

Essential Reference Paper 'C'

Proposed Amendments to Section 5.3: Urban Form

Paragraph 5.3.116

Secondly, there is a high-voltage overhead power line running through the middle of Sub-Areas A and B. ~~For health and safety reasons, regulations require a 'wayleave' of 400m on either side of such power lines (i.e 800m across). As, which forms~~ an artificial straight line with no reference either to the existing town of Harlow nor to any natural features such as topography or watercourses, ~~it is difficult to see how the power line could be convincingly integrated into GI or other landscape or open space networks. (7) For example, at Great Ashby north of Stevenage the limitations to coherent urban form resulting from a similar power line are clear, even though the wayleave is considerably narrower than current requirements (only 50m each side). National Grid guidance¹ provides case studies of good and bad design and site layout in relation to planning new development around overhead power lines.~~

Paragraph 5.3.123

A second option could be for a number of connected 'villages', perhaps reflecting some of the features of Hunsdon, for example. As the village concept is not explicitly related to Harlow it could provide a more coherent 'stand-alone' form to incorporate an irregular (rather than linear) 'wayleave' around the overhead power lines. ~~However, this would be likely to reduce the amount of land available for development in order to soften the linear edges through uneven set back from the 400m line on both sides, and could be vulnerable to pressure to 'squeeze' development value from the land.~~ This option could relate better to the existing villages in the area, although it would still significantly impact their character in terms of their countryside setting.

¹ 'A Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for Development Near High Voltage Overhead Lines'
See www.nationalgrid.com/uk/Senseofplace