

Roydon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Village Hall, Roydon,
on Wednesday 25 May 2022

Councillors Present:		Jane Jennifer	JJ	Chair
		Trevor Ault	TA	Vice Chair
		David Bartrum	DB	
		Angela Brown	AB	
		Paul Curson	PC	
		Andrew Daniels	AD	
		Jenny Shorter	JS	
Councillors Absent:		Pam Murton	PM	
		Elizabeth Taylor	ET	
In Attendance:		Wendy Benson	WB	Clerk & RFO
		Keith Kiddie	KK	County Councillor
		Graham Minshull	GM	District Councillor
Approximately 60 members of the public				
				Action
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and Councillors and Clerk introduced themselves.				
1.	Apologies for absence: Apologies were accepted from – Elizabeth Taylor, Pam Murton, Andrew Daniels (arrived at 8pm), Jenny Wilby (District Councillor), Richard Bacon (MP)			
2.	Declarations of Interest: None			
3.	Public Forum: JJ gave a short introduction, explaining how the meeting would be run in order to allow as many comments from the public as possible. The meeting would run according to the Council's Standing Orders which allows for 30 minutes for the public forum and 5 minutes maximum per speaker. She asked that speakers should try to be concise and if a previous speaker had raised a point subsequent speakers should not address the same points but could indicate their support of these in order to allow as many people to speak as possible. She asked that those wishing to speak raised their hands to indicate this and state their names and area they lived, these would not be minuted. A show of hands indicated that the majority of attendees lived or worked in Roydon. JJ then read the following statement from Richard Bacon MP : Like many constituents across South Norfolk, I am deeply concerned by National Grid's current consultation surrounding 'East Anglia GREEN' – the proposal to erect 164ft high steel lattice pylons between Norwich Substation and Roydon -- with the route continuing through Suffolk to Tilbury in Essex. I am particularly disappointed that the scope of the supposed "consultation" set out by National Grid is so limited. National Grid appears to have decided in advance without any explanation that the new pylons should run overground; in effect, they have "pre-cooked" the consultation process by limiting the options in advance,			

Roydon Parish Council

	despite the fact that there exists a viable undersea cable route from the offshore wind farms into the Thames Estuary, known as Sea Link 2 (SCD2). Together with other MPs whose constituents are affected by the proposals, I have written to the energy minister Greg Hands asking for proper consideration to be given to an upgraded subsea route from the offshore turbines along the coast and into the Thames estuary. Together with my parliamentary colleagues, I am hoping to meet the minister soon. I believe that where ever possible, new offshore-generated electricity should be transmitted offshore, making landfall as close to the target population centres as possible. I am a strong supporter of OffSET, and its campaigns for an offshore grid. I will of course let you know when I have further news. District Councillor Graham Minshull then spoke: The District Council only learned of this project in February at which point an officer was assigned. National Grid were invited to meet with SNDC to discuss these proposals but declined. The issue was raised at the full council meeting on Monday and referred to the Scrutiny Committee. This is a non-statutory consultation with the full consultation due to be between undertaken April 2023 to June 2023 with it expected to go to the inspector in December 2024 and with construction due to start in 2027. Both GM and KK attended the only local National Grid event held at Palgrave. Jenny Wilby is not able to attend these events due to ill health but supports the opposition of these pylons. GM thinks this is a poor process. The following three questions were asked of the NG representative at this event: 1- Why not have offshore cabling, reply – there are a number of cables and pipes already coming across from Europe and there is an agreement that they have a right for these not to be crossed. 2 – Why can't the lines be buried, reply – this would cost 6 times as much. 3 – Why can't the new lines be put alongside the existing route, reply – too difficult. GM concluded that we need green energy, but riding roughshod over people's views was not the way to do it. County Councillor Keith Kiddie stated: He attended the South Norfolk council meeting and supports the views on opposing how this project has been presented by National Grid (NG). He commented on the NG booklet, that the picture on the front did not have a pylon in site a truer picture is on page 33. Pylons would surround Diss & Roydon on all sides if this project goes ahead. KK has been in consultation with Richard Bacon regarding this. KK is absolutely opposed to this project. Attendees' Comments: (recorded as 'resident' if from within Roydon parish, 'comment' if from outside the parish) - Resident. The need for additional electricity is due to the governments drive to reach net zero. The increase in electric vehicles and other green initiatives will mean a 5 fold increase in electricity needs. We need to push for a full public enquiry for all sections of this project - Comment. Stated that along Darrow Lane the road has been marked in blue paint and has surveyor's pins indicating where they propose to site the pylons. This resident owns land in Roydon which could have 2 pylons on it due to the inability to make 90 degree turns of the cables on the pylons. He told NG that	
--	---	--

