



Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Hearing Transcript

Project:	Sea Link
Hearing:	Transcript of Open floor hearing 1 (OFH1) – Session 1 Part 2
Date:	5 November 2025

Please note: This document is intended to assist Interested Parties.

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The video recording published on the Planning Inspectorate project page is the primary record of the hearing.

FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:06:11 - 00:00:18:02

Okay. Thank you very much for coming back. Um, it's the time is now 3:30, and we're going to recommence this meeting. Can I just confirm that the live stream of this event has restarted

00:00:19:28 - 00:00:21:06

from the case team?

00:00:23:02 - 00:00:24:00

Thank you.

00:00:25:20 - 00:01:18:17

Okay, so the next group we have is Alexandra Fulford, David Pelley, Rachel McConville, Justin Power and Charlotte Newsom. So we'll start with Alexander Fulford. You've got three minutes. Thank you. Thank you. I'm Alexandra Fulford from Sachs, London. Imagine a world with no trees, no birds, no fields, no wildlife, or imagine a world, or we can no longer produce enough food to feed this nation, or where the already struggling NHS crumbles under the weight of mental health crisis due to people like myself suffering from the loss of green space and being surrounded by nothing but environmental destruction.

00:01:19:08 - 00:01:55:26

That is the reality that we face here in Suffolk. That is what is on the horizon. That is the impact we will see from such wanton destruction of nature. We must protect what little is left of nature. We must be the voice of the trees, of the birds and the wildlife. We must act now to protect our beautiful countryside and protect our own health and the health of the nation, and ultimately, the health of this planet.

00:01:56:05 - 00:02:27:14

We must act now before it is too late. I sit here today to plead for what little is left of our countryside. The UK is already amongst the world's most nature depleted countries. We are in the bottom 10% in terms of nature depletion. Globally, 1 in 6 species in the UK is at risk.

00:02:28:04 - 00:02:55:11

We have so little left we cannot afford to lose any more. And so I'm here today to please ask you and please ask everybody here to stop this environmental annihilation before it's too late. Thank you. Thank you. We now have David Pelley and you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:03:00:06 - 00:03:32:27

My name is David Pelly. I'm a resident of Walbrzych, and I am objecting to the Sealink application, primarily because of the cumulative impact that Sealink will have on the protected habitats and local communities in the coastal areas of Suffolk. When combined with the other major energy infrastructure projects, including Sizewell C line, link E1 and E2, it should be noted that the DCO

submission for Sealink provides for land for the converter station for line link, so Line Link and Sealink cannot be considered in isolation from each other.

00:03:33:15 - 00:04:07:01

On a personal note, my house in Walbrzych overlooks the proposed site for the landfall and cable route for Line Link. The line and interconnecting cable that will pass my back door will cross the countryside and end up at a massive converter station at Friston, next door to the converter stations and substations being built, the Sealink and the other energy projects. This cable represents an umbilical link between the communities of Walbrzych and those in the Saxmundham and Friston areas. That is why I'm speaking here today, and I believe that the Planning Inspectorate should not assess each project in isolation.

00:04:07:08 - 00:04:40:10

In the time available, I will only focus on one aspect of cumulative impact, which is on the local environment. Pretty much the whole of the Suffolk coast affected by all these projects is covered by a range of environmental designations. These include Suffolk Coastal Heaths, National Landscapes, minimal Walbrzych Heaths and Marshes. Triple C, along with other areas designated as Ramsar, Ramsar, Spa and SAC. The geographical extent of these areas is critical to allowing wildlife to feed, thrive and breed sustainably.

00:04:40:12 - 00:05:14:03

Looked at separately, developers can argue that they can limit adverse impacts for one project, but they cannot take account of multiple projects affecting different parts of these protected areas and adjacent habitats. I look out of my window at home and see marsh harriers, which are specially protected in the UK and specifically in the local SBA hunt across the fields and marshes by the coast. The marshes and reedbeds in the Walbrzych area will increasingly be a refuge for them from the disruption caused by other projects along the coast.

