

We have been totally against this disgusting project since the outset. There has been NO consultation. The decision to use old-fashioned, ugly, massive PYLONS was taken before any attempt at 'consultation'. It is NOT the most cost-effective, green or least impact solution. Under sea from the windmills, round the coast and into Tilbury is by far the better way.

So, the worst possible wrecking of beautiful East Anglia, along with disgusting solar farms, is to be our legacy for all future generations to wonder why. I live close enough to this scar on the landscape for my house to have devalued by circa 30% already. This will mean that many of us will be unable to move and will stagnate East Anglia to an area where nobody wants to live or visit. Every attempt the Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons Group have made to demonstrate the illegality of this project and dreadful effect on people's lives has been ignored and swept aside. Shame on all involved.

None of our concerns have been addressed, eg

How much compensation are National Grid proposing to pay to everyone whose property values will be affected?

What actions will National Grid take to eliminate:

danger to wildlife caused by the pylons?

destruction of habitat for small mammals, reptiles and birds?

potential damage to underground gas pipelines?

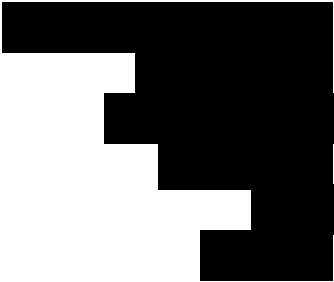
lack of access and traffic flow issues suffered by residents who would have no alternative routes during construction? For example, we are on a loop road - Chignal Road to Mashbury Road and, as the pylon route crosses the loop in 2 places, we will be unable to get out. NG has made no contact regarding this very concerning issue which they must know exists. NG has not answered our concerns about legal aspects (Gunning Principles for public consultation). They decided that pylons were the ONLY means of getting offshore electricity to users in London. No other means were ever presented, against the legal requirement that 'consultation must occur while proposals are still at a formative stage'.

Similarly, the Treasury Green Book has been disregarded by NG who appear to hold that this applies only to policies, not projects.

Furthermore, The Holford Rules are a set of guidelines for planning high-voltage overhead power lines to minimize their visual impact on the landscape. This has been ignored along with so many other considerations.

Through all of this, NG has made the process more and more difficult, confusing and unnecessarily technical, especially for older people who struggle with technology.

I will try to attach my submission of 26 November 2025 which I trust will be read.



The Planning Inspectorate
Norwich to Tilbury Project

26 November 2025

Registration ID no: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] (24 November 2025)

In trying to find the 'Comments Form' for this project, I had registered twice and then received another reference number by email. This is because I had spent a couple of hours trying to find the form, which doesn't seem to exist. As a result, I am sending my comments via email as an attachment.

Dear Sir/Madam

I support the Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons Action Group. Consultation has been legally deficient since 2022. No alternatives have been presented and we have not been listened to by National Grid.

1 Background Information

I have been totally against this project since the outset. There has been NO consultation. The decision to use old-fashioned, ugly, massive PYLONS was taken before any attempt at 'consultation'. It is NOT the most cost-effective, green or least impact solution. Under sea from the wind turbines, round the coast and into Tilbury is by far the better way.

So, if this were to proceed, the worst possible wrecking of beautiful East Anglia is to be our legacy for all future generations to wonder why. I live close enough to this scar on the landscape for my house to have devalued by 30% already. This will mean that many of us will be unable to move and will stagnate East Anglia to an area where nobody wants to live or visit. Every attempt the Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons Group has made to demonstrate the illegality of this project and dreadful effect on people's lives has been ignored and swept aside.

I am, therefore, writing to lodge my formal objection to National Grid's proposals for the new pylon run between Norwich and Tilbury, which would directly and severely impact Chignal Smealy Parish and the surrounding landscape.

