

National Landscape Office
Saxon House, 1 Whittle Road
Hadleigh Road Industrial Estate
Ipswich, Suffolk
IP2 0UH

15th January 2025

Jo Hazlewood
4 Shepherds Lane
The Street
Holbrook
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP9 2QA

Dear Mrs Hazlewood

Proposed Lower Holbrook to Harkstead Landscape Enhancement Project

The National Landscape team in partnership with UK Power Networks are proposing a project to remove overhead wires and wooden poles and replace with underground cable in the Lower Holbrook - Harkstead area. I'm writing to seek support from Holbrook Parish Council on two counts:

- First, I would like to seek comments from the Parish Council about the proposal in general, noting that details of the precise route of the replacement underground cables and other equipment will not be known until further investigation and consultations have taken place.
- Secondly, I understand that some of the existing overhead network is on or adjacent to land under the Parish Council's ownership at Alton Green. The preliminary proposal also includes the installation of underground cabling on land which I understand is adjacent to the Parish Council's land ownership. As such I would like to provide some further information for your consideration.

This is one of a number of similar projects, some already completed, in the Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape (formally known as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and is funded by a special allowance operated by the electricity regulator Ofgem. Completed schemes include those at Sutton Common and Erwarton. The National Landscape team work with local communities to identify viable schemes and these are

reported to a regional steering group established by UK Power Networks. The steering group determine where the funds should be allocated, with successful schemes having a positive impact on landscape and amenity.

A total fund of £6.9M is available in the eastern region from Ofgem to improve visual amenity through the replacement of overhead wires with underground cable on the electricity distribution network in National Parks and National Landscapes (legally defined as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) for the period 2027-2032.

This proposal covers approximately 2,300m of high voltage electricity network, all of which currently uses overhead cables carried on wooden poles. The attached plan shows the existing overhead network and the lengths of overhead wire being considered for inclusion in the scheme.

I've highlighted in orange on the attached plan where I believe the Parish Council's property is affected at Alton Green. **Please let me know if my understanding of the Parish Council's land ownership is incorrect.** If you happen to know the correct owner and their contact details, I would be very grateful if you could **please help us get in touch?**

The attached plan is a preliminary plan of the proposed scheme and is subject to agreement with each landowner. The existing, high voltage, overhead cabling is highlighted in yellow and we wish to remove this and replace it with underground cabling shown on the plan by a 'thick' dashed red line. The physical works involve an open trench, c. 1m deep and ½ m wide and are carried out by specialist groundwork contractors. Any pole mounted equipment (transformers and switch gear) would need to be replaced with ground level equipment.

Project planning takes into account various constraints, including ecological, archaeological, technical electrical supply considerations, minimal disruption to farming operations etc. The estimated cost of the Lower Holbrook - Harkstead scheme is c. £640k, which would be recovered by UK Power Networks from Ofgem on successful completion. If approved, the timescales for taking a project such as this forward can range from 18 months to several years depending on the complexity of the scheme.

At this stage, in order for us to take the project development of this proposal forward, we are requesting:

- The Parish Council to inspect the attached plan and provide me with your comments by email.
- Written 'in principle' support from the Parish Council (an email will suffice) for the removal of overhead lines on land under the Parish Council's ownership. Our

understanding is that the proposed underground cabling route is not on Parish Council land but does run close to the ownership boundary.

- Please also submit contact details for a nominated contact for the Parish Council to be given UK Power Networks if the project gains traction.

I recognise that members of the Parish Council will need to discuss this. The next UK Power Networks Steering Group Meeting is scheduled to be held on the first week of March, so it would be great if you could try to get back to me by the end of February at the latest. I would be happy to arrange for a surveyor from UK Power Networks to answer any technical queries if required.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Eloise Markwick

National Landscape Officer

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