00:05:14:15 - 00:05:47:12

But where will they go when lining is being constructed? I recognise and support the government's efforts to meet targets for net zero emissions, but they are also committed to targets on biodiversity. For example, target 14 in the government's own biodiversity policy, published only in February 2025 this year makes a commitment to, and I quote, ensure the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes and environmental impact assessments.

00:05:47:16 - 00:06:06:10

The only way to reconcile the government's targets for biodiversity and for net zero in relation to Sealink is to assess the cumulative impact of all these energy projects on the environmentally designated and sensitive areas on the Suffolk coast. I trust the examining Authority will do this and convenient issue specific hearing on cumulative impact. Thank you.

00:06:06:12 - 00:06:11:21

Thank you very much. And next we have Rachel McConville. Three minutes please.

00:06:13:01 - 00:06:14:16

Hi. I hope you can see me.

00:06:15:19 - 00:06:20:13

Um. Not yet. Can we, um, display on the the full screen, please?

00:06:20:18 - 00:06:21:09

Yes.

00:06:22:06 - 00:06:25:09

I think whoever's in charge of the teams will be able to do that.

00:06:25:21 - 00:06:26:24

Does that work?

00:06:28:13 - 00:06:35:10

Uh, I think they're just trying to sort it out. Oh, yeah. It's working now. Thank you very much. You've got three minutes.

00:06:35:21 - 00:07:21:28

Thank you. As a resident of Benwell, Saxmundham, I'm grateful for the opportunity to talk here today. And despite it often feeling like we are fighting a losing battle with our concerns seemingly overruled. It is important that we still make our voices heard. As you all know, there are huge energy development projects being undertaken at the moment in the form of Line Link, Sealink and Sizewell C, all of which put huge strain on both the environment and the local communities who are witnessing large parts of a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as well as fertile farmland being bulldozed to make way for car parks, energy infrastructure and various other man made monstrosities.

00:07:23:07 - 00:07:54:25

The cumulative disruption to both the local community and the natural landscape is simply too great. I'd like to clarify that I'm not against the greener sources of energy, which is an essential step into weaning ourselves off fossil fuels, but I feel strongly that this has to be done in a way that is sympathetic to the environment and the communities that bear the brunt of it. Climate change is happening and these quick fixing plasters to rush to meet unrealistic green target deadlines are not going to prevent it.

00:07:54:27 - 00:08:27:15

It is better to take a longer view towards solutions to slow down the effect. Alternatives, even if more costly in the short term, should be properly considered, including an offshore grid as successfully achieved in Belgium. Ripping up farmland, sea beds and beaches to make way for miles of cabling, as well as disrupting endangered bird species in the process, surely cannot be the environmental answer. The irony is we seem to be destroying the environment to save the environment.

00:08:27:18 - 00:09:04:15

And once the cables have been laid, will the land really be thoughtfully reinstated as it was before? Not accounting for the fact that at that point countless trees will have been chopped down and endangered species may never recover. The impact on farmland, which we have less and less of,

cannot be ignored. Local farmers are deeply concerned about trench depths and soil disruption, amongst many other things. If cables are not buried deep enough, land may no longer be suitable for traditional agricultural use, and I sincerely hope this has been suitably researched.

00:09:04:27 - 00:09:08:22

Ironically, wind turbines are uneconomical, uneconomic.

00:09:09:04 - 00:09:10:10

And 90s left.

00:09:10:12 - 00:09:41:06

Even that zero. Materials and construction depend on cheap fossil fuels, which all come from China. Production is negligible on windless days and we have to pay to turn them off on windy days, as the national grid cannot support all the power generated by them. Though there is a massive carbon footprint in their manufacture, installation and maintenance for 20 year lifespan and all at the expense of our landscape. How can this be considered green? If Sealink does get the go ahead?

00:09:41:08 - 00:09:55:18

That's your three minutes. I'm afraid we need to stop there. But anything you haven't had a chance to say, please do submit it in writing into the examination and we will read it. Thank you. Next, can we hear from Justin Power? Three minutes please.