2 Landscape

i Chignal Smealy is defined by its open views, rolling farmland, and the expansive 'big skies' that characterise this part of Essex and caused me to move here some 27 years ago. The proposed overhead pylons would cause irreversible harm to this unique rural setting. The sheer scale and height of the structures would dominate the skyline, being higher than any structure in the city of Chelmsford, fragmenting currently uninterrupted vistas that are central both to the parish's character and to the wellbeing of those who live here. Far from being 'NIMBY', I do not want these huge pylons ANYWHERE in East Anglia, which is one of the most beautifully unspoilt areas in the country so close to the capital City. It is disgusting to consider what our fabulous open skies and ancient landscapes would look like with these monstrous, ugly, old-fashioned contraptions that have been around for over 100 years and are currently being removed at a fast rate in numerous areas of Britain.

ii National Grid's interpretation of National Policy Statements (EN-5) set out the factors influencing site/route selection and the impacts and other matters which are specific to electricity networks infrastructure. Paragraph 2.8.2 of EN-5 states "at particularly sensitive locations the potential adverse landscape and visual impacts of an over head line proposal may make it unacceptable in planning terms, taking account of the specific local environment and context". The 'Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Report' Appendix D Baseline Overviews for Chelmsford section K conclude that 'no locally designated landscape is affected'. However, datasets relating to locally valued landscapes do not appear to have been considered in the GIS mapping nor has landscape character assessment data been reviewed. This is important because these assessments contain information on key characteristics, qualities and sensitivities, all of which inform an understanding of landscape value in our rural parishes.

Source: East Anglia Green Energy Enablement Consultation: Review of Consultation Documentation in relation to Sections K(ET1) and L (ET5)"

3 Proximity to houses and resultant property devaluation

My own home – a small 17th century cottage within the parish – has already suffered a substantial loss of value due to the proposal, with an estimated 30% devaluation directly attributed to the planned pylon route. This is not only

financially devastating, but deeply distressing for a long-standing resident who has cared for and invested in this property for many years. Unsurprisingly, this has seriously affected my health and I now suffer from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that I have never experienced in my life.

The prospect of immense steel structures visible from or imposed upon our homes fundamentally undermines the rural charm and environmental tranquillity that define this area. My cottage is less than 5m high, and we believe at least 9 of these 50m high pylons will be in our view.

4 Public Rights of Way

Chignal Smealy is to the west of the busy and rapidly expanding City of Chelmsford. Our countryside and lanes provide much needed relaxation, exercise and recreation for cyclists, runners, walkers, ramblers, horse riders. An opportunity to recharge and enjoy a number of footpaths and bridleways in the peace and tranquillity of a Parish which is a very short distance from the City. The visual impact and obtrusive noises created by huge pylons would destroy this.

Footpaths affected: Broomfield 4, 5, 9, 26; Chignal 11, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 37, 40, 41.

During the construction period there will be serious disruption, with some paths permanently altered. National Grid has issued no mitigation plans regarding this disruption, nor made reference to permanent alteration that will be required to rights of way. A number of these rights of way will intersect on the route, which will obstruct any possible alternatives for long periods during construction. Large areas of current leisure activities will be denied to local residents and the many visitors to the Chignals – but then who wants to include huge, ugly, buzzing and potentially dangerous pylons in their countryside walk?

5 Environment, habitat, species

The Project gives very little consideration to the impact of pylons on wildlife and biodiversity. The effects on larger birds, including feeding and hunting grounds, migration corridors and breeding grounds is considerable. Bird mortality can occur through collision with power lines and through electrocution from power lines or supporting structures. Research suggests that pylons, along with wind turbines, are having a devastating effect on death and injury to raptors.

Chignal Smealy is an important hunting and breeding ground for a wide range of raptors. Red Kites, Honey Buzzards, Marsh Harriers, Kestrels, Peregrine Falcons, Barn Owls, Tawny Owls and Little Owls are sighted regularly in the area. Swans and other large waterfowl are of particular concern for power line collisions. All

year-round large populations of greylag and Canada Geese and several Mute Swans graze on the banks of farm reservoirs and flooded gravel pits and fly in formation between these areas several times a day. Herons and Egrets also feed on lakes, rivers and ponds locally.

