

**Hintlesham & Chattisham Parish Council Draft Response to Bramford to Twinstead Upgrade
Consultation. September 8th 2022 to October 19th 2022.**

The Consultation Process;

Our response will be in two parts. The first part will comment on the adequacy of the consultation and the second part will comment on the PC'S preferred options.

Although the Consultation started on 8th September 2022 and ends on 19th October 2022, as of the 12th October, none of the households in the following post codes; IP8 3PA, IP8 3NX, IP8 3NY; have received documentation from National Grid informing them of said consultation. All of these addresses, of which there are over 20 properties, are well within 1 kilometer of Hintlesham Woods, and most are directly facing it.

Most of these homes will be greatly affected by the 3 year plus construction programme, which will inevitably result in homes becoming unsaleable during this period.

Although the Parish Council met with the National Grid team prior to the start of the Consultation, there have been no face to face open meetings or even webinars, for residents of Hintlesham to attend.

Indeed, most residents have only learned of the consultation when informed by members of the Parish Council.

Once again, the amount of detail on National Grid's website has been very poor. Maps have been too small, they have been lacking in detail, to the extent that they do not display roads in the area, they do not explain where new trackways will be constructed, and most importantly, they do not show positions of new pylons. Much of the detail on plans is also unexplained, with large areas of the DCO limit having no explanation as to why the boundaries are where they are.

All in all the feeling is that information has not been made sufficiently accessible for residents to make an informed decision on such an important matter.

As has been previously mentioned, the topic of tourism had already been scoped out of this consultation, even though it generates over £2 Billion per year in Suffolk, and is the main income provider for several businesses in the area.

The Options;

Unlike the majority of the route (which already has two existing pylon lines) the first 6 kilometres from Bramford Substation is at present a single line of 440kv pylons.

Most of this 6 km is in Hintlesham, including Grade 1 listed Hintlesham Hall and Grade 11 listed College Farm, Park Farm, Normans Farm, Mill Farm and Old Hall Farm. In addition, there are several period houses that are not listed, but which will be impacted by this proposal. There will be a significant impact on Heritage Assets.

To add a new parallel line of large pylons would obviously have a greater cumulative effect in this area than anywhere else on the proposed route, especially with the back drop of the Bramford Substation which further industrializes the rural setting, an area which is designated a Special Landscape Area, and which will be further developed with the EA Green Project.

This is a prime reason why **undergrounding** should have been a major consideration on this section of the route. This is particularly important given the proposed EA Green project which will further add to the wirescape in the area. It is recognised by NG that the landscape is at "saturation point" already, before the addition of these new lines. To underground a section from the substation to the Hintlesham Wood area

would help to mitigate the impact on the saturated landscape whilst also benefiting surrounding houses and businesses.

Hintlesham has many tourism related businesses which will be negatively impacted by the proposed line, including The Lost Garden Retreat, the award winning Suffolk Escape, College Farm B&B, Hintlesham Hall and Hintlesham Hall Golf club which also runs a wedding venue and is a significant employer in the village. The impact on these businesses both during and more importantly after construction will be significant and has the potential to jeopardise the viability of some of these businesses in the future.

National Grid's Option One: for a pylon line around Hintlesham/Rams Wood will see 6 new pylons and 2.5 km of electric cable in an area where there are currently no pylons at all. This will be in addition to the existing pylons at either end of this route option before the lines go around the wood. This will create an industrial wirescape in an open field, and will be in closer proximity to a number of residents. It will have a major negative impact on property values, and in consequence will have a negative impact on residents well being and the right to enjoy a family life.

National Grid's Option 2 (a parallel line over sailing Hintlesham Wood) would be a better option.

It is important to stress, that the technology for oversailing cables is well known and widespread, and it is critically important that National Grid state this in their Development Consent Order.

Both from a cost and an engineering point of view, with it being 700 metres shorter and easier and cheaper to build. The simpler construction process will also mean a significantly quicker construction phase, with the impact on the residents and business of the area being reduced.

There will be only 3 new pylons in the field north of Hintlesham Wood, and no new pylons in the wood itself. It would only require some height reduction of the existing tree canopy and not the clearing of a new pathway through the wood.

This is a big improvement on the industrial outlook caused by Option One.

OPTION 2 also has less intrusive pylon positioning for Hintlesham Hall, Hintlesham Golf Club and especially the 16 houses along the A1071.

The current cleared area through Hintlesham Wood has actually been a proven benefit for the breeding of Nightingales and other bird species, as they require a scrubland next to their nesting area.

It is unlikely that more cables over the wood will have a detrimental effect on wildlife, in fact it will achieve many of the management prescriptions Natural England favour in the management of the SSSI – diversity of height of trees, varying habitat, clearings- all of which will encourage additional flora and fauna to the woods.

For all these reasons, Option 2 is the choice of Hintlesham & Chattisham Parish Council for a new pylon line, in the absence of undergrounding.

However, the Parish Council would urge National Grid to undertake all appropriate surveys in Hintlesham Woods as soon as possible.

Finally, we feel that National Grid will need to improve their communications with local residents and businesses over the next few years when considering issues such as the impact of construction traffic, the impact on tourism both during and after construction and the impact on the well being of residents which has been detrimentally affected over the last 12 years of this process.