00:09:57:09 - 00:10:34:21

Hello, I'm Justin Power, I'm a resident of Saxmundham and I protest National grid ceiling project. I consider us an East Suffolk estate. Agents and tourist industry like to style us the Heritage Coast. Bushy tailed nonresident utopians at the energy Coast. But the reality in ten years time, it could be the onslaught coast, the devastated coast or the chewed up and spat out coast. Who is supporting us in East Suffolk? We feel on our own. Consider the national grid answerable to its shareholders the Abu Dhabi National Wealth Fund, Blackrock et al.

00:10:34:23 - 00:11:07:03

And also, of course, a developing reputation for gamesmanship. Consider Ofgem above my pay grade. But no one can accuse them of being on the side of the people of East Suffolk. Our estimable and estimable M.P., Jennie Riddle Carpenter, is on the socials, trying her damndest to get accountability for the lack of coordination between all these assets. And she's being palmed off. So we have to stand up for ourselves. But who is listening? I'm very glad you are. We have so many projects, yet there's so little coordination.

00:11:07:06 - 00:11:41:20

Sizewell C is the third largest engineering project in the UK. Essex and Suffolk Water has just this week announced a new plan of a huge development, cutting straight through this part of East Suffolk, mainly related to Sizewell. There are 800 homes being built, part of the South Saxmundham garden suburb, and still we have yet to see plans of how potable water is going to be got to Sizewell once it's built as well. That will also be huge. And now sealing and all the rest of the national grid stuff.

00:11:41:25 - 00:11:49:21

The cumulative effects of all this will be staggering, but the disruption has barely begun and the people of Suffolk are already suffering.

00:11:51:08 - 00:12:25:26

Ipswich hospital appointments are already being missed. An air ambulance visited south entrance only just two days ago, and I'm sure it won't be the last. Washing out to dry is being covered in builder's dust. Even Suffolk's leading community choir rehearsals are being disrupted. Roadkill of displaced mammals through the roof. We are resilient and not habitual, monas. But there will come a point when something will have to give. The question arises could National Grid organise a piss up in the brewery? The evidence suggests not.

00:12:25:28 - 00:13:03:21

The first question ought to be when organising a piss up, is the brewery available? In this case, the brewery is East Suffolk and Sizewell C had booked it already and it gets worse. The gormless national grid to toxic arrogance gamesmanship last month announced this railway bridge on the BBC two one in Bethnal Green, south of Saxmundham. And honestly, they mention a housing development in in Bennell, but no mention of the 800 homes being built just 500m away that will disrupt the A12, and the BT 1121 will also be completely devastated.

00:13:03:27 - 00:13:10:05

Thank you very much and apologies for anyone who didn't like the bad language in your submission.

00:13:10:07 - 00:13:10:22

Sorry.

00:13:10:24 - 00:13:12:23

Apologies to anyone who didn't like the bad language.

00:13:13:11 - 00:13:14:14

About what bad language?

00:13:14:16 - 00:13:18:18

And can we have a newsroom next, please? You have three minutes.

00:13:21:27 - 00:13:25:21

Left in the same house, eight minutes from North Warren for 95 years.

00:13:25:26 - 00:13:28:12

I don't think your microphone is switched on.

00:13:31:17 - 00:13:32:13

Is it now?

00:13:32:29 - 00:13:33:14

Yes it.

00:13:33:16 - 00:13:34:01

Is.

00:13:37:21 - 00:14:15:00

Is that better? Yep. Okay. My family have lived in the same house, eight minutes from North Warren for 95 years. We are a combination of artists, dancers, farmers and fishermen contributing through this heritage and with a fierce commitment to nature protection because we understand its value and dependency on this beautiful coast. With rarity comes fragility, and the industrialization of the East Coast will destroy it. All the communities here have worked to establish a nature reserve of incredible beauty and tranquility under dark skies, and have protected it until now.

