

James Cartlidge MP  
Member of Parliament for South Suffolk  
Email: james.cartlidge.mp@parliament.uk

21st February 2024

Dear James,

Thank you for your letter and for your ongoing engagement with regard to the development of the Norwich to Tilbury Project.

I am disappointed to hear that you do not feel we have been sufficiently transparent in our consideration of the comparable offshore infrastructure options. I can assure you that when we develop our infrastructure proposals, we do undertake a robust and transparent options appraisal and assessment process. This process is used to carefully compare infrastructure options.

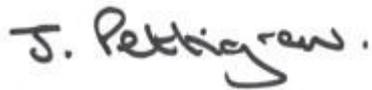
For the Norwich to Tilbury project, the team did examine an equivalent offshore infrastructure solution. However, as you are aware, this was discounted on the basis that it required three subsea cables and additional onshore converter stations in order to transport the same amount of energy as the overhead line. This would place significant extra costs on energy bill payers and not align with the statutory duties placed on us to be economic and efficient. The details of this and our reasoning were published in the projects Strategic Options Backcheck and Review (SOBR) 2023 as part of the recent consultation.

As you note, the ESO is carrying out an independent assessment of the infrastructure options for East Anglia, following the announcement of the Offshore Coordination Support Scheme (OCSS). As part of their assessment process, I understand the ESO have undertaken thorough engagement with community representatives in your constituency to discuss these proposals.

The Norwich to Tilbury project team are committed to carefully considering the findings of the ESO independent Study and should it indicate feasible alternative infrastructure options, which both meet our licence obligations and provide an ability to still achieve the delivery schedule, we will of course review and engage with the impacted communities appropriately. The project team are continuing to progress the project in parallel to the ESO Study, which is both necessary and important in order to meet the ambitious programme deadlines that enables new generation to be connected by the end of this decade, which is in line with the Government's commitment to connect 50GW of offshore wind by 2030.

I can assure you, we are working hard to review all possible ways to reduce the impact on communities, as much as we can. We are reviewing all the feedback received and will consider this as we further develop our proposals. If there are any aspects of the project that you would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to get in touch. The project team would be happy to meet and discuss this in more detail when your diary permits.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Pettigrew." The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

John Pettigrew  
CEO  
National Grid