

Motion referred from Council: The Impact of Pylons on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The motion below was approved and adopted at the Council meeting on 19 July 2023. As the subject matter relates to an executive function and the motion informs Cabinet of Council's view, it is referred to Cabinet to consider further.

The Impact of Pylons on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

This Council notes:

- 1. The pride, affection and enjoyment with which residents and visitors have towards our local beauty spots and their tranquillity.*
- 2. National Grid are seeking to transport electricity across East Anglia via pylons which would have a dramatic impact on our residents, especially those living in Langham, Boxted, Fordham, Great Horkesley, Little Horkesley, West Bergholt, Aldham, Marks Tey and beyond.*
- 3. Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex have some of the most beautiful landscapes in the UK, immortalised by painters such as John Constable RA, as such these 50 metre high pylons are incompatible with these landscapes and challenge our revered 'big skies'.*
- 4. The Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which is a protected landscape, has been singled out as an area for power cables to be laid underground but this is only being considered on the basis of the defined area of the AONB. Topographical considerations close to the AONB appear not to have been considered and you will be able to see these pylons from within the AONB.*

Furthermore, the setting of the AONB will be compromised with the 'sealing-end compounds' (electrical sub-stations) as well as the installation of inspection pits.
- 5. The construction of the pylons and associated hardware will have a detrimental impact on our overburdened rural road infrastructure; including lanes with damage to verges likely where there are often no passing places.*
- 6. Further negative consequences during the construction of these pylons could include damage to various habitats of wildlife including: trees, biodiversity, plant-life as well as also negatively impacting on regional tourist attractions and archaeology.*

7. Current rules stipulate local Planning Authorities determine if onshore wind turbines are permissible.

This Council informs Cabinet of its opinion that:

1. Robust representations should be made, during and outside of consultation periods, to the Government, given they have set the framework for these national planning issues, to oppose new pylons blighting our beautiful countryside and to look again at underground and offshore options and their relative and financial and environmental impacts.

2. Collaborative working with other local authorities and MPs should take place to support calls for an offshore grid, including for the North Falls and Five Estuaries wind farms; in order to speed up delivery of green energy, cut its cost and protect the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and surrounding countryside.