

## **Fiona, Open Floor Hearings, Thursday 8 October 2020, Resident of Fristonmoor**

Good Afternoon Mr Smith and panel. My name is Fiona and my home is situated on Fristonmoor right on the perimeter of the substation site.

I am grateful for the opportunity to speak today but I do want to register my objection to the holding of these hearings virtually. By conducting these meetings in this way the community has been deprived of a powerful opportunity to convey the enormous strength of opposition to these applications.

Scottish Power and NG's plans will have, and already have had, a **hugely detrimental effect** on us and our neighbours and the recommendation you make to the Secretary of State will affect us not just for years, but almost certainly for the rest of our lives, as a result of the cumulative projects the National Grid seem set on allowing at the Friston site on the back of these schemes.

The allotted time prevents me from raising many of the issues I would like to have spoken about. I am grateful to and endorse the submissions made by Michael Mahony, Fiona Gilmore, Dr Coffey and Marianne Fellowes amongst many others.

So instead I am going to speak about the impact directly upon my family. Like many others, the first we heard about these plans was two years ago when Stage three of the so-called consultation was nearing its end. Very quickly the Friston site was selected -since then fighting this threat has dominated our lives. The emotional impact has been huge. We live daily with uncertainty and the prospect of losing the life we love and the retirement we looked forward to.

This morning as on most mornings I walked my dog around the circular footpath route following ancient pilgrimage paths to Friston and back. This is something I will never be able to do again if this project gets the go-ahead. This is a source of great sadness. Our home, is a beautiful Grade 2 listed 16th Century farmhouse one of a number of listed buildings that ring Fristonmoor. From both the house and the garden we have an uninterrupted view of the Friston church and surrounding countryside. SPR and NG now intend to place a vast industrial structure between our house and the village decimating the tracks that have connected our house and others for over 500 years. We will be isolated and cut off our views lost

Michael Mahony of SASES is right when he describes the high level of distrust in Scottish Power and NG. The consultation was shambolic and the behaviour of the applicant has been at best disingenuous.

It was only very late during the consultation process that we discovered that there would be a huge amount of noisy 18 m tall National Grid infrastructure built just 300 hundred meters from the garden fence directly in front of our property blocking our views to the church. I still fail to understand how we had

gone almost through this whole consultation and actually not been shown fundamental parts of what is proposed. Why is NG allowed to come in under the umbrella of Scottish power without having to make their intentions plain. This is symptomatic of the shadowy but pivotal role played by NG in this whole process.

In their application SPR have the temerity to suggest that the impact on our property and its 'Heritage value' will be minimal.

The idea that we will not be blighted by noise and light pollution when the stations are built is insulting.

The idea that mitigation will make it alright is equally absurd.

The idea and I quote that the projects are "unlikely to have a significant impact on human health" is objectionable .

They even claim that the installations are sited "away from population areas" This is frankly ridiculous.

I try not to imagine what the next few years will bring if these plans go ahead as it is profoundly depressing.

We know that SPR and National Grid are planning to use the Friston site for a series of successive infrastructures. I ask you to consider what this means for my family and others who also live in the houses which encircle this tightly constrained site. We face the prospect of decades of building work and an

arc of construction slicing through the village and the countryside. The truth is that if consent is given Friston will be blighted by heavy construction traffic, noise, dust and smell for the rest of our lives. The village and countryside that was to have been a tranquil sanctuary for our latter years will be a heaving industrial complex.

We do not oppose renewable energy. We do not oppose wind farms. But the idea that SPR can seek to claim a moral high ground and claim green credentials when they have chosen to despoil a medieval village is pure hypocrisy.

These substations are not intended to serve the local population. There is no benefit to us. There are many other brownfield sites that could have been chosen. There are other technologies that could be used to avoid ruining in the countryside. Whilst we welcome the BEISS review it appears these projects have been deliberately excluded.

Finally I would refer you to Dermot Nolan, former head of Ofgem's comments in today's digital Times newspaper. He describes the present method of each windfarm having its own connection as outdated, politically unacceptable, costly and unfit for delivering on the government's renewable targets. He suggests that there should be a full scale review of offshore infrastructure, a fully independent body should replace NG and instead of hundreds of cables going ashore an off shore grid should be built which would not only save huge areas of our countryside but could save £6 billion by 2050.

Finally our voices appear to be being heard.

Thank you.