



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25TH MAY 2022
IN THE NEW VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM**

Those present:

Cllr M Mead (Chairman)
Cllr L Williams
+ 11 members of the public

Welcome from the Chairman of the Parish Council

The Chairman welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the meeting.

Questions and Comments

East Anglia GREEN Pylons Project

One member of the public read out a statement concerning the East Anglia GREEN project (please see Appendix A). They have started a local campaign against the project and asked the Parish Council to help raise awareness among the residents of Great Horkelesley.

During further discussion on the East Anglia GREEN project, the following points were raised:

- Some residents of Little Horkelesley have formed an Action Group to respond to the proposal. They have a meeting tomorrow night and are expecting a large number of people to attend.
- Many people living in Great Horkelesley and within the 'purple swathe' on the map provided by National Grid have not received information about the project and are still unaware of what it entails. People living in neighbouring villages, outside of the 'purple swathe' have not been notified about the project at all.
- Although National Grid have proposed to bury the wires underground through the AONB, many people do not realise that this means a trench 100m wide will need to be dug in order for them to be buried, and the wires will then be only a couple of metres under foot.
- The planned position of the pylons may restrict the approach to Nayland Airfield.
- The Off-Shore Electricity Grid Task Force (OffSET), opposing the East Anglia GREEN project, is chaired by local MP Sir Bernard Jenkin.
- County Councillor Lewis Barber has contacted Parish Councils across his division asking for their support in co-signing a joint letter against the proposal.
- Fordham Parish Council have published a letter of objection to the proposal.

- As the pinch point of the 'purple swathe' is in Great Horkesley, it is thought that if the argument to not have the pylons go through Great Horkesley is strong enough, then the whole proposal will fall apart.

Development Around Great Horkesley Manor

One member of the public asked for an update on the development.

The Chairman explained that he had recently met with the developers, who apologised for the way they went ahead with their original consultation. The Chairman said that the developers have changed the design in response to the concerns that were put forward about the original plans and are making personal contact with residents on Ivy Lodge Road, who will be most affected by the new development. A new planning application is expected by the end of June.

Neighbourhood Plan

One member of the public asked if Great Horkesley has a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Chairman confirmed that there is a Neighbourhood Plan Group working on a Neighbourhood Plan for Great Horkesley, but it takes time to get one in place.

Speed Limits Through Great Horkesley

One member of the public asked if the 30mph speed limit on the A134 could be extended through the North of the village.

The Chairman confirmed that The Highways Agency is responsible for determining speed limits and it is very difficult to get these changed, however the Parish Council is making note of any road traffic accidents that take place in the village so this can be used when proposing changes to current speed limits and road layouts.

Chairman's Closing Remarks

The Chairman encouraged people to step up and consider taking on a Parish Councillor role, as there are currently vacancies on Great Horkesley Parish Council. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.33pm

APPENDIX A – Statement from Mr. Mark Putnam regarding the East Anglia GREEN Project

Good evening everyone.

My name is Mark Putnam and I am assisting on the main campaign opposing East Anglia Green. I live in Great Horkesley with my wife and 1 year old daughter. We live right on the narrow pinch point where these giant pylons will be coming into our village.

I am aware that not everybody received communications from the National Grid and may be hearing about this for the first time. Essentially a new 400,000 volt power line is planned to be built between Norwich and Tilbury. It will carve its way through three counties along a 180 km route. The power lines will be supported by giant 50m tall pylons every 300 to 350 meter along the route with buried cables through the Dedham AONB (with trenches up to 100m wide which can take the landscape a decade or more to recover). To put the scale of these monster pylons into perspective, each is higher than 10 double decker busses stacked on top of each other.

The pylons will be on the land opposite, to the rear and on the narrow strip of land, known as a pinch point, adjacent to my family's home. This means a pylon could be erected within just a few meters of my infant daughter's bedroom. There is no minimum distance a pylon can be built from a person's home. The pylons will massively devalue our home, and it is, even now, not possible to sell it. If this goes ahead our home will be worth less than our mortgage and we will be trapped. My biggest concern however is that the 400,000 volt power lines give off electromagnetic fields which studies have linked to a potential increased risk in diseases including, but not limited to brain tumours and childhood leukaemia. SAGE advised the government that new schools and homes should not be built within 60m of them due to the evidence. Whilst other papers dismiss this, there is no clear cut answer. Essentially we are trapped, unable to move and we fear for the health of our one year old daughter.

This is just the impact on one family and there will be thousands in similar situations throughout the counties. You may think this will not affect you. The reality is that **WILL** affect you, albeit possibly to a lesser extent than others.

Let us be clear. The pylons will bring no positive benefits to anyone in Great Horkesley, only negatives. It is important that we all know what these negatives are.

ALL of OUR properties will be devalued to some degree, even if you live at the other end of the village. People do not want to live in a village where giant electricity pylons dominate the skyline. I speak as a former estate agent with over 15 years in the industry. The whole village will be tarnished. Perhaps your home is your children's inheritance or perhaps you planned to sell and retire abroad, or perhaps downsize to a bungalow? This affects us all.