00:14:15:05 - 00:15:21:29

With National Grid and five other proposed routes, I am not here to quote facts as you have them, and you will be awash with them over these two days. The the problem is that they do not seem to be heard. The proposals in front of you are indefensible when you know there are options that are also cheaper and will not leave lasting, irreversible damage on shore here. It is not only landscape destruction, species the extinction. It is the destruction of our cultural heritage and livelihoods. Why onshore when an offshore transmission network is cheaper? Why onshore on productive farmland and wetland nature reserves of significant importance in a nature depleted country like the UK, when an offshore network is already a reality, demonstrated by Belgium, who have operated their national grid offshore for four years, with Germany and Holland investing in the same infrastructure, the proposals have not demonstrated reasonable grounds for choosing this area when other options are available, and we have not been represented with, we have not been presented with information as to why this route must be the one when national grids.

00:15:22:01 - 00:16:02:00

ESO's analysis of an integrated offshore system for East Anglia demonstrates that it could save 2 billion. National grid will cause economic damage here, not just during the construction phase, but afterwards where restrictions will apply within specified easement strips along cable routes 30m wide, which are not allowed to. Which will prevent sorry deep root systems of trees and shrubs regrowth, in particular to the income from nature tourism which has grown here precisely because of the significant, because of the investment in it by all the communities on this East Coast with international significance for the work.

00:16:02:02 - 00:16:06:20

The RSPB has achieved RSPB has achieved over 90 years.

00:16:08:25 - 00:16:41:02

The commitment amounts, the financial commitment amounts to possibly billions. When you take into consideration the interrelated industries and the employment, all will be swept away. National grid have selected an area of red list species rare and incredibly important wetlands, interlinking diverse communities, providing rich species habitat. East Suffolk does not need to be sacrificed in this way when offshore and brownfield sites are economically viable and habitat destruction avoidable? Thank you very much.

00:16:41:08 - 00:16:51:18

Thank you very much. If we now have the next group of five, please. So that's Yvonne Edge, Henry Young, Robert Nicole, Allison Downs and Michael Mahoney.

00:17:17:29 - 00:17:32:18

Thank you. And I'd just like to reiterate again, the reason why we're not asking questions is in the interest of time so we can hear from more people. Um, if we have got questions, we will write to you afterwards and ask our questions. So first we have Avon Edge. You have three minutes.

00:17:33:03 - 00:18:09:00

Thank you. And good afternoon. I'm Yvonne Edge. Apologies in advance. I have come from my sickbed today. And so if I lose a bit of coherence or focus. Please accept my apologies. As you can tell from my accent, I am not a native of these parts. No, but you can't help who you fall in love with. And that's what brought me to my first trip to Suffolk 23 years ago to visit the relatives. Besides the interrogation I got from a very wary mother, I was not taken with this landscape far too flat.

00:18:09:11 - 00:18:40:24

Where were the hills? Where were those colossal reminders of natural, of nature, visible every day. From the polluted confines of an inner city life? Well, at least when it wasn't raining. It took me a little time to appreciate the vastness of these open skies and the wonders who opened up to me. Over the years, I learned the slow, languorous, quiet ways of this place. I saw creatures I'd only ever seen in books or on TV before.

00:18:41:03 - 00:19:01:11

Adders, marsh harriers, slow worms and glow worms. A cornucopia of nature's delights and wonders. And finally, ten years ago, I moved to make my home on the southern border of North Warren Nature Reserve. I want you to listen, just for a short time.

00:19:05:29 - 00:19:36:03

That is the soundscape to my life every day in our home. Actually. Not quite. This quiet is sometimes interspersed with the roars of the red deer stag. During the autumn rutting season, the surprisingly high pitched calls of the hunting marsh harrier, the unbelievable booming of the bittern during the spring mating season, the call of the cuckoo interloper, demanding food from its tiny stepparents.

