

Aldham Parish Council
Aldham
Colchester Essex
2 December 2022
aldhampc@gmail.com

Dear Planning Inspectorate

Response to the EIA Scoping Report for East Anglia Green Pylon proposals

Aldham Parish Council are responding to the recent publication of the National Grid EIA Scoping Report as these proposals on East Anglia GREEN have a very direct impact on our community.

Aldham Parish council were not directly invited to respond but given the potential impact on our parish we would be grateful if you considered our views. We have viewed the published documents [here](#) but we have been unable to find the context in which they were being shared or whether there were any specific questions you were looking to find answers to.

Aldham village background

Aldham is a village and civil parish situated in Essex approximately 4.5 miles to the west of Colchester with the A12 running to the south approximately 1.5 miles away. The village lies between the River Colne and Roman river valleys. There are two main village areas the conservation area of Fordstreet and the village centre around the Church. There are many other scattered properties (mainly linked to old farmsteads) typical of ancient countryside. The majority of the land is gently rolling arable farmland with a number of semi ancient woodlands scattered across the parish. The village is some 1847 acres in size.

The village is also recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 but has an earlier history as there have been Iron Age finds in the area and pottery which may indicate a Roman settlement. Today the village no longer has a shop school or pub.

In the current Colchester Local Plan Spatial Hierarchy the lack of facilities left Aldham outside the Sustainable Settlement category in the Other villages grouping. Other Villages are defined by “tightly drawn settlement boundaries which reflect the core community focus of each village and protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”. This sums us up fairly.

From the 2011 census the village has a population of 490 residents and 210 properties. Please see annex 1 for more details. Our population tends to be stable

not migratory so those who live here have a deep connection to their local environment.

EIA Scoping document

Aldham falls within Colchester Borough (now City) Council local authority as described on page 45. This covers a 21.7 km length of overhead pylons. Aldham is facing around 3km of pylons and as the section corridor is currently drawn it will have to pass through our village. The description correctly identifies the topography and mix of ancient woodlands scattered communities and the adjacent habitats and SSSIs in the village (but not currently under the purple swath scoping corridor). We are pleased to see the scoping report extends the study area beyond the scoping report corridor

Aldham Parish Council wish to note that the impacts of the project will not be limited to the purple swath scoping corridor area so the impacts on the bordering environment and historical features should be in scope.

We have considered the following section 6 to 17 s of the report and have provided comments against each section that we have initial views on. We have based our comments on the summary table "Proposed scope of ES" in each section

Section 6 Agricultural Soils	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council view
Table 6.5	Scoped out The majority of land required for construction would be returned to its pre-construction land use during operation therefore, impacts on agricultural landholdings across the Project are likely to be limited and not significant.	Future cropping is likely to be very different to current agricultural practices. New crops are emerging and the role of tree planting will increase. Future operations will impact on land use and should be scoped in
	The majority of land required for construction would be returned to its pre-construction land use and so impacts on soil ecosystem functions are likely to be limited and not significant.	The construction of the haul road is likely to have lasting effects this should be scoped in , particularly if novel soil stabilisation is to be used
	The economic effects on landowners would be addressed through agreements which lie outside the scope of the ES.	Outside scope of the EIA but current rates are woefully dated and narrow in scope

Section 7 Air quality	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council view
	No likely significant effects are expected following the implementation of standard measures set out in the outline CoCP	We question whether a haul road of the scale anticipated could be built without an impact on air quality so this should be scoped in
		Pleased to see construction traffic scoped in

Section 8 Ecology and Biodiversity	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council
	There are no perceivable pathways to impact 'Important' hedgerows during operation.	How we manage hedgerows is changing future operation impacts should be scoped in
	There are no perceivable pathways to impact breeding birds during operation.	This should be scoped in as impacts are unknown

Section 10 Health and Welbeing	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council
		General comment. Outside EIA maybe but the health benefits from the environment are well documented so should be covered as environmental impacts will unquestionably impact health and wellbeing

Section 11 Historic Environment	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council
<p>This is a hugely significant aspect for Aldham; of the 225 listed buildings along the entire length of the scoping corridor Aldham has 19 or some 8 % of the buildings NG have identified in the Scoping Report . The 3km of corridor in our village (out of 180 total) is only 1.66% of the route length. In addition there are a further 20 listed buildings in the village just outside the scoping corridor. This includes a number of grade 1 properties and the conservation area of Fordstreet. We are clearly very disproportionately affected</p> <p>Annex 2 has the extract of listed properties in our parish</p>		
	There are no anticipated likely impacts to the physical fabric of	Scope in. The concentration of listed building in Aldham is

	built heritage assets. The Project does not currently propose to remove or modify any built heritage assets and effects from vibration are highly unlikely to result from the Project for built heritage during construction and operation. This would be kept under review as the Project evolves.	significantly higher than the project average. It will not be possible to construct a project of this size without impacting the listed buildings given the density that have to be circumnavigated. The scoping corridor also weaves around several on the boundary which gives a misleading representation of the impacts
--	---	---