In addition to bird populations, there is numerous wildlife, including deer, smaller wild mammals and reptiles such as adders and crested newts. Their habitats will be destroyed and the damage done to the land will not be recoverable. There is no evidence of any surveying on behalf of National Grid having taken place.

6 Roads and access

Recently, we learnt that there were new maps and plans available to look at on a website. This also claimed to cover the 'how and when' of planned works taking place. For the lay person, this is a technological nightmare. We were actually unable to locate our house and the part of the road it occupies on the relevant map. The plethora of tiny print on various map keys and symbols is mind numbing. It is impossible to see whether or not there have been changes since the last maps we had sight of.

Information includes the facts that the A12 and other important local routes will be closed for the construction period. Due to the layout of immediate local exit roads it would appear that we will be unable to go anywhere while construction is taking place. For example, we are on a 'loop' road – Chignal Road to Mashbury Road' and, as the pylon route crosses the loop in 2 places, we will be unable to get out. National Grid has made no contact regarding this very concerning issue which they must know exists.

7 Legal aspects

A The **4 Gunning Principles** for Public Consultation have been breached:

i) Consultation must occur while proposals are still at a formative stage

National Grid had decided that pylons were the **only** means of getting offshore electricity to users in London. No other means were ever presented. "... the Project, including the proposed route corridor, had already been formulated, with by National Grid's own admission the exercise to be informed by consultation being merely one of 'back-checking'

ii) Sufficient information needs to be supplied for the public to give the consultation 'intelligent consideration'

National Grid did not arrange consultations, but presentations, with no opportunity for discussion or questions and answers. These meetings were little more than 'this is what we are going to do' sessions.

iii) **There needs to be adequate time for the consultees to consider the proposal and respond**

Throughout, time periods and deadlines were hopelessly inadequate for such a huge scale project that needed skills and abilities outside many residents' experience. It was also quite incredible how many so-called 'consultations' were during daytime, working hours and were held at out of the way places with inadequate signage and parking. It seemed to many that National Grid were going out of their way to make the process of involving the public as difficult as possible.

iv) **Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation response before decisions are made.**

Some minor 'tweaks' to the pylon route in some highly sensitive locations may have been made, but minimal response to the flawed consultation exercises have been received and there is little evidence of any views, feelings, or comments of residents being considered.

B The Treasury Green Book has been disregarded by National Grid, who appear to hold that this applies only to policies, not projects. However, legal advice has confirmed that 'Green Book Guidance applies to all proposals that concern public spending taxation, changes to regulations and changes to the use of existing public assets and resources.

The only tenable interpretation of the Green Book is that it applies to the consideration of projects, and not just policies.

C The Holford Rules

The Holford Rules are a set of guidelines for planning high-voltage overhead power lines to **minimize their visual impact on the landscape**. Key principles include **avoiding areas of high amenity value**, choosing the most direct routes to reduce the need for "angle towers," and using background features like trees and hills to break up the visual line of the pylons. **While originally focused on landscape, modern practice also emphasizes minimizing impact on residential areas and public rights of way.**

If there were absolutely no other solution than land-based overhead power lines (which there obviously is), then surely it would have been better to upgrade **existing power lines** than destroying such a valuable public asset as the East Anglian countryside.

D Health & Safety

National Grid have a 'Wellbeing and Health Policy', signed off by its Chief Executive. It is worth including here:

"As CEO, the wellbeing and health of every employee and of those who work on our behalf is very important to me. We should encourage open conversations about both mental and physical wellbeing to help us all spot the early signs that things might not be right. This will also enable us to respond and provide support to our colleagues who need help. We take our responsibilities for wellbeing and health very seriously. We will as a minimum, comply with our legal health monitoring and surveillance obligations.

Scope: Our Wellbeing and Health Policy applies to you if you are employed by, or carry out work on behalf of any National Grid business. All our employees shall work in accordance with this policy and our leaders shall ensure this policy is embedded across all levels of the organisation. We Commit to:

Identifying and responding to wellbeing and health risks

Ensuring early intervention and proactive management of wellbeing and health

Evaluating our performance to support continuous improvement"

At no stage in the so-called 'consultation' have we seen anything from National Grid that even mentions the effects of this project on the people whose lives, wellbeing and financial security will be changed for ever.