00:19:36:11 - 00:20:19:27

The shrieks of the grey lugs as they crush in for the night, and the magical beating of the wings of thousands of starlings as they perform their gravity defying murmuring in winter, and so many more. That's exactly the sound of silence, then, but Sonic Manor to my ears. If National Grid's current ceiling plans go ahead, I have no doubt that this soundscape will be gone, not just during the construction phase, but forever. These species, many endangered, but all calling this place home under Haven for at least part of the year, will not be able to survive, or will not care to survive in what will become an industrial landscape.

00:20:20:07 - 00:20:35:13

I will not repeat the fact that many of the commentators have already so eloquently described to you about the many kinds of damage these proposals will cause, not just to North Warren to, but put put through this wonderful heritage coast. Thank you.

00:20:36:06 - 00:20:45:18

Thank you very much. And now can we have Henry Young, who is representing Britten, Pears Arts and the Suffolk Coast Destination Management organisation. You have six minutes.

00:20:50:29 - 00:20:52:00

Thank you very much.

00:20:52:05 - 00:21:27:07

For allowing me to speak in my two roles as chief operating officer, Britten Pears Arts, a charity that owns Snape Maltings and produces the Aldeburgh Festival, and also as a director of the Suffolk Coast Limited, the destination management organisation for East Suffolk, which has a membership of 250 businesses and engages with many more. Both organisations submitted representations in June. I will try to avoid repeating what was submitted, but there is now new economic data to share. Personally, I've been focusing on energy projects since 2018 when I was chair of the Suffolk Coast.

00:21:27:09 - 00:22:00:15

We invited EDF energy and ScottishPower to explain their projects at our members conference. We've been fairly open minded about the projects to that point, uncertain whether our membership would view the projects as threats or opportunities, but were left gobsmacked by the absence of a national strategy and the obvious lack of coordination. The OMB was going to be carved up time and time again. In 2019, we raised funds to commission an independent study into the cumulative impact of the first batch of MSPs on tourism.

00:22:01:05 - 00:22:32:17

Those studies by leading consultants BVA, modeled the size we'll see in Scottish power projects, as at that time there was only limited knowledge of all the other projects on the horizon. Tourism is a major part of the East Suffolk economy. The latest figures for 2024 before the size will see works got going, and data produced by Destination Research showed its full value at 730 million, up 5% on 2023.

00:22:32:27 - 00:22:42:18

Supporting more than 15,000 full time equivalent jobs. 16% of local employment. Comparable to Norfolk and even Cornwall.

00:22:44:21 - 00:23:19:16

Visitors come here for peace and tranquility. 84% of tourists cite this as their main motivator. Yet our BVA report showed the first tranche of incidents would deter at least 17% of visitors. And that was before Sealink and Lion Link, and on and on and on. Tourism is a pillar of the local economy, but it is fragile. Employers. National insurance has hit accommodation, retail and hospitality hardest, as has the rising cost of living and national living wage.

00:23:20:11 - 00:23:52:15

Tourism businesses survive on slim margins, rejoice in a 5% rise in footfall, but really struggle or fail with a 5% fall. This is not theory. We feel it very acutely at Snape Maltings. Let me speak briefly about Britain Piers Arts. As someone who's a bit institutionally biased but also generally avoids hyperbole. There is nowhere else like this on the planet. An international centre for music in a serene and utterly tranquil national landscape.

00:23:52:28 - 00:24:24:19

Financially, it shouldn't really add up. We're in the middle of reedbeds. Half our catchment is the North Sea, and there is no real public transport to speak of. We've recently commissioned a fresh economic impact assessment from Bot consultants. We visited by over 600,000 people annually, sustained 400 full time equivalent local jobs and contribute 37 million to the local economy. But this is a very expensive site to run and classical music is extremely hard to fund.

00:24:25:06 - 00:24:58:03

Our survival depends on footfall and a healthy visitor economy, which we also help to sustain, which relies on its tranquil environment for which its famous and a functioning road network. Snape Maltings generates 1700 vehicle movements daily. The A12 and A110 for already struggle in summer. The A 1094 and B 169 junction up at Snape Village clogs with any volume of daytime traffic.

