

The Planning Inspectorate

c/o QUADIENT

69 Buckingham Avenue

Slough

SL1 4PN

27th January 2026

Email (NorwichtoTilbury@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) and via the “Have Your Say” website only

Dear Sirs

EN020027 - Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission for an order granting development consent for the Norwich to Tilbury project – Response to the Rule 6 Letter sent on behalf of Ardleigh Parish Council (FE7D5AD75) and Little Bromley Parish Council (FF43E7FAB)

Introduction

1. I write on behalf of Ardleigh Parish Council and Little Bromley Parish Council (“the Parish Councils”), both registered as Interested Parties in this examination. The Parish Councils concerns surrounding this development proposal are set out in their respective relevant representations [RR-0300 & RR-2172].
2. The issue raised in this letter are confined to procedural arrangements for the examination, as invited by the Examining Authority in the Rule 6 letter dated 13th January 2026, but considering the points that follow, it is important to have considered the issues raised by the Parish Councils.

Additional Submission

3. An additional submission has been prepared clarifying the Parish Council's concerns surrounding loss of BMV, safety, emergency-response capacity and resilience risks arising from the risk of "clustering" of infrastructure developments (particularly BESS sites) around this proposed nationally significant infrastructure, with particular regard to the Ardleigh/ Little Bromley area ("the ALBA"). The Examining Authority is invited to accept this additional representation (appended to this letter) now, as it is important to consider the points raised in the context of the preliminary meeting and the following points that the Parish Councils wish to raise at that meeting.

Need for an ALBA ISH

4. Given the cumulative impacts that arise from this proposed development in the ALBA, the Parish Councils requested in their Relevant Representations that the examination include an ISH addressing the impacts on the ALBA
5. It is considered that the proposed development has multiple, significant and concentrated adverse impacts on the ALBA, particularly in respect of its locally distinctive character in the Ardleigh–Little Bromley area.
6. Annex C to the Rule 6 letter sets out the Examining Authority's Initial Assessment of Principal Issues under broad topic headings. We do not suggest that any topic category is missing. However, several of the listed issues including:
 - a. Cumulative Effects,
 - b. Safety and Security,
 - c. Health and Wellbeing,
 - d. Landscape and Visual Impact,
 - e. Transport and Traffic, and;
 - f. Water Environment

have distinct ALBA specific impacts arising from the route and concentration of the proposed infrastructure.

7. This reinforces the practical value (or need) of examining those topics through a dedicated ALBA ISH rather than dispersing them across multiple sessions.

8. Further, the Parish Councils have invested in professional representation for this examination and to ensure the money raised by the local communities to fund this representation, dedicated sessions in respect of the ALBA will ensure the most efficient use of that money.
9. The Parish Councils request, therefore, that consideration be given to, and confirmation that the final examination timetable will include a dedicated ISH addressing the impacts on the ALBA
10. The Parish Councils also note that Annex D of the draft examination timetable reserves a further hearing window in the week commencing 27 April 2026. If ALBA ISH is scheduled within this window, the Parish Councils request that it is arranged with reasonable regard to the availability of the Parish Councils and its representative. To that end, please also consider the points raised below concerning the proposed use of Orsett Hall as a venue.

The Parish Councils' Additional Submission

11. If the Parish Councils' additional submission is accepted by the Examining Authority, and if an ALBA ISH is arranged, to enable meaningful participation in such a hearing, the Parish Councils request that the Examining Authority:
 - a. Direct the Applicant to identify, as early as possible, the documents and assessments relied upon concerning emergency-response planning, worst-case incident modelling, fire-risk management and resilience of clustered assets; and
 - b. Consider issuing written questions or information requests on these topics in advance of an ALBA ISH
 - c. The Parish Councils are available to assist with framing any such questions and requests, should that be of assistance to the Examining Authority.

Accompanied Site Inspection

12. The Parish Councils have requested a site visit to the Ardleigh–Little Bromley area, including the site of the proposed East Anglia Connection Node site, pylon corridor and village approaches. The approved BESS site discussed in the Parish Councils' further representation should also be included in that itinerary.
13. Given the flat landscape, settlement proximity, heritage sensitivity and constrained emergency-access routes, the Parish Councils consider that an accompanied site inspection would materially assist understanding. We respectfully request an early indication of whether an Accompanied Site Inspection is proposed and at what stage of the examination it is anticipated. From the Parish Council's perspective, it may be helpful for the Examining Authority to carry out such a site visit before any ALBA ISH

Hearing Format, Accessibility and Venue Location

14. The Parish Councils wish to raise a concern about the choice of Orsett Hall as a venue.
15. For the communities affected in the ALBA, Orsett Hall lies at the southern extreme of the county. Whilst travel by private vehicle to Orsett Hall takes around an hour from Ardleigh, attending it via public transport can take c. three hours, a six-hour round trip, from Ardleigh and Little Bromley.
16. The Parish Council suggests that the choice of venue should be reconsidered by the Applicant and Examining Authority and a new, suitable and available venue, taking account of the county-wide distribution of affected communities along the route and the availability of public transport, so as to avoid unnecessary travel barriers for local participants who wish to take part or attend hearings in person. Whilst the hybrid provision is welcome, in-person attendance remains important for many within the Parish Councils' communities and, the Parish Councils submit, other communities concerned about the passage of the proposed development through Essex.
17. One venue to consider (particularly in respect of an ALBA ISH) is the village hall in Ardleigh. Ardleigh Parish Council is able to facilitate its use for the Examining Authority if needed. This may not be ideal for hearings other than an ALBA ISH, but it will help to ensure all those within the ALBA who wish to attend in person may do

so. The Village Hall seats 120 people, with 20-30 spaces for cars (and an overflow car park, available in dry weather).

18. Further, venues to consider include:

- a. Colchester Football Ground. This venue can accommodate 400 seats, is situated just off the A12 in Colchester and has ample parking.
- b. Hylands Estate, Chelmsford. This venue can accommodate 300 seats and has ample car parking. As a venue, it is more accessible for North East Essex attendees than Orsett Hall is.
- c. Wivenhoe House Hotel, close to Colchester. This can accommodate 120 seats.

Conclusion

19. Ardleigh and Little Bromley Parish Councils seek to participate constructively and efficiently in this examination. The procedural points above are intended to assist the Examining Authority in establishing examination arrangements that are clear, accessible and proportionate to the scale of local impacts and the issues raised in the Parish Councils representations.

Yours sincerely



Simon Bell

Counsel