

Stoke Holy Cross Parish Council – 6 September 2023

District Councillor Report

Overview

Little to report since last month.

South Norfolk Council is currently developing a new 4 year strategy.

Waste Recycling

It is estimated that 44% of recyclable waste is recycled across South Norfolk. This is good by local standards but has proved difficult to improve.

Expect to see a new emphasis on increasing recycling rates with a new focus on small electricals and a reminder on the importance of using local bottle banks and paper waste facilities in preference to green bins.

Tour of Dunston Common

Ian Spratt and I were given a tour of the 4 commons in the Mulbarton & Stoke Holy Cross ward by Jamie Henry of SNC on Friday 4th August.

Council Tax Assistance Scheme

A paper proposing no changes for 2024/25 will go to the appropriate SNC Committee next week. This follows changes introduced for the current financial year with the objectives of better targeting benefits and controlling cost.

Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Proposal

The recent National Grid consultation has closed. National Grid advises that the formal statutory consultation will take place in 2024. An extract of key points from South Norfolk Council's 17 page submission is included as an Appendix.

National Grid has recently completed testing of the 1.4 GW Viking Link interconnector between Lincolnshire and Denmark, suggesting that offshore transmission of electricity is feasible.

The Fornsett & South Norfolk Pylons Action Group is planning a walk along the line of the pylons on Sunday 17th September.

Claire Coutinho MP has recently been appointed Energy Minister.

Other Infrastructure Developments

EDF Renewables application for a 50MW battery storage facility north of Hickling Lane, Swainsthorpe (Stoke Holy Cross ward) has been approved by SNC subject to conditions. EDF has indicated that it may be on site as early as Q4 this year.

National Grid is expected to make planning application for a major extension of the Norwich Main Substation.

Wymondham Station Approach Scheme

SNC Cabinet has agreed to fund and submit a planning application for the regeneration of the land around (mainly to NW of) Wymondham Station including improvement of the public realm at the entrance to the station. The land is in multiple ownership and the Cabinet endorsed the potential use of Compulsory Purchase Orders if necessary to secure the land at a fair price.

Jim Webber

6 September 2023

Appendix: Extract from South Norfolk Council's Response to 2nd Norwich to Tilbury Consultation

"Summary of our Position

Whilst recognising the potential importance of the Norwich to Tilbury (NT) project, in meeting the need to increase capacity to the electricity network, the Council maintains our objection to the proposed project as it stands, as agreed by South Norfolk's Cabinet at its meeting on Monday, 13 June 2022, when we considered the first non-statutory consultation.

As submitted, noting the changes from the 2022 preferred route corridor, the project presented still proposes standard lattice pylons through South Norfolk. It is considered therefore, that the Norwich to Tilbury (NT) project would continue to have a significant detrimental impact on the environment of South Norfolk. The Council maintains its stance that we are not satisfied that the project in its present form with its proposed overhead lines and standard lattice pylons is the most appropriate solution to National Grid's need for increased capacity. The imperative of getting electricity to market should not be at the expense of the open landscapes, heritage assets, wildlife sites, economy and wider environmental life of our district.

The concerns the Council has to the project are supported by the Leaders of the Norfolk Councils as set out in their letter dated 17 July 2023, which is attached to this response. This second non-statutory consultation again does not have any mitigations been enumerated including undergrounding in the most sensitive locations, avoidance of listed buildings, pylon design. Of great concern, which remains, is the realisation that the important market town of Diss would be surrounded on three sides by intrusive pylons and pass through the Waveney River Valley.

It is unacceptable that the proposals would 'fence-in' the historic market town of Diss in such an intrusive manner. A consultation that does not flesh-out the detail of the potential pylon designs and the visual appearance in relation to Diss (and indeed other sensitive landscapes) leaves interested parties incapable of assessing the proposals fully and responding accordingly.

Furthermore, as the Council has previously raised the timing of the consultation over the summer makes it difficult for our residents, businesses, and parish councils to engage and submit formal comments with their views regarding the project, which will have a significant impact upon them. Despite the Council's request to extend the consultation, National Grid has not extended the consultation period.

Whilst the principle of getting electricity to market is accepted absolutely, the case for this proposal has still not been made at all. Significantly more work alongside associated consultation and engagement will be required including a comparison of route options and detailed line configuration along the routes and assessments made on a monetary and non-monetary basis will be necessary. Only when this is available, should the project progress to the next step. To this end it is not clear why a completely new route has been chosen over one which more closely aligns to the existing route.

South Norfolk Council stands by to facilitate the proper engagement with all interested parties and is ready to allow both proposers and objectors to make their case in a constructive and respectful manner."

The full South Norfolk Council response can be found here: [SNC Response Letter](#)