00:24:58:15 - 00:25:32:04

Layer Sealink on top of size will see ScottishPower and others, and it's a terrifying prospect. Why has National Grid not carried out a meaningful traffic assessment, only using January and February as a baseline? They should worry about their impact on tourism but also their own logistics. They they'll be shocked. National grid has made no meaningful effort to engage with tourism. And yet the Suffolk coast is a very easy organization to engage with for all their faults and destruction.

00:25:32:06 - 00:26:09:12

Size will see did engage with tourism. The Scottish Power did to start off with and then hid under government policy. N1 National Grid is obliged to consider tourism impacts. The token effort in their environmental statement mentions the Red House, our very special museum and Aldeburgh, but visited by just 10,000 people, but ignores Snape Maltings, an attraction that attracts 600,000 and underpins the local economy. National grid's judgment that only attractions within a 500 metre catchment of their construction area is laughable.

00:26:10:24 - 00:26:43:18

National grid fails to recognise tourism as an employment sector, despite providing more jobs than any sector listed in its environmental statement. This is unacceptable. Please can we have an issue specific hearing on tourism and also on traffic and transport. We would say this, but Britain, Piers Arts and the Suffolk coast are both huge champions of green energy. But what we oppose is the relentless carving up of this national landscape and the chronic cumulative impacts. Are there not better strategic solutions? Please do not consent to this spaghetti infrastructure.

00:26:43:21 - 00:26:51:06

It will threaten thousands of jobs and undermine a cultural and economic ecosystem that has taken decades to build. Thank you.

00:26:51:18 - 00:26:56:14

Thank you very much. And now can we have Robert Nicoll? You have three minutes.

00:26:57:28 - 00:27:13:22

I am Robert Nicoll. I am the unfortunate farmer who has this land that I'm the unfortunate farmer who has the land which National Grid requires for their project.

00:27:15:11 - 00:27:18:22

In doing so, this whole project.

00:27:20:08 - 00:27:20:23

Has.

00:27:20:29 - 00:27:39:03

Been absolutely crazy to me because I've seen the carnage of the digging up of the fields, the of all the archaeological pits, and firsthand how much damage they have done to my farm. I'm normally.

00:27:41:00 - 00:27:41:22

Very, very.

00:27:41:24 - 00:28:18:15

Good at my farming business, and we on an annual turnover of probably 13 to 1400 tonnes of Group one or Group two milling wheat, which is why would you take out such a good farm that has more than a foot worth of good topsoil, but below the topsoil it has this lovely clay, which seems to soak up the moisture in the summertime and allows the plant to get going and makes me makes a good yield.

00:28:19:23 - 00:28:52:08

Although all of that, there's probably more than half £1 million worth of land drains covered with stone and large pipes, all within a chain of part which is 21m to allow the water to clear off the to clear off the farm, to make it far enough to grow real decent crops. The crops right grow are royalty rate for feed, beans and beans for human consumption.

00:28:52:21 - 00:29:03:08

Also, I grow a specific wheat which is used for digestive biscuits, biscuits which goes to McVitie's normally and the million week's Jenny go to

00:29:04:24 - 00:29:42:00

a mill in Northampton, where it's always makes it great, makes it grade, makes fantastic bread. I also have a lady who lives in, uh, locally. She makes bread My flour. Give me a loaf every now and then. And it's. It's just out of this world. Bread. I don't know why. National breweries have chosen my farm. Probably because it's on a large plateau. It's 185 acres of superb agricultural land, which my father had bought back in 1955.

00:29:42:11 - 00:29:57:14

That's been in our family since then. And I'm now the third generation farmers of the nickel family. I find it very, very hard that I'm going to get pushed off on this. Fantastic.

00:30:02:11 - 00:30:28:08

Thank you very much. Um, can we not have clapping, please? I need to be able to hear what people are saying. You're taking up time with the clapping. Thank you. Um, I think if you're affected by compulsory acquisition, you can be heard at a corporate acquisition hearing where you can speak specifically about your concerns in relation to land that's being taken. So please do. Please do ask to speak at one of those and we can hear more detail from you on your issues. Thank you.

