

The Parish Councils of Assington, Bures St Mary, Leavenheath, Little Cornard, Polstead & Stoke by Nayland

Additional Supporting Information at Deadline 8 – Strategic Options & TS Conductor

1. Context

- 1.1 Further to our submission at Deadline 7 regarding the incomplete nature of the Applicant's consideration of strategic options and alternative technologies, we write to inform the ExA of the additional parish councils that have reviewed our submission and indicated their support.
- 1.2 Although we have not received confirmation from any party that the Applicant intends to address and respond to the issues raised in our note, we have taken this opportunity to amplify the information that we reasonably expect to be covered by the Applicant's response.
- 1.3 We have endeavoured not to repeat the issues raised in our Deadline 7 submission; however, this paper should be read in conjunction with that earlier submission.

2. Wider Consultation

- 2.1 Following deposition of our Deadline 7 submission, we have approached all of the parish councils located to the east of us that are materially affected by the reinforcement scheme.
- 2.2 In the interests of efficiency, we have asked the councils to respond to us directly, rather than overload the ExA with multiple separate submissions.
- 2.3 While a number have yet to meet to complete their individual sign-off procedures, the following councils have already endorsed the contents of our Deadline 7 submission on Strategic Options etc [REP7-035], and agreed that their names can be added in support of the six parish councils that made the original submission:
 - Chattisham & Hintlesham Parish Council
 - Raydon Parish Council
 - Layham Parish Council
 - Boxford Parish Council
- 2.4 We have made separate approaches to Babergh District Council, Suffolk County Council, our local Member of Parliament, to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero and to OfGem. We assume that a technological solution that obviates the need to construct a second 400kV pylon line and the attendant disruption from undergrounding works would have the strong support of all parties, especially if it were technologically sound, cheaper to build and could be completed in timescales consistent with demand.

3. Expectations of a Response from The Applicant

- 3.1 Based on an assumption that the Applicant expects or is required to respond to our earlier submission, we have taken this opportunity to set out some of the elements that we would expect to see in an authoritative reply.

3.2 We believe this matter to be of sufficient importance to warrant a fulsome and detailed technical response from the Applicant, one that is supported by evidence that can be challenged and tested by independent experts. We would expect to see:

- An explanation for the fact that the emerging conductor technology highlighted in our submission was omitted by the Applicant from its documents.
- Detailed reasons why the claims made by TS Conductor regarding the appropriateness of this emerging technology and increased conductor capacity cannot be substantiated, failing which, detailed reasoning for not promoting the adoption of a superior and less damaging scheme to replace the existing 400kV conductors on the existing pylons supporting the existing 400kV line.
- Evidence for the build-up of demand for reinforcement between Bramford and Twinstead, for example, over the next 20-30 years, and reasoning as to why the existing conductors could not be progressively replaced with advanced conductors to match emerging demands for additional capacity and resilience.

3.3 While we cannot purport to be energy transmission experts, we assert that this should not be seen as an excuse by the Applicant for making generalised responses, advancing assertions without the provision of evidence, including technical detail and calculations if necessary, or for a casual or unsubstantiated dismissal of issues raised in our note. We rely on the ExA's breadth of relevant infrastructure planning experience to recognise deficiencies in arguments raised by the Applicant in support of its technical solutions, and if necessary to call for independent expert evidence.

3.4 In passing, we note that, whilst so-called advanced conductors have been in use for a number of years on the UK grid – albeit we understand with mixed results – we are led to believe that TS Conductor has developed a superior product that is currently being installed in US and is in the process of securing approval for use in UK.