Section 12 Hydrology and land drainage	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council
	No likely significant effects as no operational discharges would be generated and surface water drainage from operational infrastructure would be managed using suitable SuDS.	Suds and their construction may have lasting impact on our village. Severe weather events are increasingly frequent so the future operation of SUDs should be scoped in

Section 13 Landscape and Visual	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council
	It would be highly unlikely for receptors located in places outside the ZTV to have views of the Project – the digital ZTV maps would be ground truthed to ensure that likely visibility from sensitive receptors is fully considered.	Scope in. Highly unlikely means they could still occur so needs assessing in the EIA.
	Representative viewpoints	The current from NG are unacceptably limited. There are none that cover our parish. Great scrutiny will be required on this part of the EIA. See appendix of current visual receptor point from Marks Tey railway station – an area NG already say in section will not impact by the proposal see next comment below

	No likely significant effects on people using rail travel.	The Marks Tey Sudbury line (marketed as The Gainsborough line by the train operators, previously the Lovejoy line) is both a commuter and tourist line. The Chappel Viaduct, railway museum and recently re opened Gainsborough House in Sudbury provide a unique link of attractions. The impact on those using the line should be scoped in
	Assessment of visual effects on individual private views (with regard to the 'right to a view') is not within the remit of EIA.	It may not be but views are a key aspect of people attraction and interaction with the environment

Section 14 Noise and vibration	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council
	Construction traffic vibration	Scope in given the density of properties in the village, the haul road is a major part of this project and will impact both in its construction its deconstruction and its operation

Section 15 Socio economic recreation and tourism	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council
	During operation the project would not affect businesses ability to function. Routine inspections and maintenance would not lead to significant disruption	Scope in. Business have to evolve and this project will prevent a number of very real opportunities that those in the village may be looking to develop. This includes tourism and environmental activities
	Local economy and employment: Financial effect on individual businesses or property prices	Not in EIA scope but a major impact causing much concern

Section 16 traffic and transport	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council
		No comments

Section 17 cumulative effects	National Grid proposals	Aldham Parish council
		Pleased to see no matters being scoped out

The 406 page scoping report plus appendices is a considerable document. Aldham Parish Council have reviewed this as well as we can in the limited time and expertise at our disposal. As drafted the National Grid project will change our village for ever so we are disappointed that the off shore under sea route has not been properly assessed by National Grid.

We recognise wind power from the North Sea must be transmitted to consumers but this should be via a coordinated offshore grid. Such a grid has been shown by National Grid ESO (in 2020) not only to be deliverable but hugely beneficial. 50% less infrastructure will be required for a coordinated grid than the current piecemeal approach. That results in cost savings for consumers of £6billion and benefits the environment and communities.

We are gravely concerned that National Grid are using the scale of the project (NSI) , the current energy crisis and the complexity of the DCO process to steam roller this through. The planning inspectorate has the capability and duty to represent the public from this heavy handed approach from National Grid so we trust you will take our comments into full consideration.

As a separate item we have also included the views of Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylon Group who have outlined some of the wider concerns of the approach National Grid are taking to the consultation with communities that we also share as a parish.

Yours sincerely

Aldham Parish Council

Annex 1

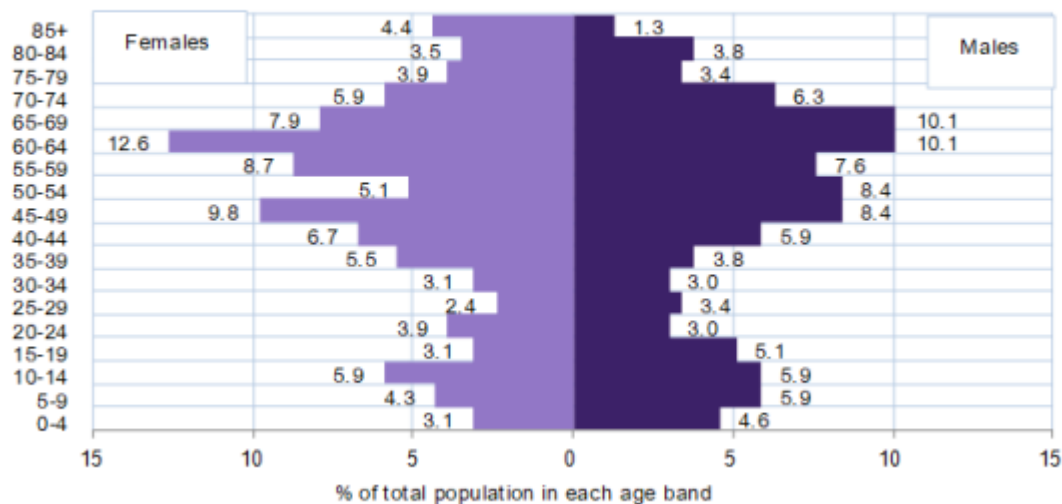
RCCE Community Profile of Aldham Village

<https://cbccrmdata.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/Aldham%20Parish%20Profile.pdf>

Population of Aldham as of 2011 Census compared to the national average.