Roydon Parish Council

	he denied them access to his land but was told they have powers to overcome this. - Resident. Lives in the swath marked purple on the maps so will be severely affected. He viewed putting cables underground, and the increased cost of this, would increase the cost of electricity to households and put more people into poverty. He stated we must not approach this with a NIMBY attitude. - Resident stated that NG are noting the area around Dedham is an AONB and therefore putting cables underground but they have not considered the other areas along the route. Within the area around Roydon there is an SSSI and Special Landscape area. At the NG event NG representatives were very consistent in what they said with no contradictions. Considered this to be more a show-and-tell event rather than a consultation. Resident was told that it was too expensive to put underground or undersea. Asked the meeting to support Bernard Jenkins OffSET proposal, there would be social and environmental benefit from an offshore grid. Believes the feedback forms are manipulative and in favour of NG and people should answer carefully e.g., the question do you believe in green energy should not be taken to mean that you support the pylons. There is currently a QC and legal team looking into how these forms are written and how they should be answered. It is important to tell NG about where you live and the importance of the special sites around Roydon. - Comment, considers the consultation is a 'fait accompli', that other options are limited due to cost and lack of government funding and that everyone must lobby their MP to put more money into green energy. - Resident thanked the Parish Council for organising the meeting. Stated that this project is due to increased energy consumption and needs. There should be more government strategies for reducing energy needs. Also, money needed from government to ensure subsea route is viable. - Comment, lives 150m from nearest pylon site. Has reservations about the use of offshore undersea network being workable. Stated that London gets all their power underground so it should be available this way for everyone. If put underground should be 25m down, not just run along in a ditch, and if the work was done properly with a tunnel and air jacket the excess heat from this process could be extracted and used/sold. This would carry an increase in cost but considers it is better to pay more for a better system and that the overriding factor should be excellent performance. Stated we should all be climate change enthusiasts. - PC read a statement from Mr & Mrs Murton which is attached to the end of the minutes. - JJ read an email received from local residents. We have completed and sent the consultation feedback form with an emphasis on our personal situation. Our more general comments are précised in the following points. We understand that Darrow Lane and surrounding area are in line for designation as a Key View in the Diss and District neighbourhood plan as they provide the only big sky open view in the Parish of Roydon. Pylons would destroy that view, not only for residents but for the many people who use the lane on a regular basis for various forms of recreation. The pinch point on the map shows a very narrow swathe which would mean close proximity of pylons	
--	--	--

Roydon Parish Council

	to properties with the accompanying drawbacks of not only the visual decimation of the countryside but also the potential health hazards and noise pollution. The provision of subsea cables to run direct from source to terminal would be a much better alternative. Objectives could still be achieved without destroying vast areas of countryside for future generations. Underground cables at pinch points are another viable alternative. We felt that the initial questions on the feedback form were very leading so we deliberately declined to answer them. For us to say yes to renewable energy does NOT depend on us saying yes to pylons. We also noted that the cover of National Grid's brochure depicted a country scene with no pylons. Read into that what you will! - Resident, attended the Palgrave event at which NG stated this was a strategic solution. He wanted lobbying for national policy to be reviewed. Also pointed out that the SSSI had not been recognised and that NG were not aware that this scheme would destroy Bressingham Gardens. - Comment, pinch point is entirely on a 2 acre horse paddock and 50m from a house. - JJ advised the public that copies of a document by Matt Bloom, setting out Bressingham Gardens' arguments against pylons, were available in the hall for anyone to read and take away. Also advised public to access Bressingham Gardens' website where there is a tab to access information regarding the Blooms letter to National Grid and other information. - Resident, stated that at the Palgrave event NG encouraged local residents to inform them about local SSSI and protected areas and to inform them about the local community. - Comment, the pylons run North to South across valuable A1 & A2 agricultural land taking these areas out of food production. Noted that there was a similar scheme on Anglesey which was passed purely on the responses from the questionnaires. - Comment, stated North Sea green energy is transient and macro generation of electricity will be phased out over the next 25-35 years. The government should be backing micro generation for example solar panels on houses. - Comment, there will be no wayleaves for farmers affected by the pylons but payments made per pylon. Farmer was told by NG 'not to worry, you would get used to them'.	
4.	East Anglia GREEN: To discuss and agree Roydon Parish Council's comments for feedback to National Grid's public consultation. The comments from Councillors were: That there are other power generation possibilities and that the grid solution may be short term. Good and interesting comments were expressed in the Public Forum. There are many different ways to avoid the use of fossil fuels but we need to concentrate on this issue regarding the pylons. There is no alternative option available in the consultation, but there are already many undersea systems and pylons are dated.	

Roydon Parish Council

	The substation at Hartford Bridge will be huge, possibly equivalent of 5 storeys high and 5 football pitches long and 3 wide. It will affect listed buildings, SSSI and a field used for gliders. Essential to push for a public enquiry, to ensure this is not a behind closed doors decision. The planning inspector will decide if they want this. Points taken from meeting: There was no support for the pylons at the meeting. There would have to be a judicial challenge to enable a subsea cable to cross various currents utilities coming in from Europe. Concerns were raised regarding support for underground cabling as we have already signed up to support the 95 Parishes of Norfolk objections to underground cabling trenches and to support their campaign for subsea cables. Their campaign, however, is regarding three separate cabling trenches - coming onshore to Norwich Main, so we would not be undermining that support if we looked at underground here. Designated Key Views are part of DDNP which the pylons would be across. These were consulted upon and agreed in the DDNP consultation process in 2020 prior to this NG consultation. Concerns that due to the directional changes of the swathe some households will see more than one view of the pylons and cables. Concerns for sea life if put undersea. Any pylon is intrusive. Why have no alternatives routes/methods been put out to consultation? NG's comments regarding increased costs having to be passed onto customers is not true as they make huge profits. Why is it stated as too difficult to run alongside the current route of pylons? The government's statement, following Covid, was 'we will build back better'. Now is their chance to do so. This project shouldn't be rushed through to achieve a government target. Many government targets don't get met: circumstances change, other options come to light. An Offshore Transmission Network Review is ongoing by the government, due to be published this summer, looking at offshore sub-sea routeing and National Grid should wait till the outcome of this review before proceeding any further. Decisions: We should send our comments back by online form and email to ensure our written comments are seen. We support the OffSET campaign. We will leave out questions that do not allow us to accurately respond and write our explanation for this in the relevant boxes. We will email copies of our response to County Councillor KK, District Councillor GM, as well as our MP and the Secretary of State. Desired routes for National Grid to use: 1st UNDERSEA 2nd FOLLOW EXISTING ROUTES 3rd UNDERGROUND ALONG THE ENTIRE ROUTE	
--	---	--

Roydon Parish Council

Meeting closed at 9.35pm

Statement From Mr & Mrs Murton:

DRAFT