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**Subject:** Norfolk Vanguard Project - EN010079  
**Date:** 05 April 2019 23:18:23  
**Attachments:** [Questions about Mental Wellbeing PINS.docx](#)

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My registration identification number is 20012181.

Dear Planning Inspector,

I have some questions I would like to ask the applicant, if possible, regarding the Heath Impact Assessment.

Please see attached, thank you.

I would like to attend the hearings 24th and 25th April with my husband Andrew Lockwood who is also an interested party.

Thank you.

Patricia Lockwood

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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## Questions about Mental Wellbeing

I am concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of residents effected by Norfolk Vanguard onshore substation at Necton, as there is a proven link between environment and mental health. I want to establish that the applicant has given this sufficient importance in their Health Impact Assessment.

“Natural England” states “The “nef project” reviews some evidence illustrating the negative impact of localised environmental damage to psychological wellbeing (e.g. areas experiencing intense resource exploitation and people living near toxic waste sites). However, it notes that these impacts are mediated through changes in perceived autonomy and acute sense of loss rather than a direct effect.”

“Natural England” also states “Most studies, which tend to have considered relationships at a population level, find greater amounts of natural environment around the home has a protective effect on self-reported mental health and is associated with reduced risk of stress, tendency to psychiatric morbidity, psychological distress, depressive symptoms, clinical anxiety, depression and mood disorders in adults.”

When a population chooses to live in a rural area it follows that they will enjoy the positive impacts of living near natural environments but also a sense of loss when suddenly deprived of such an inherent part of their lives. This gives a potential two-fold negative effect on mental wellbeing.

*Could the applicant show how they have included this sense of loss in their Health Impact Assessment PIER ch27 please?*

Natural England also states “The Mental Health Foundation highlights that 1 in 4 people in England will experience a mental health problem in any given year, and 50 percent of long-term mental health problems are established by age 14 and 75 percent by age 24. The costs of mental health problems to the UK economy are estimated to amount to £70-£100 billion each year, around 4.5 percent of GDP”

Necton has a higher than average ageing population whose mental health is more susceptible to stress. There is also evidence that older people value nature highly and that interaction with green spaces not only improved levels of concentration but also reduced stress (Talbot & Kaplan, 1991; Ottosson & Grahn, 2005).

I have read of the applicants methodology for assessing health and they state “14. There is no defined or recommended procedure or guidance for assessing the significance of health impacts within the context of an EIA. The methodology used therefore adopts the standard source-pathway-receptor model approach..... Etc.”

Although they have detailed their methodology, I am concerned this is wide open to their interpretation to prove that adverse health effects are low.

*Has the applicant replicated successful historic methodology and investigations regarding Health?*

As Mental Health and Environment is a current government initiative, *Has the applicant taken mental health concerns fully into account using the most up to date methods of investigations?*

I am interested in psychology but no expert. There are many scholarly articles which evaluate wellbeing and how the environment effects mental health.

One is by Dr Julie Newton. She is jointly funded by Defra and the ESRC. She has commented on an ecosystems approach as provides a useful framework to conceptualise the link between wellbeing and the natural environment.

“This is widely recognised as a valuable way to analyse the relationship between people and the environment and for this reason has been endorsed by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, 1992). ....Humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of many ecosystems” (MEA, 2003: 11). It therefore provides a useful framework to conceptualise the link between wellbeing and the natural environment

*Has the applicant used an ecosystem approach in their Health Impact Assessment PIER ch27 please?*

There are many media sources reporting on the state of the nation’s mental health and I would like to draw your attention to quotes from "The Independent" (British politically independent national morning online newspaper)

In October 2018 – “Caroline Lucas” (MP, when Green party Co-leader) “ is urging British people to reconnect with nature to address the “mental health epidemic” facing the country. ....The UK has been described as “one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world”, with around 15 per cent of its wildlife facing extinction.....“Research shows moving to greener areas improves people’s mental wellbeing for the long term – .....‘All of us need to get back in touch with nature. We’re facing a mental health epidemic in this country alongside the systematic degradation of our land.”

*Can the applicant explain how their project will mitigate their degradation of our land?*

This is not an invitation to extol the claimed benefits of their project as an energy producer, but to answer this in regards to the local environment they are going to destroy in Necton, By placing their onshore substations (the biggest in the world onshore for offshore wind) on high ground, instead of on the low ground that was suggested on Top Farm, (including the fact that the applicant’s access road severs the lowest field on the farm) Or, even better by helping the movement towards an offshore ring main for offshore wind.