

Offshore Grid

An offshore grid in accordance with holistic network design recommended by the ESO is the optimal way of bringing renewable power from East Anglia to demand centres near London.

Coordination offshore, as we see from our North Sea neighbours, will reduce infrastructure, costs and harms. The two reasons given for pursuing the selected option are not valid:

- Signed contracts are subject to planning permission
- Speed to meet an arbitrary and unachievable 2030 target is counter productive

Process

The Treasury Green Book must be followed by DESNZ, OFGEM, NESO and National Grid. This will ensure the best outcomes for bill payers, communities and the environment.

It must be mandatory to upgrade the existing grid before building new infrastructure. This will reduce costs and protect the environment.

When cables are undergrounded, this should be done using cable ploughing, as this reduces the damage caused, reduces costs and speeds up delivery.

And finally, when cables are to be onshore for routes longer than 120km, HVDC undergrounding should be the presumption.

Lack of community consultation

Major decisions regarding the location of the project were made before meaningful consultation with the local community.

The proposed EACN site is

situated on prime agricultural land within an area of unspoilt countryside.

Brownfield and previously developed industrial land should have been properly prioritised before productive agricultural land.

Why has Tarchon been located on the other side of Little Bromley rather than elsewhere entirely?

Loss of agricultural land

Prime agricultural land including high value horticultural sites is being used for these developments instead of brownfield sites. This is likely to affect food security and prices which are already high.

Traffic and safety impacts

The proposals would result in an excessive amount of traffic on the rural roads around Little Bromley. These roads are currently used by cyclists, horse riders, runners, walkers, local residents and buses travelling to and from Manningtree.

The effects of this project cannot properly be understood without knowing how construction traffic and infrastructure associated with National Grid's proposals will interact with the proposed Five Estuaries,

North Falls and Tarchon projects.

Historical sites and heritage hedge

There is particular concern about the Little Bromley church and War Memorial which are a listed structures of special architectural or historic interest.

Opposite the War Memorial is a historic heritage hedge which also appears to be at risk of removal.

Noise and vibration

Document APP-256 identifies only five properties as having the potential to experience damage from construction noise and vibration – this cannot be true.

There are other properties within Little Bromley, including our Grade II listed house, whose lack of foundations and traditional construction makes it vulnerable to vibration damage.

To make matters worse, National Grid have recently changed the routing of the Permanent Access Road bringing it hundreds of metres closer to the majority of Little Bromley's homes on Shop Road and to our house on Ardleigh Road.

This will not only worsen the impact on vulnerable properties but also make life even more miserable for residents who will suffer disruption, noise, dust and other pollution. And this road will remain in place after construction has been completed.

Wildlife

Numerous native species will be adversely affected including buzzards, owls, bats, house martins, swallows, garden birds; hares, badgers, hedgehogs, newts and others.

Property values and compensation

We are also anxious about the effect of the proposals on our homes and property values.

Prices in Little Bromley have already been affected, with one resident reportedly reducing an asking price by approximately £150,000 and still being unable to sell.

Whether or not every individual loss can ultimately be attributed to the project, the concern is genuine and should not be dismissed.

There has also been insufficient clarity for affected residents regarding compensation. If residents and property owners suffer financial losses or are unable to sell their homes because of the development, there needs to be a clear, transparent and properly discussed compensation mechanism.

A few pounds off electricity bills is frankly insulting.

Conclusion

I am deeply concerned about the overwhelming scale of the proposed project in a small village of Little Bromley. The impacts cannot be considered in isolation from other proposed developments ie Five Estuaries, North Falls and Tarchon. This whole project will ruin Little Bromley and the surrounding countryside.

Mehboob Somani