

Written Representation re EA1N & EA2  
Nichola Jane Winter

1st November 2020

Having moved to this area in 1984 I am well acquainted with its beauty, tranquility and rural landscape. I ran a business in Aldeburgh until 1998 and made my home in the quiet village of Friston in 1990, where my husband and I have been permanent residents for the last thirty years. My husband has a business based at Rendlesham and we are active members of the Friston community. I trained for church ministry in 1999 and was ordained as a non-stipendiary minister in 2003. I run a bookkeeping business to sustain me financially in my role as Assistant Priest for the Alde Sandlings benefice which includes the parishes of Friston, Aldeburgh, Aldringham and Knodishall. Each of these parishes will be affected detrimentally by the proposed project if it goes ahead, both during the construction process and when dealing with the aftermath in terms of spoilt environment and fragmented communities.

Many of the submissions you will have received will have described the unspoilt nature of this part of Suffolk. It is a quiet, rural, unpolluted area with narrow roads and lanes which are consistent with the local environment. Friston is surrounded by woods and fields and has a network of historic footpaths which map out its historic and agricultural background. It borders areas of outstanding natural beauty, recognised sites of special scientific interest, bird reserves and places for recreational pursuits. It has long been a magnet for artists of all forms - all of whom value its quiet tranquility and peace. The contribution our area makes to the economy is subtle rather than exuberant - the charm of this segment of Suffolk all year round means it has a steady stream of visitors who value what it has to offer and who enjoy supporting its resources. This is threatened by the decimating nature of the project under consideration and the unique characteristics of this area will vanish and be lost for ever if the proposed project goes ahead - at a time when the government claims to be safeguarding the environment. In its introduction the 19th August 2020 Environment Bill claims:

‘The Environment Bill brings about urgent and meaningful action to combat the environmental and climate crises we are facing’

and later on:

‘The Environment Bill allows for long-term targets to be set in respect of any matter which relates to the natural environment, or people’s enjoyment of it.’

Commendably it states the desire to achieve certain energy targets but also to ensure that the population is able to continue enjoying the environment. This suggests throwing the baby out with the bathwater if, in its pursuit of renewable energy infrastructure, it destroys the very environment it seeks to protect. The question has been asked why SPR and National Grid are not working together to come up with a green energy solution that reduces the environmental impact on the community - and this seems to be at the heart of the question.

I agree whole-heartedly with what has been said at the Open Floor Hearings in October when speakers opposed the plans - our MP Dr Coffey, representatives of East

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Suffolk and Suffolk County Council, members of the SASES group and numerous private individuals. The objections were wide-ranging and have been spelt out eloquently.

I wish to highlight the following:

**Noise:** Counsellor Fellowes spoke about ‘sound’ and the effect that the construction of this project will have, together with the ongoing ‘background’ hum from the sub-station when complete. I, too, am concerned about the noise of the project. Noise nuisance during construction will be horrendous - Cllr Fellowes has suggested that construction might easily run from 7am to 7pm and even later in certain cases. This will be bad enough. But there is also the issue of background noise once the substation is up and running. This might be considered insignificant but research suggests that low-level background noise causes a nuisance and can, indeed, be injurious to health. See research by:

Stansfeld, S., Haines, M., & Brown, B. 2000, 'Noise and health in the urban environment', *Rev Environ Health*, vol. 15, no. 1-2, pp. 43-82 (pdf attached as annexe.)

- and comment on [REDACTED] work quoted in 3rd Feb 2016 issue of ‘The Conversation’ when reference is made to the ‘negative feelings noise can create such as disturbance, irritation, dissatisfaction, nuisance... a feeling of invasion of privacy’.

If this project goes ahead the peace and natural sounds of Friston will be gone forever and an irritating industrial hum will take its place - one which can be very disturbing for many folk blessed with sensitive hearing.

**Traffic nuisance:** The impact on our local roads during construction will be horrendous and once construction is complete our quiet roads will have gone for good. They will have become major roads with all that is implied regarding volume, size, noise and pollution of vehicles.

**Light:** Light pollution is another issue that will have a massive impact. One of the things that drew me to Friston was its clear, unpolluted night sky. That spectacle takes us out of ourselves and allows us to contemplate our small part of creation. An appreciation of the vastness of the heavens will be lost in the inevitable artificial light pollution caused by security lighting around the sub-station.

**Footpaths:** At a time when we are being exhorted to take more exercise as part of our duty towards maintaining a healthy lifestyle it is ironic that this project will decimate many of our local footpaths. At one of the early public information meetings I asked the SPR representative what alternative footpath routes were being proposed and was told that no provision had been made. You have only to walk these paths at present to appreciate the natural environment - trees, hedgerows, birds, insects, small and large mammals. Another part of our local landscape and health-inducing countryside that will be lost.

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**Spiritual and Mental Health:** The proximity of the project to the church of St Mary the Virgin at Friston is alarming. The quiet atmosphere inside the church building itself as well as in its beautiful setting will be ruined. So many visitors have commented on the tranquility and peace that this setting provides - this will be ruined. An environment that provides a peaceful haven and helps restore sanity and spiritual calm in an ever-increasingly frantic and noisy world will be ruined. Will Sundays be respected as a day of rest? I doubt it - so Sunday services will be affected. And imagine attending a funeral when peace for contemplation and reflection is needed - the mood will be completely altered by the noise of construction work.

All of these are going to have a negative impact on the mental wellbeing of local residents, not to mention their spiritual well-being. This project is just one of a series of alarming large-scale projects which will have a dramatic and damaging effect on the whole of East Suffolk. The magnitude does not appear to have been thought through and has certainly not been explained or described properly to local residents who, quite rightly, fear that they are being left in the dark. I remain completely opposed to the application by SPR and I urge the planning inspectorate to turn down this application.