

RAYDON PARISH COUNCIL

15 June 2022

National Grid
FREEPOST EAST ANGLIA GREEN

Dear Sirs

Green Energy Enablement Scheme

I am contacting you on behalf of Raydon Parish Council and the parishioners of Raydon, to raise their objections in relation to the proposals in the National Grid's Green Energy Enablement Scheme to upgrade the National Grid network to meet future supply distribution from offshore wind farms. and any increased demands for power upon the grid.

National Grid (NG) have notified those residents in the affected areas in Norfolk/Suffolk/Essex which include Raydon, Suffolk of their intentions to seek approval to install 180Kms of 50m high pylons, 300m apart carrying 400,000 volts via overhead power lines between Norwich and Tilbury, and have invited them to express their views and concerns. The Parish Council and parishioners of Raydon are extremely angry and outraged to have received this information out of the blue, having had NO previous notifications relating to this major project that would adversely affect their lives and wellbeing in so many ways.

This proposal identifies and provides very complex details for only one of three possible options:

1. **Overhead power lines supported by pylons - NG have supplied maps indicating a wide swath of land with no firm route being indicated;**
2. Underground cables - not considered an option;
3. Offshore cables - not considered an option.

NG have failed to apply the Gunning Principle which requires them to share their Design and Development principals for this scheme, nor have they had prior engagement with anyone who may be affected by this project, be it:

1. Raydon Parish Council
2. Raydon residents
3. Raydon Wings Airfield
4. Army Air Corp at Wattisham
5. Any organisation, council or resident across Norfolk/Suffolk/Essex

Natioanl Grid states that this upgrading is required as an integral part of the Government's Net Zero Green Energy Policy and is required primarily to serve the offshore wind farms in the North Sea off the coast of East Anglia. But by destroying the beautiful countryside across three counties, it must be considered anything but Green.

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The area identifies and details a wide swathe of countryside, but totally fails to take into account the following:

1. Effects upon the environment in all respects'
2. Devaluation of housing and property in general - many residents will see these pylons located closely to their homes and in full view;
3. Many buildings in the area, which are listed buildings, eg St Mary's church in Raydon dates back to the 14th century;
4. Loss of use and devaluation of arable farmland;
5. Loss of woodlands and hedgerows; it is stated that replanting will take place, but it will take years for any of the removed trees and hedgerows to grow back - and where the pylons are located, they will never be replanted;
6. Access restricted to the many public footpaths that cross the area;
7. Restricts flight path access to the Raydon Wings airstrip - an active airfield, designated as an emergency runway for light aircraft - the flight path would be compromised by the proposed pylon route;
8. Restricts Army Air Corp training flights in the skies over Raydon - low level training sorties night and day over and around Raydon and Holton St Mary;
9. It makes no mention of the Raydon WW2 airfield and the risks and dangers associated with how the land was utilised for fuel, ammunition dumps or any other associated high risk activities.

Furthermore, it has not properly detailed the negative impact on the local environment during the construction phase and maintenance stages for these pylons, which will be a further burden and impact upon the local population:

1. The requirement for numerous localised contractor support and project management compounds;
2. The construction of access roads and working platforms;
3. The increased levels of HGV traffic, heavy plant and cranes;
4. The damage to highways - the local highway infrastructure was never designed nor constructed to take the current volume of vehicles experienced today; the level of HGVs accessing the Notley Enterprise Park, local businesses and farms growing annually; the increased influx of heavy plant and HGVs delivering materials for construction will only make matters worse.

Finally, the impact of the current proposals upon the mental health and wellbeing of the local community has not been identified and / or mitigated against. Many of these will remain for life. They include, but are not limited to:

1. Stress - short and long term;
2. Health consequences - there remain unanswered debates about the risk of cancer and leukaemia in children from being exposed or close to high voltage overhead and underground cables;
3. Mental health - there will be increased levels of depression amongst those in close proximity;
4. Frustration and anger - it has been stated that this project is for the benefit of London, but only the local population will suffer the blight and hardship of having such a large and intrusive project on their doorstep.

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It is common knowledge - and there are many examples here in the UK - that NG are now installing cables offshore instead of overhead or underground. Many of these projects which supported pylons when presented to local communities were subsequently changed to offshore installations after taking into account public outrage. Furthermore, pylons located in Scotland have been removed in favour of laying the cables offshore.

It is a fact that National Grid (a private FTSE listed company) continues to make enormous profits, which is reflected in the dividends to their shareholders, many of whom are foreign investors. Instead, NG should be investing investing the profits in improving the distribution infrastructure in a sustainable and respectful manner.

NG continually states that this work is necessary in order to connect the incoming supplies from the various offshore wind farms, all are which are privately owned. It would therefore make sense that if these generation companies want to make a profit from the end users, they should also accept responsibility for the cost of the grid development instead of expecting the public to pay for it via the Government purse.

It also has to be said that the arrangement for the public consultation events in our local area were totally inadequate, NG having chosen the village hall in Holton St Mary. This location is quite small and beside a very busy road, with no dedicated parking. We are sure that many Raydon residents decided not to attend for those reasons and more consideration should have been given to providing a location with better facilities. It should also be recognised that no everyone in rural locations has a PC and that the local internet access is often very unreliable.

Furthermore, it is also important that NG recognises that this proposal does not just affect those of us in the parish of Raydon, as it extends to the wider population along the whole route from Norwich to Tilbury. Nobody wants to see the pylons blighting our lovely countryside; we already have enough of these ugly monstrosities and have no desire to see more.

There is a growing lobby both from MPs and other experts that recommends laying the cables offshore is a more practicable solution. Furthermore, there is evidence that a long term offshore distribution network circumnavigating the UK would bring savings of around £6 billion to the consumer. The public demands that this option is properly prepared and detailed so that we can all decide on what is the best option and not just what is considered the cheapest option for NG and its shareholders.

From the outset NG has failed to share its Design and Development principles for this scheme, which by law they are obliged to do in order to meet the requirements of the Gunning Principles.

The current proposal to install lattice pylons which have been around for over 60 years is considered totally unacceptable and a more sustainable and strategic solution must be sought. Only when NG has reassessed this project and provided details of ALL options, together with costings, can a public consultation be made. Until that happens, the deadline of 16 June 2022 must be extended indefinitely.

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In conclusion we, the Parish Council and the parishioners of Raydon, totally reject NG's current proposals to install these hideous pylons over or underground across much of East Anglia, and would reaffirm that the only option is to route these cables offshore, constructing a link from the wind farms direct to Tilbury.

Yours faithfully



Jane Cryer
Parish Clerk / Proper Officer

on behalf of Raydon Parish Council and parishioners

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