



## **Ardleigh Parish Council response to Five Estuaries Off-shore Windfarm consultation May 2023**

Our Parish Council has previously responded to consultation by Five Estuaries, most recently on 12 August 2022. Those earlier comments still stand and we do not intend to repeat them here except to clarify or emphasise a few points. We would ask that our earlier responses are taken in to account for the current consultation.

As previously stated, *'In principle, the Parish Council supports the generation of green energy and is not opposed to the development of off-shore wind farms.'*

However, we object in the strongest terms to this unnecessary connection onshore. This will result in tunnelling beneath the shoreline, trenching to place underground cables through Tendring, and a sub-station near to or within Ardleigh (with further sub-stations needed for National Grid and for other providers).

This damaging onshore connection is unnecessary because both Five Estuaries and sister project North Falls could, and should, connect offshore. National Grid ESO has already carried out advanced scenario testing of offshore coordination options.

We know that National Grid has offered this connection point to you but we urge you to do the right thing for the environment and communities and to reject National Grid's unacceptable offer. You will be aware that the connection offered is deeply damaging, being in the centre of a 180km pylon route, and adjacent to the AONB where the pylons create a ring of steel around Ardleigh which would thus be uniquely and profoundly affected. This project is many years from a planning permission, if it succeeds at all.

Our residents care deeply about their environment and the rural characteristics around our Parish. This was emphasised during consultation for our Neighbourhood Plan- which has been endorsed by Tendring District and now reached Regulation 15 and 16 consultation stage. *'It is the overwhelming view of the people who live and work in the Parish of Ardleigh that it should above all else retain its rural characteristics, including the visual quality of its buildings, open spaces, trees, hedges, footpaths and bridleways... There is also a strong sense of community in Ardleigh which should be protected and nurtured throughout all parts of the Parish, including its outlying hamlets...'* (para 6.29-6.30 Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan). More details of the emerging Plan are on the Tendring DC site <https://www.tendringdc.uk/sub-content-pages/ardleigh-neighbourhood-plan> or our own site <https://ardleigh.website/our-plan>. We consider the proposals by Five Estuaries and the associated proposals from National Grid to threaten the very things which our residents tell us they value about where they live. We are therefore bound to oppose them.

The latest consultation has revealed more data about the potential traffic movements which are a cause of grave concern for our residents. There are particular concerns about the impact on the road and lane network in the areas around the new sub-stations and of safety for all users but especially those on foot/ cycling or on horseback along the very narrow lanes. Such concerns would be exacerbated if several substations are contiguously or closely located. If the existing lanes are used by construction traffic we struggle to see how mitigation could prevent a very significant and negative impact on local residents particularly those who use the lanes for leisure and could well be prevented from doing so if sharing with HGVs.

It is noted that Five Estuaries themselves estimate that the average number of HGV's journeys along the B1029 each day will be up to 73 for the duration of the project which is expected to take between 18 and 24 months as well as temporary construction compounds along "a corridor route" for Parking, Welfare Facilities for its staff, Material set-down areas and Access points with large compounds needed where drilling is carried out. This would inevitably impact the entire stretch of the B1029 including Burnt Heath, Ardleigh and Ardleigh village to the junction with the A137.

In addition we would emphasise local concerns around

- Agricultural Land. loss and damage to significant areas of high grade agricultural land- at a time when food security is of increased concern
- Landscape and Views. The topography around Ardleigh means there are vast open vistas across productive farmland which could be disfigured forever by proposed pylons and substations

Please do the right thing by RWE's own responsibility and sustainability goals: *"RWE is helping to shape the sustainable future of the world's power supply. As part of society and a key player in the worldwide energy market, we are aware of the responsibility that goes with our role. We exercise that responsibility every day by applying clear principles to our corporate and social actions. Every single person at RWE – from Executive Board members and managers to colleagues and line staff – contributes by acting responsibly towards others and the environment. For RWE, taking responsibility means taking socially relevant issues into consideration in our corporate decision-making processes, keeping an eye on the consequences of our actions beyond our own area of responsibility and considering corporate activities from an ecological, social and ethical standpoint as well as from a business perspective. Corporate Responsibility is part of the contribution RWE makes to sustainable development and responsible business management. Everything from environmental protection and climate-change mitigation, social concerns and human rights through to responsible corporate governance is taken into account – as RWE does justice to its responsibility in every sense."*

We urge you put these good words into practice and to work with Government through its current coordination schemes to connect offshore instead.

*Ardleigh Parish Council  
12 May 2023*