How many people live locally?	How many households?	Children under 16	Working age adults	Older people over 65
490	210	75	290	125
48.3% male; 51.7% female		15.7% (England average = 18.9%)	59.1% (England average = 64.7%)	25.3% (England average = 16.3%)
Lone parent families with children	Single pensioner households	People from Black or Minority ethnic groups	People born outside the UK	Dependency Ratio
10	30	20	25	0.69
17.0% of all families with dependent children (England average = 24.5%)	15.4% of households (England average = 12.4%)	4.1% (England average = 20.2%)	5.3% (England average = 13.8%)	England average = 0.55

Population estimates by 5 year age band

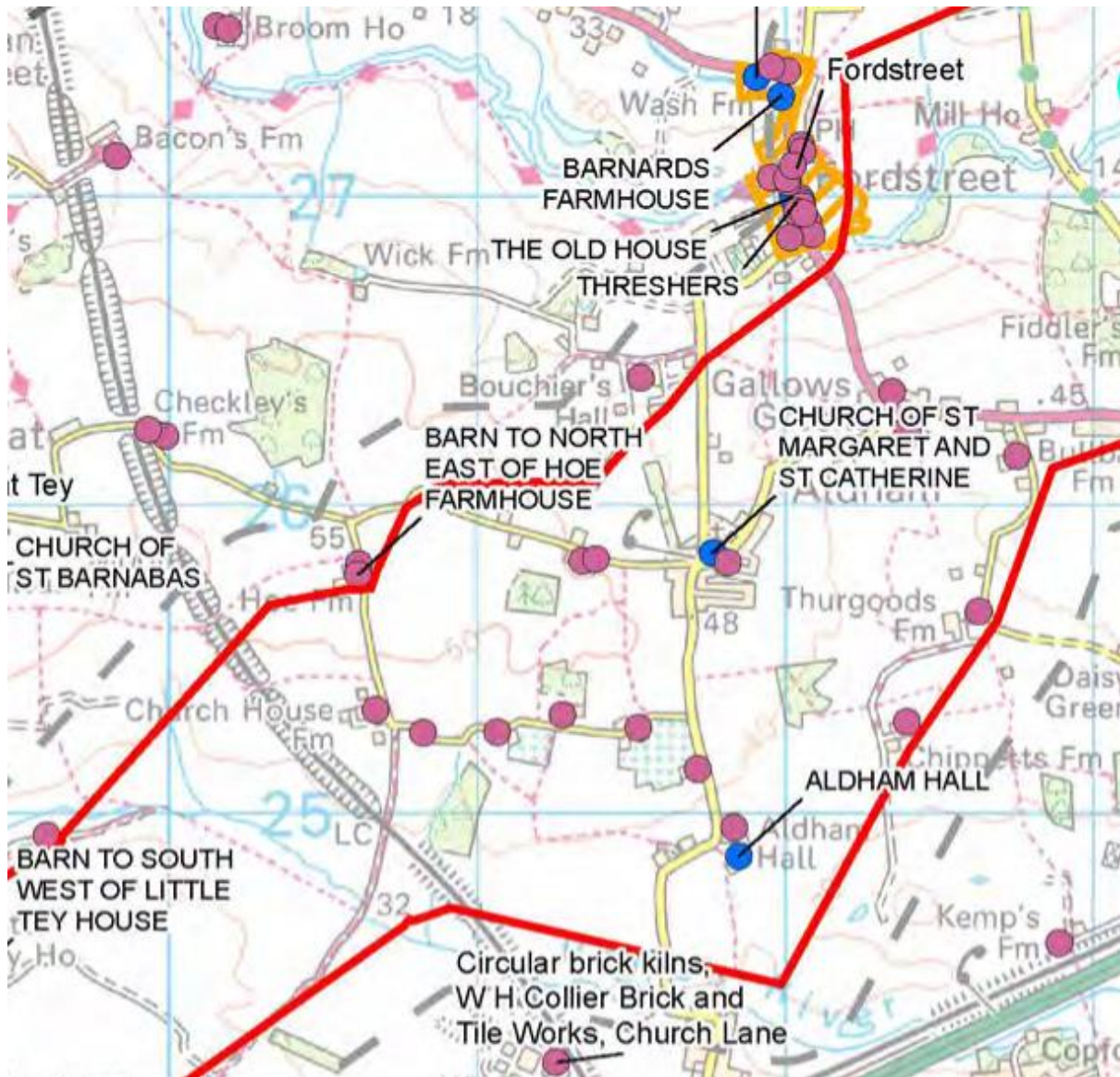


. The village contains the parish church: St Margaret and St Catherine and a number of farms as the surrounding area is agricultural. The village does not contain any primary or high schools and children requiring education will have to travel outside the village.

Annex 2

Historic Buildings extracted from Scoping report Appendix A part 6 of 8

Highlighting listed buildings across the village including string along Rectory road and the dense cluster in Ford street are of the village – this is also a conservation area



Annex 3

Scoping report part A section 7 of 8

Viewpoints proposed by National Grid

