

Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement
Planning Inspectorate Reference EN020002

Now that this project has reached the examination stage following acceptance of the application for a Development Consent Order, it is an opportune time to consider some further improvements that would help greatly in appeasing affected residents at minimal extra cost. This is a project that is of particular concern to me as it passes through my ward, including the village I live in (Polstead).

In Babergh and Mid Suffolk's response to the statutory consultation in March last year, we made two suggestions: move the location of the Dedham Vale East CSE Compound and provide an underground link between the Dedham Vale West and Stour Valley East CSE Compounds. Unfortunately, neither of these has been taken up and we have not had any explanation as to why they haven't been considered.

Although it would require an additional 850m of underground route, moving the Dedham Vale East CSE Compound from adjacent to Millwood Road, Polstead, further east to the Layham quarry would ensure that it is in a less visible location and access for construction traffic would be much easier via the existing purpose-built road servicing the quarry. Other correspondents have made submissions that show how this alternative location has significant advantages over the Millwood Road site in every category of the 'Initial Assessment of Principle Issues'. I can only concur with the evidence submitted.

Having an underground link between the proposed underground Stour Valley and Dedham Vale AONB sections would enhance the visual environment as this section, whilst not in the AONB, is still highly visible from many locations within it and the local community would be much happier if this area were to be protected from the visual impact of the pylons. Furthermore, it would obviate the need for two of the four CSE Compounds which, presumably, would offset the cost of the additional underground works.

Finally, I want to stress that both these modifications would be a real positive step in demonstrating to our residents that National Grid does listen and is willing to give something to the communities affected, which is clearly the desire of all political parties at Westminster.