Inadequate information (none in fact) has been published about how we will cope during the lengthy construction period. The National Grid's virtuous wellbeing policy for employees is all well and good, but they have not even considered or bothered publishing a policy to safeguard the customer/consumer.

8 Finally

Under the current model, each wind farm connects to shore via a separate connection. This is the status quo modelled by National Grid ESO in 2020, which

does unacceptable damage to coastlines, communities and countryside – changing landscapes forever and destroying habitats.

As the need for grid capacity increases and if Net Zero is to be achieved by commissioning more offshore wind generation, there needs to be a more integrated approach to bringing power onshore. The piecemeal hooking up of cables wherever they can be landed is short sighted. There will have to be, in the not too distant future, have to be a more logical approach to connecting the wind generation fleet to the grid. This will require a subsea ring main which has not come into consideration. This would solve all problems, will future-proof the grid and dispense with the knee-jerk and ad-hockery that seems to be prominent in planning minds.

A better, co-ordinated approach ...

Long before the National Grid ESO report in 2020, cost savings of £3.5 billion from an integrated solution were found.

Offshore Future Transmission Network System (OFTNS) report 2011^{xxvii}

That cost saving rose to £5.6 billion by 2015. It was found that “In no circumstance does the radial-connection design offer economic advantage, even when coupled with an £870 onshore reinforcement package.” And that there were no technical barriers to an offshore transmission network.

Integrated Offshore Transmission Project (IOTP) in 2015

“This coordinated approach is likely to provide the highest degree of consumer, environmental and community benefits.”

Government, in its Draft National Policy Statement EN-1^{xxix}

Recommendation that the UK develops a strategy to coordinate interconnectors and offshore networks for wind farms and their connections to the onshore network, as part of its advice to ministers on the volume of greenhouse gases the UK can emit during the period 2033-2037.

The Climate Change Committee's Sixth Carbon Budget, published in December 2020 ^{xxx}

"As offshore wind continues to grow, more coordination is needed."

Daniel De Wijze, Policy Analyst at Renewable UK in a blog, 2021 ^{xxxi}

"Recommendations 1.4. Develop an offshore ring main for offshore wind farms."

1922 Backbench Committee on Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, January 2023

All this research and its findings have been dumped in favour of the current radial model which merely serves to enable National Grid to meet its targets for pylons – 19th century fixes for a 21st century project!

To the fury of residents and campaigners in the East of England, the entire region was 'scoped out' of the Holistic Network Design (HND) of summer 2022, run by the Government's Offshore Transmission Network Review panel.

That is despite all the acknowledged benefits of a coordinated offshore grid and the many harms resulting from the current radial model.

Consumers everywhere should be outraged. Government has ignored the financial benefit to consumers of offshore coordination.

Worse still, the HND only looks as far as 2030. Government is storing up problems, as wind farm output in the North Sea grows to 38GW by 2050, creating ever more pressure on the environment and communities.

The East of England HND must be re-run, this time meeting its own Terms of Reference (TOR), which require it to balance equally communities, environment, deliverability, and financial viability. By ignoring the first two of these and scoping out The East, the HND 2022 fails against its own terms.

In conclusion, I urge the planning authority to require National Grid to explore alternative solutions, including under-sea or undergrounding the transmission line along the entire route or adopting alternative strategic corridors that avoid

sensitive landscapes and residential areas. A project of this magnitude should not proceed at the expense of communities, heritage landscapes and residents' financial security when viable, less intrusive options exist.

The project ignores many legal requirements, as illustrated. For these reasons, I strongly oppose the current proposals and ask that the application be rejected unless and until a solution is brought forward that protects both the landscape and the people who live within it.

".... Well, I wouldn't want to live near one [pylon]" National Grid Senior Representative, overheard at Writtle (First 'Consultation' event).