

Net zero pylons put beauty spot at risk, claims Fiennes

EMMA GATTEN

Net zero pylons put beauty spot at risk, claims Fiennes

RALPH FIENNES has warned that the drive for net-zero power threatens to leave one of his favourite parts of the UK with “acres of steel and concrete in areas of profound natural beauty”.

Campaigners argue that plans for onshore substations to link two wind farms, and improve Suffolk and Kent’s links to the Netherlands, could cause long-term harm to ecology and tourism.

In a video produced for the campaign group Suffolk Energy Action Solutions, *Shakespeare in Love* actor Fiennes says the UK should introduce offshore hubs for its wind power, as Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands have done.

“This country has decided to bring this vital clean, green energy into the grid by building on land, on greenfield sites, as opposed to brownfield sites, creating acres of steel and concrete in areas of profound natural beauty, protected birdlife and cultural heritage,” he said.

The Suffolk-born actor who grew up on his father’s farm near Southwold, says “vital green power” must be implemented with a “forward-thinking and environmentally enlightened vision”.

The campaign group says connections for two offshore wind farms off the coast of East Anglia will “gouge through the fragile cliffs north of Thorpeness” and require a five-mile cable trench.

It is opposed to onshore connections of the Sea Link, a project to install a 2 gigawatt high-voltage direct current (HVDC) cable between Suffolk and Kent, largely at sea. It also questions the need for onshore landing for the proposed LionLink, a subsea connection between Dutch offshore wind farms.

The National Grid has said hundreds of miles of new pylons as well as electricity substations and cabling will be needed to complete net zero goals.