In addition to our skylines, our countryside will be blighted by these giant pylons. As part of my work with the campaign, I have been trying to establish how far away the pylons are visible from. The furthest we have seen so far was over 5 miles away.

The proposal would see an access road built along the route to enable heavy plant machinery, trucks and cranes access to erect this procession of pylons with temporary storage yard sites too. This will further destroy the ever dwindling habitat of our wildlife such as hedgehogs who's numbers have decreased by over 50% since the year 2000. It will also cause unquantifiable chaos for traffic along a major traffic route, The A134 for potentially months at a time.

Already, this proposal has caused mental health issues for thousands of people along the 180km proposed route with the potential to trap families like my own, in a position potentially damaging to their health.

With my involvement in the campaign I have received so many messages from people telling me how this has impacted their mental health and their lives.

“I am already suffering badly from the stress and worry of now owning an unsalable property. My whole life’s work is invested in it. I have to sell, it is my pension. I have planned this my whole life. I have nothing else and National Grid have just snatched my future from me. I am normally a strong person, but I am broken by this, sick with fear and worry of what I'm going to do.”

This is one of dozens of messages I have received or seen posted on the group. The national grid sent out letters, or rather letter bombs that have blown up people’s lives, threatening the life sum of their work. They only notified people however within the purple swath and within a 1km radius. This despite the fact that they can be seen for miles around.

The consultation, if you can call it that, offers one option across a relatively narrow swathe. For Great Horkesley, we haven’t even been given that. It’s a forgone conclusion; this is where it will have to go. That is not a consultation.

So these are the key impacts this will have on our lives and our village. Now I would like to briefly talk about the campaign that is running to try to stop this.

Firstly, we are not saying “Not in My Back Yard” we are saying not in Anybody’s Back Yard. We are pushing for an offshore subsea cable to run around the East Anglia coast on the sea bed and up the Thames estuary. An offshore grid. This subsea cable method has been used on numerous electricity transmission projects including the north sea link. This would mean that it would not destroy any countryside, it would not devalue anybody’s home or reduce a child’s future inheritance. It would not put thousands of families into a state of fear for their children’s health, basically it would not destroy people’s lives along a 180km route through three counties! The national Grid has admitted that an offshore grid could save consumers an estimated 6 BILLION POUNDS and would have significant environmental and social benefits.

So far the Pylons East Anglia action group secured over 12,000 signatures on its petition opposing this nightmare and proposing an offshore solution. It now has thousands of members on its facebook group. It is a limited company and will soon have a bank account to allow crowd funding and donations.

This project would call for approximately 500 steel pylons, each of which would need approximately 25 tonnes of galvanised steel! They would need hundreds of thousands of tonnes of concrete for all the foundations! They will have to build a 180 km temporary access road for diesel gluing plant machinery! There will be mass destruction of wildlife habitat and treasured ancient landscapes! And they have the cheek to call this green? I hope members of the council will agree that there is a need to raise awareness of this issue to the WHOLE of the village and to offer assistance to those who may not have the technological knowhow on how to voice their feedback to National Grid on this matter.

I firmly believe that the vast majority of villagers are either unaware of this project or are simply unaware of the impacts it will have on people’s lives. I am therefore forming the “Save Great Horkesley” local action group which will be working closely with the Little Horkesley action group. I am doing so with the aim of raising awareness of this nightmare proposal, to raise awareness of the Campaign fighting it and to inform people what they can do to help stop it.

We need to get together and establish the best arguments against this proposal from the villages perspective. As part of my work on the main campaign I have designed leaflets which, I have now adapted a version for my fellow residents of Great Horkesley. I have ordered 1,000 leaflets and a number of window posters to help raise awareness of what is happening, the problems it brings, the alternative solution as proposed by the campaign and what individuals can do to help stop this. If anyone here is interested in getting updates and advice on the local campaign please see me afterwards and add your email to the email list on the clipboard.

ALSO I am also seeking volunteers to give as much or little time to help raise awareness of this and again ask that they add their email to the list also.

In closing ...

We cannot stand by as our countryside is scarred for generations to come under the false umbrella of being “Green”. The energy from wind farms may be green but leaving a 180 km trail of destruction through the countryside of Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk is certainly not.

We cannot accept the decimation of people’s lives, their property values, their mental and potentially physical health as the price of bringing green energy into the grid in this environmentally destructive way, when an offshore solution would avoid this.

I hope the members of the council will join me in condemning this outdated, archaic proposal from National Grid that holds no regard for the people’s lives that it will ruin. I hope they will do so without reservation and that their response to the proposal will be robust and reflect our anger accordingly.

I would also ask the parish council for your expressed support for the campaign and that you confirm this to local councillors, Colchester planning authorities and MP’s on a written statement.

Thank you for your time.