



GroundReport

July 2006



Up to £7 billion could be wiped off property values due to pylon cancer fears.

If ministers take the advice of a committee set up by the Department of Health, about 130,000 houses could lose up to 25% of their resale price. Their draft report states that building houses within 230ft of high voltage power lines and 115ft of lower voltage lines should be banned because of possible links with childhood leukaemia.

Alarmingly, the confidential document considers the option of compulsorily buying all 75,000 homes in England and Wales that are affected. Whatever happens, it seems likely that the overall costs will ultimately be borne by consumers.

The documents were prepared by Stakeholder Advisory Group on Extremely Low Frequency Electromagnetic Fields (Sage). This committee was set up by the DoH in October 2004 following the publication of a report by the Oxford childhood cancer research group. The suggestion was made that children under 15 living near high voltage power lines could have a 69% increased risk of getting leukaemia.

The draft Sage report issued in November last year has also acknowledged that power lines are already having a significant impact on property values, with a home in a rural location within 165ft of a National Grid transmission line said to have lost as much as 15% of its value. Nicholas Ashe of Property Vision was also reported to have commented that the higher the value of the house, the greater the impact and that they are potentially talking about reductions of up to 50 per cent. A spokesman for the National Grid declined to disclose any details until the firm conclusions of the group are published this summer.