

Strategic electricity networks

An open letter from Councillor Guy McGregor calling for a strategy for electricity networks.

Pylons are threatening to blight the beautiful East Anglian countryside – but we can do something to stop it.

National Grid have plans to expand the pylon network, but there is an alternative, which would be less destructive to the countryside.

“The ever-increasing demand for electricity, and the requirement to generate more renewable energy, has led to an explosion of proposals to build wind farms off the coast of East Anglia. Hundreds of offshore wind turbines are being planned and there also proposals to expand the nuclear power station at Sizewell. The connection of each new development to the electricity network is being considered in isolation.

While Suffolk County Council supports these renewable energy and low carbon generation proposals, we know existing power lines do not have the capacity to take all of the extra electricity being generated.

National Grid’s solution is to build extra pylons – it is currently planning a new overhead line with around 90 new pylons between Bramford near Ipswich and Twinstead in Essex. But this may be just the tip of the iceberg. Significantly more will be needed and this could result in new pylons from Lowestoft, potentially across the Broads to link into the network in the Diss area, [as shown on this map](#) (PDF, 1MB).

We believe there is another option. A coordinated approach to dealing with individual wind farm developments and the use of new technology could significantly reduce the need for new pylons, and may even make them totally unnecessary. We are urging National Grid and the Government to adopt this approach. Your backing would help to make sure our voice is heard.

I am sure you, the Government and National Grid all want the same thing as Suffolk County Council – a cheap, reliable source of electricity, which doesn’t harm the environment or destroy our countryside.

Let’s work together to achieve that.”

Councillor Guy McGregor

Chair of Suffolk County Council’s New Electricity Network Group