the following question... What is the point of a consultation without proper costed comparables by an independent body. All this has left me and very many affected residents (who have taken part in a local survey) with the obvious impression that the process was a done deal.

The Waveney Valley is a unique and highly sensitive landscape, and the impacts of the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Route on this area cannot be overstated. Roydon Fen alone is home to at least eleven red-listed bird species, both native and migratory, such as swifts and the cuckoo, (which is internationally protected). Mute swans and herons are regularly seen here, and these large, low-flying birds are particularly vulnerable to collision risks posed by overhead pylons. The construction of and the introduction of massive metal pylons and electric cables into this habitat represents a direct and imminent threat to species already under significant pressure. This is particularly poignant given what has just happened with the wildfires at Dunwich Heath, Suffolk.

The cultural and historic environment in the Waveney at Roydon is equally at risk. The Grade I listed St Remigius Church will be visually dwarfed within its historic setting. Its relationship with the surrounding landscape will be severely compromised. The nationally recognised Angles Way long-distance footpath will also be overshadowed by these huge pylons, profoundly altering one of East Anglia's most valued walking routes.

The SSSI at Wortham Ling will be encircled from the north and east by the proposed pylons. This designated site is protected for its rare heathland habitat (like Dunwich) and moss species. It is also an important area of local amenity for Diss and all surrounding areas. The pylons will place this SSSI and the precious gem, - which is Roydon Fen under significant pressure, with construction disturbance, long-term ecological fragmentation and negative visual impact.

National Grid's approach to land and property purchase in Roydon also raises further serious concerns about transparency and fairness. The company purchased the Grade II listed Gables on Darrow Lane yet has never provided any explanation for why this particular property was bought. No other homeowner along the proposed pylon line has been offered the same opportunity, nor have they received comparable financial protection. The Gables now sits in a state of disrepair, adding to local frustration and raising questions about National Grid's intentions and long-term care of heritage assets.

We own farmland just north of Snow Street, Roydon. National Grid's recent rushed documentation repeatedly refers to "green mitigation" and "compensation" measures, yet the features they highlight such as hedgerows, woodland, and habitat corridors are ours and our parishes existing assets, created and maintained by all of us over many years. National Grid has proposed no genuine or additional mitigation for our land or for the lower Waveney Valley as a whole. Their plans simply re-label what already exists, offering no new planting, no habitat enhancement, and no landscape compensation for the damage their infrastructure would cause. National Grid has also never discussed these proposals with us.

To date, I am not aware of any significant compensatory measures offered by National Grid in this area. The only suggestion mentioned has been the possibility of a paltry reduction in electricity bills, an offer that is completely inadequate for a project of this size, and entirely disproportionate to the environmental, cultural, and visual harm that would be inflicted on the Waveney Valley.

The unexplained property acquisition, lack of transparency, failure to provide genuine mitigation and reliance on rushed superficial landscape compensation, further demonstrates that National Grid has not met the standards expected of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. It reinforces the conclusion that the proposed overhead route is inappropriate, unjustified, and unacceptable in its current form.

All I and most of my neighbours want from National Grid is a fair, transparent, well-costed, and *genuine* consultation on all alternatives. That means proper consideration of undergrounding and all other options, assessed openly and objectively using the Holford Rules and the Treasury Green Book. Without any of this, severe and lasting damage will be inflicted forever on the Waveney Valley Special Landscape Area, our Local Nature Reserve, our County Wildlife Site, our National Footpath, our SSSI, and our Heritage Assets. These are irreplaceable features of our landscape, culture and community, and they deserve far more careful and responsible treatment from National Grid than what has been shown to date.