00:30:30:15 - 00:30:38:17

I understand. Um, can we now have Alison Downs, please? You've got three minutes. Thank you. Good afternoon.

00:30:38:19 - 00:30:39:24

My name is Alison Downs.

00:30:39:26 - 00:30:42:22

I live in Thebarton. As executive director of Stop.

00:30:42:24 - 00:30:43:09

Sizewell.

00:30:43:11 - 00:30:45:08

C, I have quite a bit of experience.

00:30:45:10 - 00:30:45:25

Of.

00:30:45:27 - 00:30:47:03

Major infrastructure projects in East.

00:30:47:05 - 00:30:47:28

Suffolk, and.

00:30:48:00 - 00:30:48:20

I want to focus.

00:30:48:22 - 00:30:49:07

On.

00:30:49:09 - 00:30:50:12

Cumulative impact, which I.

00:30:50:14 - 00:30:50:29

Believe.

00:30:51:01 - 00:30:54:24

Cannot be overemphasized. Let me give you an example of events just.

00:30:54:26 - 00:30:55:14

This evening.

00:30:55:16 - 00:31:02:28

Related to Energy Project. So obviously these hearings are continuing this evening. There is a size we'll see Northern Transport Forum, where vital.

00:31:03:00 - 00:31:03:21

Information.

00:31:03:23 - 00:31:17:16

About the disruption caused by the project and project updates are shared. There's also an Essex and Suffolk Water public drop in in Saxmundham as part of early consultations on pipelines, which come into Saxmundham London, and then a bespoke pipeline.

00:31:17:18 - 00:31:18:03

Is being.

00:31:18:05 - 00:31:22:06

Built to Sizewell C across the country. Now, obviously nobody can be in three.

00:31:22:08 - 00:31:22:23

Places.

00:31:22:25 - 00:32:03:09

At once, so choices must be made. But I hope the burden on local communities is apparent from just telling you about those three concurrent events. However, struggling which event to attend is nothing compared to living with multiple infrastructure projects at the same time with roadworks and delays. Noise and environmental destruction literally in every direction. Certainly from where I live. Periodic, overnight and occasional longer term road closures from anything from country lanes to the A12 are causing havoc as diversions can be lengthy and sometimes there is literally no alternative other than a single track road with very few, if any, passing places.

00:32:03:11 - 00:32:51:18

Now, during Sizewell C DCO hearing, which many people here took part in, we remember the traffic issues specific hearing in which we were assured that the extra traffic involved with sizeable sea would cause delays, according to their modelling. That could be counted in seconds. Now, every single person in this room will have their own story to tell about why? That is complete nonsense, and it's just shocking to hear that National Grid hadn't even done a transport survey. You might know about Bowdon Farms in Middleton, where Line Link is attempting to sandwich its cable route into the gap between the Bowden's family farmhouse and the sizeable link road, which is cutting their access drive in to a Kelsall landowner, has line link wanting to dig north to the south across their land.

00:32:51:20 - 00:33:21:25

And now this new pipeline west to east. So many energy projects in a small area will not only make impacts intolerable for local people, but affect the delivery of those projects and delays in individual projects are inevitable. Sizeable seas already tripping over itself in local businesses. And there's examples of gridlock in Leiston caused by multiple schemes coming together and commencement of road schemes in Thebarton have been delayed because this was decided. They can't begin until rail works are completed.

00:33:21:27 - 00:33:56:02

Now you've heard about the alternatives of an integrated offshore grid. I urge you to hold an issue specific hearing on cumulative impact and request all the developers, including Sizewell C, to come and reflect people's real lived experience of what it means. With all these projects coming together. Thank you very much again. Please, every time you clap, you're taking away time where we could have extra people at the end of this session. So please do not. Can I now hear from Michael Mahoney, please? Kristin Price, counsel and substation action.

