

I have lived in Ardleigh with my family for the last 35 years. We chose to buy a property here to enjoy life in a rural village community surrounded by beautiful countryside.

I am an active supporter of PEA and have attended all the consultations and most of the Hearings. This has been going on now for the last four years and has been a very stressful experience to date when my husband and I should be enjoying our retirement.

NG have only ever put forward one proposal namely for 110 miles of 50m high pylons from Norwich to Tilbury plus the EACN at Ardleigh and Little Bromley. They have not seriously considered or engaged in any meaningful way with the various alternatives which would be quicker, cheaper and less damaging to communities and the environment. It feels to me that they are determined to push ahead with their plan come what may even though they have positively acknowledged the benefits of HVDC undergrounding in other projects of theirs.

I fully understand that the grid needs upgrading and support renewable energy. However, the method of achieving the necessary upgrade needs to be the best available method making full use of modern technology and following the Treasury Green book guidance. This would ensure, amongst other things, that natural capital is also taken into account. The need can be met via alternatives such as HVDC undergrounding, offshore coordination and upgrading the existing grid. Also, any undergrounding should be done using cable ploughing because it is cheaper, quicker and less damaging. NG's proposals would be a disaster for Ardleigh which is a medieval village with a rich heritage, over 70 listed buildings including St. Marys Church which is grade II* listed and significant archaeology. The proposals would completely change the character of the village and surrounding area to an industrialised landscape dominated by huge pylons and associated infrastructure.

There also appears to be little concern about the destruction of hedgerows and mature trees which will severely impact the landscape and nature. Nor do NG appear concerned about building on grade 1 farmland which is very rare and would result in some farms and other local rural businesses becoming unviable. Food security is also a big concern.

I am also concerned, should NG's plan proceed, that such a visible above ground scheme with giant pylons and a huge hub at EACN (which includes other wind farms and the Tarchon Interconnector) could become a target to hostile states. Also, with our changing climate storms, wildfires and floods would be able to cause far more damage to NGs scheme than an offshore/underground scheme.

We have worked hard over the years to build up our assets here which we intend to pass on to our children in due course. The value of our property has already dropped considerably and should the scheme proceed would no doubt drop further. There has been nothing from NG to say they would compensate for such losses. This is grossly unfair. These are only some of the many reasons why this scheme should not go ahead.