

National Grid (Norwich to Tilbury) Development Consent Order (Application Reference EN020027):

Representation by Ingatestone & Fryerning Parish Council

Ingatestone & Fryerning Parish Council wishes to register a formal objection to the above application and to make the following representation.

Summary of objection

We recognise the national need to upgrade electricity transmission infrastructure. However, we strongly oppose the proposed use of overhead transmission lines supported by large lattice pylons through Ingatestone & Fryerning parish and the surrounding landscape. The proposed 50-metre lattice structures would cause unacceptable and irreversible harm to the character, views and heritage of the Wid Valley and adjacent areas. We believe viable, less damaging alternatives exist—specifically offshore routing, undergrounding, or use of lower-impact pylon designs such as the T-ylon—and request that these options be given proper, transparent consideration.

Grounds of objection

1. Severe landscape and visual harm

The Wid Valley east of Ingatestone is an area of exceptional natural beauty within the parish. The introduction of 50-metre lattice pylons (pylons TB187–TB199) would dominate views, fragment the skyline and substantially erode the peace and character of open valley landscapes. The cumulative visual effect—given the current scarcity of overhead lines in this locality—would be particularly damaging.

2. Heritage and local amenity impacts

The scale and industrial appearance of traditional lattice pylons would be discordant with local historic and rural settings and would harm the enjoyment of public rights of way, conservation areas and the wider setting of heritage assets.

3. Failure to give adequate weight to less intrusive alternatives

National Grid appears to have dismissed offshore or underground cable routing primarily on cost grounds. While cost is a material consideration, the Council cannot accept cost alone as a sufficient justification for proposals that will cause significant and permanent damage to valued local landscapes and heritage. Likewise, the dismissal of modern, lower-impact pylon designs—most notably the award-winning T-ylon—has not been adequately justified.

4. Evidence supporting lower-impact pylon designs

The T-ylon is substantially shorter than traditional 400kV lattice pylons, has a smaller footprint and a contemporary form that is less intrusive in the landscape. National Grid's own material acknowledges that the T-ylon's lower height and design would reduce visibility to sensitive receptors in areas such as Ingatestone. The Council considers the deployment of T-pylons in the sensitive Wid Valley section (TB187–TB199) to be a proportionate and reasonable mitigation measure.

Request to the Planning Inspectorate

Given the significant landscape, visual and heritage harm that the proposed lattice pylons would cause, we respectfully request that the Planning Inspectorate:

1. Instruct National Grid to produce a clear, comparative appraisal that transparently assesses offshore routing, undergrounding and lower-impact overhead alternatives (including T-pylons), with full cost-benefit and environmental impact analysis specific to the Wid Valley and other sensitive sections; and
2. Require National Grid to demonstrate why, if at all, T-pylons and other less intrusive technologies are not suitable for pylons TB187–TB199 and other sensitive locations, rather than relying on high-level cost arguments alone.

Conclusion

Ingatestone & Fryerning Parish Council accepts the need for improved transmission capacity, but not at the expense of permanent and avoidable damage to local landscapes, heritage assets and community amenity. We ask the Inspectorate to ensure that the Secretary of State and National Grid properly and transparently consider offshore routing, undergrounding and T-pylon alternatives before any consent is granted for traditional lattice overhead infrastructure through this parish.