

Responses to East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) Consultation feedback form

About you

Your details

Title: **Mr**
First name: **Will**
Surname: **Adshead-Grant**
Organisation/group: **Great Waltham Parish Council**
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How would you describe your interest in East Anglia GREEN?

Statutory organisation

Please specify

Clerk to Great Waltham Parish Council

General

Q.1 *As part of the goal for delivering net zero carbon emissions in the UK by 2050, and the need to connect 40 GW of offshore wind energy by 2030 as part of this goal, do you agree with the identified need for East Anglia GREEN in upgrading the region's energy infrastructure?*

Neither agree nor disagree.

Policy context

Q.2 *How concerned are you about the following?*

The effect of climate change/global warming on your life.

Neutral.

The effect of climate change/global warming on the lives of future generations.

Neutral.

Q.3 *To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?*

The UK meeting its target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 is important to you.

Neither agree nor disagree.

With more renewable energy connection in East Anglia, it is important to reinforce the network between Norwich and Tilbury to enable this energy to be transported to where it is needed.

Neither agree nor disagree.

Having domestic energy sources and the associated infrastructure would help increase the UK's energy security.

Neither agree nor disagree.

Increasing our domestic renewable energy production and associated infrastructure would make us less reliant on imported oil and gas.

Neither agree nor disagree.

Our proposals

The preferred corridor

Q.4 We considered and assessed a number of options to select a preferred corridor. Do you agree with the process we have taken?

Strongly disagree.

Please indicate which local authority section(s) of the route your response relates to Chelmsford.

Please tell us the reason for your answer and if you think there is anything we should take into consideration when developing our plans.

See our comments in the response to Q.17. We are very concerned that you have only offered your pre-selected preferred transmission line route for public consultation. We regard this *fait accompli* approach as undemocratic and that the public should have the right to scrutinise all options. Therefore, a full and proper consultation should be conducted with every possible solution (such as offshore, overland along other routes or use of buried cables rather than pylons) presented in detail for public examination, comment and consent.

The graduated swathe

Q.5 *Please indicate which local authority sections(s) of the route your response relates to Chelmsford.*

Are there any features within the graduated swathe that you think we should take into consideration when developing our plans?

Given our absolute opposition to the proposed route in the first instance, our comments on the graduated swathe are in that sense hypothetical. That part of the proposed route which violates our parish fails to appreciate the harm it would do to the acknowledged green wedge between Great Waltham and Broomfield, takes no account of the special status of the Langleys estate and the location of the Scheduled Ancient Monument area in the Chelmer valley, means the likely removal of mature trees and would be far too close to residential properties. See our comments in full in our response to Q.17.

Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Q.6 *Please comment on any aspects of the routeing and mitigation that you would like to see in relation to our proposals through the AONB.*

We believe our parish is an area of outstanding natural beauty even though it does not have an official designation. However, like the Dedham Vale Area, your proposals for routeing and mitigation become academic with the adoption of another solution, such as offshore or along existing transmission line corridors. We do not accept the premise that your proposal is the only one which is viable.

Substations

The preferred substation site on the Tendring Peninsula

Q.7 *We considered and assessed a number of options to select a substation site. Do you agree with the process we have taken?*

Neither agree nor disagree.

Please tell us the reason for your answer and if you think there is anything we should take into consideration when developing our plans.

We do not have sufficient local knowledge to offer a definitive view, but suspect that many of our comments in response to Q.17 would be applicable as much on the Tendring Peninsula as in our parish.

Q.8 *Please comment on any aspects of the site and/or areas of mitigation that you would like to see in relation to our proposals for a new connection substation.*

We have no comments.

Q.9 *Associated work at existing substations*

Please indicate which substation your response relates to
[To be left unanswered].

Is there anything that you think we should consider in relation to this work?

We have no comments.

Other considerations

Refining our proposals

Q.10 *Are there any particular features, considerations or mitigation that you think we should consider as we refine our proposals?*

See our comments in the response to Q.17.

