

Pesky pylons on property could become a most valuable resource

►► Check out eligibility for compensation

►► Land with pylons is more costly to farm

IF you have old high-voltage pylons or electricity lines crossing your property, you could be eligible for a large compensation payment, says a specialist land agent.

Cambridgeshire-based Ben Lenton points out most of these lines were constructed on annual wayleave agreements. "Many land and property owners do not realise they can be terminated.

"If this happens, the electricity company has to remove the lines or pay fair compensation."

But why is this compensation available?

"High voltage overhead lines and pylons cause significant blight to property values,

where they can be seen from the farmhouse or cottages," says Mr Lenton.

They affect residential property because people do not want to live next to them. They also affect agricultural land because it is more expensive to farm around them. Some of the largest claims arise where they cross land which may be developed.

"This is because houses or industrial units cannot usually be built under them.

"Any new houses next to the lines will be harder to sell and less valuable."

He suggests farmhouses can be devalued by as much as 20 per cent to 30 per cent where pylons run very closely.

"Many such claims run into six-figure payments.

"Ideally, the pylon needs to be within 200 metres of the property for a claim to be viable.

"If none of the pylons are actually on the property but the



Public perceptions of pylons include links to poor health (not yet proven), but they are also more expensive to farm around.

lines cross it, then the lines need to be within 50m."

Mr Lenton says it should be noted that small wooden pole lines do not usually give rise to a significant compensation payment unless they are of 33kV capacity.

Visual impact

"Other things in addition to the visual impact cause devaluation. The perceptions by the general public relating to electromagnetic fields and their effect on health is one example.

"Whether or not there is a true link is yet to be fully proven.

"Most land and property owners do not realise that they have a right to compensation for the loss in value.

"If the electricity line is near to but not crossing land owned, it is not possible to claim.

"Similarly, if a lump sum has been paid in the past, then no claim can be made," he says.

"Large claims also result where pylons and lines cross land with development potential. It is often possible for lines to be removed, run underground or for compensation if they are to remain."

Mr Lenton says most claims are reached by agreement without them becoming too contentious or proceeding to a Wayleave Hearing.

"However, there are many unique quirks which can catch the unwary or inexperienced adviser.

"There are also other matters that require negotiation in addition to the compensation figure to ensure a landowner's interests are not compromised."

His advice is to use a firm of specialist chartered surveyors on a 'no-win no-fee' basis.

MORE INFORMATION: Contact Ben Lenton on 01223 412 343 or visit www.cambridgelandconsultants.com

Compensation 'irrelevancies'

If claiming compensation, there are several factors which do not matter:

- Line was constructed a long time ago
- Property was bought after line construction
- Purchaser was fully aware of the line when buying property and may have bought at a discount
- Property was built after the power line was constructed
- There is no intent to sell property now, or in future

World news

■ AUSTRALIA

THE sale of a Mount Ascot Merino ram last week for \$8,000 (£4,450) has set what is believed to be a record for a Queensland ram sold at auction.

■ BRAZIL

JBS-Swift sees opportunities to export beef products into places where it has not traditionally been part of the diet. For example, canned beef products which do not need refrigeration into Africa.

■ GERMANY

SOME German supermarkets are selling 'Fair Milk'. It is a dairy farmers organisation initiative and generates a higher milk price of 40 cents/kg (0.35p/kg) provided the milk meets certain criteria; 4.2 per cent fat, 3.5 per cent protein, and is produced from a ration containing at least 60 per cent grass (or silage) and a maximum 30 per cent maize silage.

■ DENMARK

THE Association of Danish Pig Producers (ADDP) is reported to be unhappy with the board at Danish Crown. ADDP outgoing chairman Torben Poulsen, said: "I am convinced we cannot escape changing the company's management." Danish producers exported around seven million weaners last year – a 1.7m increase on 2008 – in a bid to bypass prices paid by Danish Crown.

■ ISRAEL

AN outbreak of bird flu was discovered in Kibbutz Ein Shemer in a poultry shed containing about 43,000 hens.

■ RUSSIA

AFRICAN swine fever has been found in pigs on a private property. About 100 animals were culled in the surrounding area which was quarantined, said the Russian federal agency for animal and plant health.

■ VIETNAM

THE Ministry's animal husbandry department plans to increase ratio of livestock production within total agricultural output to 38 per cent by 2015 and 42 per cent by 2020, from the current 30 per cent. It necessitates a shift from household-based to industrial farming.

■ HAITI

THE American Association of Swine Veterinarians has called for extra caution for transmittable trans-border diseases from Haiti, now the country is slowly recovering from the earthquake.

■ INDIA

UTTAR Pradesh state produces more milk than the world's largest exporter, New Zealand, while Punjab and Rajasthan each beat Australia, according to *Economic Times* figures.

Down on the farm

with Mark Tucker, Head of Agronomy, Yara UK Ltd.

Risks associated with Urea are the key...

At a recent conference the subject of nitrogen source was again debated, with the conclusion that urea could offer benefits to feed wheat growers as it is difficult to statistically differentiate between yields achieved with urea and ammonium nitrate. Trying to demonstrate a statistical difference is always a challenge as the error associated with the nitrogen response curve is typically greater than the difference between the type of nitrogen used. With this in mind other methods of differentiating the two sources needs to be considered, such as nitrogen lost as ammonia. This highlights the risk associated with using urea, as it stands well apart from ammonium nitrate based fertilizers. This should be weighed up on farm when considering nitrogen source. The EU Emissions Inventory Guide shows a 10.9% greater loss from urea, whilst the latest UK data gives a 21% greater ammonia loss on arable soils and 36% on grassland than AN. Therefore for every 100 kgN/ha applied, 21kgN/ha (arable) or 36 kgN/ha (grassland) can be lost as ammonia. To compensate for this loss, the efficiency of uptake of the nitrogen left needs to be very high. This uptake efficiency is clearly going to be affected by many factors including soil moisture, temperature, compaction, root size and depth etc. As any one, or more, of these factors becomes less than optimal, efficiency reduces and thus the affect of nitrogen source becomes more apparent. In 2009, conditions at application were dry and thus unfavourable for nitrogen uptake which came through to yield where urea was statistically significantly poorer than nitrate based fertilizers (UAN, AN, CAN) with a yield penalty of 0.51 t/ha. As agriculture faces the challenge of improving 'Nutrient Use Efficiency' to reduce its carbon footprint, knowingly selecting an inefficient nutrient does not make sense.



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