



MENDLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Statutory Consultation in response to the National Grid's Proposal to erect 50m pylons from Norwich to Tilbury.

General

The Parish of Mendlesham consists of three population areas. Mendlesham itself, Mendlesham Green and Tan Office. At the Census of 2021 it was recorded that the Parish has a population of 1551.

The Parish is in a rural setting and has a mixture of new housing developments, traditional houses and a conservation area in the centre of Mendlesham village. The Parish is surrounded by good quality agricultural land that produces crops with some grazing land.

The Parish has a Primary School with an award winning Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Unit attached to it.

There is a Village Shop, a Health Centre, two places of worship, a number of independent businesses and a pub.

The views of the Mendlesham Parish

An open meeting was held on the 23rd May 2024 hosted by Mendlesham Parish Council with speakers from both District and County Councils and a local farmer. This panel were able to address issues raised by the audience that were numerous and varied in content.

There was a vote at the end of the meeting and it was evident that the parishioners were unanimously against the the construction of pylons in and around the Parish.

Views and Concerns of the Parishioners

- It was generally accepted that the current Climate Emergency warrants a change from oil and gas as energy providers to greener alternatives through the electricity infrastructure.
- Existing pylons have recently been updated which run parallel to the proposed pylons. If new pylons were proposed why was this necessary?
- Thirteen 50m pylons are proposed running through the Parish. Numbers 133 – 145, that will be twice the height of our village church. There is no information available as to where proposed substations will be located.
- The Parish is accessed by minor roads and country lanes. It is proposed that roads could be widened or new haul roads developed to allow access to the construction sites. This will facilitate lorries transporting soil removal and bringing in ballast during the construction of these roads and the foundations for the pylons. This will also include transporting the parts required for the pylons, cables, etc. If the pylons are 360m apart x 8m for the width of the haul road this equals 2880 square metres. If 20 ton lorries are used that will equal 100.7 loads of ballast. As we have 13 pylons proposed this will mean 1310 lorry loads just for the haul roads then the same again to remove it all at the end of construction. This figure does not include the stone needed to make a work base around every pylon, or lorries to bring earth movers, pipes for ditches, clay removal, concrete for pylon legs, wood from trees and hedges, steel, wire and so much more. The haul roads could be down for 2-3 years. The land, in the meantime, will be squashed and become anaerobic and will in effect be 'dead' thus no longer suitable to be returned to precious agricultural land.
- It is of concern that as a result of these constructions there will be a loss of habitats for flora and fauna. We note that the project is indicating a -6% biodiversity nett gain for area habitat units. We expect the mandatory +10% biodiversity nett gain through offsite measures.

- It would appear that the comparison costs of the 3 alternatives (over ground, underground or under the sea) for the project have not been made. It is therefore not evident that erecting pylons is a cheaper option. This would appear to be a major flaw in the project. It is important to note that the National Grid's High Voltage Direct Current Electricity Technical Information figures show that HVDC undergrounding is cost equal or cheaper than the pylon option.
- Only 20% of the electricity generated by this proposal will be used in East Anglia the rest will be consumed in the Midlands and the London area. If the government would agree to a longer timescale then cables under the sea with underground spurs used to transfer the power to where it is needed. This will be a preferable option.
- There does not seem to be a comprehensive plan in respect of financial compensation for farmers, local businesses home owners (2 houses will be only a few yards away from a proposed pylon making it impossible to sell their properties) and renters. This is contrary to the Human Rights Act 2014 – protection of property (Compensation).
- Health issues have also been raised in respect of the effects of electromagnetic radiation and noise pollution for those living near to the pylons. There will also be a significant increase in CO2 emissions as a result of the number of lorries involved in the construction and 'making right' of the haul roads and pylon installation.

In conclusion, the residents of Mendlesham Parish strongly oppose the National Grid's proposal to erect thirteen 50m pylons in our area as part of the Norwich to Tilbury Project.

Bearing in mind past infrastructure projects supported by the government we do not want this to become the HS2 of East Anglia. That is over-budget, taking many years to construct or being aborted before completion with additional compensation costs ensuing.

Helen J Orton

Chair of Mendlesham Parish Council

07/07/2024