



**Suffolk & Essex  
Coast & Heaths**  
National  
Landscape



**Dedham Vale**  
National  
Landscape  
& Stour Valley

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28 February 2025

**National Landscape STAFF TEAM response to Norwich to Tilbury Targeted Consultation (Norfolk and Suffolk) 30 Jan to 3 March 2025**

**Response parameters**

In this response the term National Landscape is used to represent the brand of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation.

For the avoidance of any doubt please note that this response is from the National Landscape staff team and may not represent the views of either the Dedham Vale or Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape Partnerships.

The staff team have not had the capacity to develop a full Partnership response to this targeted consultation, but they consider the issues raised should be considered as reflecting many National Landscape issues.

**Context of Response:**

This response has been developed using knowledge and information about the proposals learnt from National Grid publications, attendance at Expert Topic Groups and information exchange with interested parties.

The response should be considered to add to previous National Landscape Partnership endorsed consultation responses, including:

- Non-Statutory Consultation to June 2022
- Consultation to August 2023
- Consultation to July 2024

This response will restrict itself to consideration of potential impacts on the National Landscapes from the proposals.

## **Targeted Consultation response:**

### Context:

The National Landscape staff team recognise the important role that more sustainable electricity generation can have in reducing the drivers of climate change and dependence on other nations to provide the raw materials for electricity generation. The staff team recognise that this generation is likely to require new methods of electricity transmission.

It is the view of the National Landscape team that proposals should adhere to relevant policy and legislation, including but not limited to:

- National Landscape Management Plans
- National Policy Statements, including EN-1 and EN-5
- Section 85 Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) as amended by the Levelling UP and Regeneration Act (2023)

### Considerations:

The National Landscape manager recalls discussion in the Expert Topic Groups that the scheme proposer was considering the removal of the existing overhead 132kV line that runs through part of the Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape and the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

It was suggested that the removal of this line would contribute to the delivery of the active duty placed on relevant authorities, including statutory undertakers such as National Grid, in the revised section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000). The revision of section 85 places a duty on relevant authorities to 'seek to conserve and enhance natural beauty' in their decision making. It is the view of the National Landscape manager that if the 132kV line was removed this would go a significant way in demonstrating compliance with that new duty.

This potential benefit would be felt across both the National Landscapes but be of particular importance to the highly sensitive receptors in the vicinity of Willy Lott's Cottage which was captured in one of England's greatest landscape artists, John Constable RA most well-known paintings, 'The Haywain'.

The National Landscape manager believes that the undergrounding of cables through the National Landscape is driven by policy considerations. However, to meet the revised duty, outlined above, the National Landscape manager considers that the undergrounding should be achieved through Horizontal Directional Drilling (or similar) rather than a trenching method. This would demonstrate seeking to meet the active duty outlined in section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) as amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023).

The National Landscapes will seek to respond to the Essex and Thurrock consultation that ends on 27 March in due course as both the Dedham Vale and Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscapes have at least part of their area in Essex.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Amstutz'.

Simon Amstutz  
National Landscape Manager

cc Cllr James Finch, Chairman, Dedham Vale National Landscape Joint Advisory Committee and Partnership  
Cllr Andrew Reid, Chairman, Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape Joint Advisory Committee  
Nick Collinson, Chairman, Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape Partnership