

Luigi Beltrandi Friston Resident

Good evening my name is Luigi Beltrandi, I live in Friston my house is about 500 Metres as the crow flies from the proposed land side substation development.

I would like to confine my statement to land use and general comments on the location of the impact of the substation development on the village of Friston as I also support the views of SASES and the other local Action groups.

We are scrutinizing these applications partly because of a change of transmission current within the cable corridor to the grid connection at Branford.

What was non-material amendment is in fact a material change as least in part has necessitated the two applications before us.

The site selection process for the substation location perversely favoured the site at Friston for having good screening to the east and north from ancient woodland which supposedly will screen distant views from Knodishall and Aldringham ignoring the lack of close up screening to the south and west in views from the village Friston.

The visual impact assessment questionably describes that the impact of the development on views from the village and its surrounding as moderate and insignificant erroneously reliant on mitigation by planting at 15 years growth.

As my first-year tutor used to say an architect can only persuade his client to grow ivy over his mistakes.

The site is within an ancient landscape and the setting of several listed buildings particularly of importance is the setting of the grade II* 11th Century St Mary's Church. The views from the Church out onto the surrounding landscape will be compromised more relevant will be the impact on views of the church and bell tower from the ancient footpaths some obliterated by the development as these views connect the village and its church into this historic landscape.

Works connected with the development come close to St Mary's church suggesting that location chosen is too small and cramped for the proposals to be successfully integrated and accommodated into the surrounding landscape.

The village Friston sits in a rural setting on the edge of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with no discernible difference in the quality of the surrounding landscape to that of areas within the AONB immediately to the west of the A1094.

The proposals for the development at Friston are roughly 1/3 larger than the area of the village equivalent in size to Sizewell B.

The more appropriate description for what is proposed at Friston is that a huge energy hub the size of Wembley Stadium with numerous structures as

tall as 5/6 storey buildings which are alien and incongruous in form and scale to this landscape.

Given the sensitivity of the site due to its proximity to a village, listed structures, within an ancient landscape and the physical scale of the proposals is the use of the Rochdale Envelope a suitable method for assessing the impact of the proposed development? Should the applicant have been asked to produce fully detailed proposals of the design particularly of the substation project.

What independent scrutiny is being given to the design on technical issues for example could parts of the development go underground or is the design of proposed equipment as small or as silent as is available or can be designed. Noise from the substations on what is currently a rural environment particularly at night being a major concern.

As councillor Marian Fellows pointed out the cumulative impact of the numerous additional projects that are in the pipeline is not being properly scrutinized or planned for not only for their irreversible physical impact on this precious landscape but with the disruption for years to come caused by their construction and its effect on the physical /mental health and economic wellbeing of the communities.

For this project alone the applicant submitted two separate applications with the prospect of the two developments being allowed to happen sequentially prolonging their disruption.

Land is a precious resource the impact of development on this scale is irreversible.

Allowing developers propose individual windfarm projects with their independent cable corridors and grid connections is not a sustainable method of procuring offshore wind generation.

Throughout East Anglia the countryside is being or is about to be ravaged by numerous uncoordinated such projects. This blight on coastal communities has now been recognised by the Government with the BEIS Review and by National Grid in a report of September 2020 solutions are now being brought forward proposing connection between windfarms and with the continent reducing the required number of grid connections.

Given the emerging proposals by National Grid and the Government's current review should the Inspectorate not delay the scrutiny of these applications until a coordinated plan has been produced so that we can all look forward to offshore wind generated energy within a truly sustainable future.