

**Hintlesham & Chattisham Parish Council Response to Bramford to Twinstead Upgrade  
Consultation. January 24<sup>th</sup> to March 21<sup>st</sup> 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 24th January 2022 there have been no face to face public meetings held in the Community Hall until Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March, just 17 days until the end of the consultation on the 21st March 2022. Furthermore the Parish Council has not been offered a face to face meeting, and have had to book an Ask the Expert session instead.

Suffolk County Council made this point in their submission, and also expressed disappointment that NG declined to attend a public meeting that SCC had organised at the Stoke by Nayland Hotel, even though they had been offered several dates to choose from.

National Grid has stated that they have been constrained by Covid 19 regulations, but this Parish Council has held live meetings since last October, and it feels that NG could have made a greater effort if it suited them.

The amount of detail in documents provided by NG 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 show new pylon positions and they do not explain where new trackways will be constructed.

There is a general feeling that webinars held by NG did not answer many questions put by residents and that the meetings had been manipulated by NG to answer questions that suited them.

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

Finally, the topic of tourism had already been scoped out of this consultation, even though it generates over £2 Billion per year in Suffolk.

**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

This is a prime reason why **undergrounding** should take place on this section of the route.

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 Grids 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. The impact on the landscape and also the closer proximity to residents will be significant.

National Grids Option 2 (a parallel line over sailing Hintlesham Wood) would be a better option, 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 no new pylons in the wood and it would only require some height reduction of the existing tree canopy and not the clearing of a new pathway through the wood.

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.