Q.11 *Are there any other considerations we should take into account when developing our proposals?*

See our comments in the response to Q.17.

Our consultation process

Q.12 *Please let us know how you heard about this consultation by ticking one or more of the following boxes:*

Received information from a local authority.

Informed by a local elected representative.

Saw coverage in local and/or national media.

Saw social media coverage.

Word of mouth.

Q.13 *Please rate the information included in our consultation materials in terms of how clearly it was presented and how easy it was to understand:*

Good

Reasons for answer

The presentation of information was clear, we just happen to fundamentally disagree with its content and underlying assumptions.

Q.14 *Please rate how well this consultation was promoted and advertised to the public:*

Good

Reasons for answer

While we do not like or agree with the messages being delivered, we acknowledge that they have been well communicated.

Q.15 *Did you attend one of our face-to-face or online consultation events?*

Yes.

Q.16 *If you answered yes to question 15, how informative did you find our consultation events?*

Quite informative

Q.17 *Do you have further comments about our materials, consultation process or any suggestions for how we can improve our consultation?*

Great Waltham Parish Council – Statement to the East Anglia GREEN project on its Consultation, April 2022

- 1. Great Waltham Parish Council (“Council”) welcomes the opportunity to comment on National Grid’s proposals to reinforce the high voltage electricity transmission network between Norwich, Bramford and Tilbury, as well as a proposed connection substation to connect new offshore wind generation, under its East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) project. We understand that new overland transmission lines are being proposed for the majority of the route, carried by large, visually intrusive latticed metal pylons.**
- 2. We see that part of the proposed graduated swathe for the lines slices across a section of our parish, entering across the River Chelmer from the parish Little Waltham, just south of the Langleys estate, then across fields before going over Chelmsford Road somewhere between its junction with the B1008 and the Rose and Crown public house, across Lark’s Lane and fields to the south of Broad’s Green, and then into the parish of Broomfield either across or to the west of the ancient woodland of Sparrowhawk Wood (as named in OS Explorer 1:25,000 Map 183). The lines would seem to be very close to – and even possibly above – a number of properties (some both historic and listed) along Chelmsford Road, Lark’s Lane and in Broad’s Green.**
- 3. The route would be framed within the view east from the village of Great Waltham, Langleys estate, several listed buildings and a popular pub. The health and mental wellbeing of the residents will be compromised by this unnecessary violation of the vista they currently enjoy.**
- 4. You may be unaware that the proposed swathe would pass through an area which has over several decades been protected from development by Chelmsford City Council. The valley of the River Chelmer is considered to be a ‘green lung’ into the heart of Chelmsford and the area between Broad’s Green and Broomfield Hospital is considered to be a ‘green wedge’ with the countryside protected from further urban expansion.**
- 5. The swathe cuts through a narrow area between Great Waltham and Little Waltham and in doing so has to span a unique row of 16 poplar trees which have been there for decades and are a major characteristic of the route along Chelmsford Road. They are taller than the height of pylon wires and it is difficult to see how the span of wires between the pylons could weave**

through them without necessitating some removal. These poplars are a mainstay of the character of the area.

