

I write in my capacity as the contract farmer for Mr G V S Nott (trading as D P Nott & Sons) the owner and occupier of land at Pebmarsh, Halstead, Essex (PIL No. 702) which is affected by the Project.

I would like to bring to the Planning Inspectors' attention the following observations / comments;

As a contractor, we had our first meeting with National Grid on 21st August 2022, at which they produce a road survey that had absolutely no relevance to the haul road cutting the farm in half. The representatives from National Grid (Richard Cookson, their land agent, and Bob Jones, an engineer) were apologetic and, after viewing the correct route off the A131, led us believe that the existing public highway would be sufficient. They suggested that 'someone' in the office had drawn a line using Google Maps and that the original route across our farm would probably never happen.

Despite requesting copies, we still haven't seen any surveys proving the need for a haul road, let alone any ecological surveys on the land itself.

Following another meeting with National Grid and the Parish Council on 18th October (Seb, a senior project manager) advised that; "surveys are ongoing at present and we would receive them very soon". Nearly a year on and still no surveys have been received?

Given the above, I feel National Grid have not followed correct consultation procedures for the now submitted DCO application nor provided justification as to why it is necessary to build a haul road through the middle of our Family farm.

I would request that the Planning Inspector advise;

how National Grid can have submitted the DCO application without all the required surveys having been completed?

why can National Grid create new rights (Class 4 Article 24) this late in the application process which will have huge impact on the long term value of the farm?

Over the last year we have suggested a number of alternative routes to National Grid, including the option of leaving a permanent haul road around the perimeter of two of the fields to minimise the disruption to the landowner and contractors. We feel we have been totally ignored and that National Grid have only met with us to tick a box. No proper analysis of the route or alternatives have been carried out. They have not taken any of our concerns on board and seem to be able to "change the goal posts" whenever it suits them.

Whilst working these fields I regularly enjoy watching the owls, songbirds, badgers, bats, kites, buzzards and Hares. If the haul road were to be moved and hedged around the perimeter this would add considerable more corridors for wildlife.