6. Also, you may be unacquainted with the of the nature of the Langleys estate and its associated parkland. The estate has medieval origins along with much of the ancient woodland. Multi-period archaeological deposits are known from the zone from the Neolithic through to the 2nd World War. The nearby village of Great Waltham itself has evidence of occupation from the Roman period onwards. Langleys is a 17th century grade 1 listed house. The estate visible today dates at least to the thirteenth century with the parkland and house coming under the ownership of the Langleys estate in the 14th century. Elements of woodland shown on the first edition OS survive within the present landscape along with much of the original parkland. It is possible that earthworks would survive within these woodlands. If implemented, your proposal would disfigure this ancient landscape.
7. We assume you will have studied Chelmsford City Council's *Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2018-2036* which states that '*heritage resources often coincide with biodiversity and recreational interests, including Hylands Park and Danbury Palace and Langleys (all Registered Parks and Gardens), Conservation Areas along the Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation, Danbury and the Walthams*', although your proposal to site transmission lines so close to Langleys and across the parishes of Great and Little Waltham perhaps suggests otherwise. The same Plan also confirms that there are 'designated biodiversity resources across the City Council area, [with] notable clusters around [the Walthams]'. Again, your proposals seem the very type of development that the Plan, for all the reasons it was agreed and implemented, was designed to ensure do not take place.
8. This part of the Chelmer Valley is of significant archaeological importance. Stone Age artefacts have been recovered on the banks of the River Chelmer near Chatham Green. Evidence was found of a late Iron Age settlement dating between 300-100 BCE. During the Roman occupation of Britain, from 43-410 CE many Roman roads were built, one of which (now the B1008), passes through the parish from Dunmow connecting south of the parish with a second Roman road (now the A131), leading to Chelmsford (then Caesaromagus).
9. Elsewhere along the significant cropmarks have been revealed with numerous finds made of multi-period date. Major excavations took place along the valley when the Great Leighs bypass was constructed revealing a Middle to Late Iron Age village. Finds of Bronze Age pottery hint at prehistoric activity and a major Middle Iron Age settlement has been excavated to the north of Little Waltham. The area of excavation lay beneath the present Little Waltham bypass with the remaining area of the field which survives now protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument – your proposed swathe cuts across this area of land. Nearby, Roman settlement and an associated cemetery close to the Roman road has been recorded. Occasional chance finds such as that of a Saxon spearhead close to the river suggest further archaeological potential for this period. The river valley has potential for the preservation of environmental and palaeo-environmental deposits surviving in waterlogged deposits. We believe the unique characteristics of our part of the Chelmer Valley make it an entirely unsuitable site for an electricity transmission lines corridor.

10. Furrther west, towards our boundary with Broomfield Parish Council, the proposed pylon route comes near to the KEGS playing field. There would be concerns about high balls hitting the wires.
11. Given the very special nature of this part of our parish, the Council and, we believe, Great Waltham residents in general, have been shocked and dismayed by your proposals. We pride ourselves on the beauty and heritage of our parish and find it impossible to regard placing a horrific scar across our part of the countryside as anything other than a gratuitous violation of both.
12. We remain fully supportive of the concept of North Sea wind farms to generate abundant, cheap, clean electricity, and furthermore we understand that recent increases in energy prices, coupled with the global insecurity of energy supplies gives added impetus to this strategy. However, this must never be at the expense of permanently disfiguring our landscape and its environment. It seems ironic that with so much trouble having been taken to install unsightly power generation facilities off-shore there is an apparent zeal to now tarnish the landscape with ugly transmission lines.
13. We have consulted the literature produced by the project, but we are very concerned that the consultation's starting point is to seek views on a single overland route, rather than one where all options remain on the table. The Council's preferred options are for either offshore cabling or integration along existing transmission line corridors to be used to transmit power from the generation sites. These may have technological and financial challenges, but they would avoid the need for blighting yet more countryside with hundreds of extra pylons and reduce environmental damage and disruption.
14. We believe that for any initial consultation to be valid it must ask seek views on all possible solutions, notwithstanding any technological and/or financial challenges – we may not be experts ourselves, but we feel we have a right for our voices and opinions to be heard on all alternatives, not just one presented as a fait accompli. In the circumstances, we feel your current consultation falls well short of the standards the public can reasonably expect. On that basis, we demand that National Grid holds a proper public consultation on all options, including the offshore route and the use of existing corridors, with full details and costings being made available for public scrutiny.
15. Be assured, this Council will continue to lobby your organisation and the Government to ensure that all necessary infrastructure upgrades are delivered in sustainable ways, but this must not be at the cost of ruining the Essex countryside with another pylon route.

Equality and diversity

Q.18 What is your gender?
Prefer not to say

Q.19 Do you consider yourself a person with a disability?
Prefer not to say

Q.20 How would you describe your ethnic background?
Prefer not to say

Q.21 What is your age?
Prefer not to say