00:33:56:04 - 00:33:58:02

Sally Suffolk at six minutes.

00:33:58:04 - 00:34:01:14

Good afternoon. That's Marnie, by the way. But just on a point.

00:34:01:16 - 00:34:39:12

Anyway, my name is Michael Mahoney and I represent Friston Parish Council. And I would just like to thank you for holding these hearings in Snape. It's a big benefit for everybody to be able to attend in person. Given a limited time, I'm going to be parochial and focus on the community of Friston. You have heard and will hear many submissions about the broader impact of these proposals up and down the Suffolk Coastal area, and we support these. We also support the need for renewable energy and the necessary upgrading of infrastructure. Alas, this upgrading is happening in a rushed and thoughtless manner due to the failure of National Grid to invest in the country's key energy infrastructure over many years.

00:34:39:14 - 00:35:16:16

There are parallels with the water industry here. We recognise that sacrifices have to be made, and we are the communities who have been selected to make their sacrifices. But what is not acceptable is for those sacrifices to be minimised with inadequate mitigation and inadequate financial compensation and benefits. Turning to mitigation of severely, it will be hard to find a more unsuitable location than Friston for a major energy hub which attracts other major energy projects such as Sealink. Of course, A2, A1 and National grid were consented, but the unsuitability of this site is clear from the essays comments.

00:35:16:18 - 00:35:46:18

I'm just repeating. I repeat this because Anthony Fincher mentioned it, but I think it bears repetition. The local harm that the essay has identified is substantial and should not be underestimated in its effect. Its mitigation has, in certain key respects, to be found to be only justification. On balance, not

only have National really ignored these findings, but in their pursuit of an unnecessary additional consent for the connection hub, they have sought to reduce this mitigation and how it is secured.

00:35:48:03 - 00:36:03:01

So our request is simple. If there is to be an additional consent for the National Grid Connection hub, which we do not accept, then all existing mitigation must be restored if not improved, to reflect the additional environmental damage National Grid is causing.

00:36:04:25 - 00:36:39:01

Just a point about the connection hub. We call it a connection hub because that is what it is. In the EA two and EA one n applications, the National Grid substation was presented as incidental to these projects, and simply a means to connect those two projects to the grid. In fact, it was apparent from research at the time that connection offers had already been made not only for the Scottish Power projects, but also for Line Link, then known as Ura Link Nautilus, which for the moment not permanently has been moved to Kent, and Sealink, then called SCD one.

00:36:39:12 - 00:37:12:05

However, despite making five connection offers to a site in this area, rather than seeking its own consent, it decided that Scottish Power would apply for a National Grid substation as part of his onshore infrastructure. Why is it that a company responsible for one of our most vital pieces of infrastructure did not seek its own consent when it needed a new strategic strategic connection point in Suffolk? One can speculate as to the reasons, but one of them must have been a concern that if they presented present the substation as a strategic connection hub, they would not have secured the consent.

00:37:12:07 - 00:37:43:26

They effectively now have. These issues were raised in the Scottish examinations, despite all the evidence that further projects were to be brought forward. Scottish Power and National Grid protested that all these projects were far too uncertain. For some reason, the Tsar gave them the benefit of the doubt. I am not sure they would. Today the question is what should now be done about the situation, given that consent has been granted at the latest count? There are at least seven major energy projects which will connect at Friston.

00:37:43:28 - 00:38:18:18

Given the state of the world and government policy, it is not credible to say that any of these projects are two are certain. Further, it is perfectly feasible to assess the cumulative impact of all these projects. In terms of mitigation, there is a very obvious place to go. That is so far as possible, the cable routes should be consolidated. There is no insurmountable reason why the cables and ducts for sealing and lining should not be laid at the same time, and also for the third project at Saxmundham, unless, of course, National Grid rule out the possibility of there being a third project at Saxmundham.

00:38:19:06 - 00:38:58:19

The other issue on cumulative impact is the seemingly never ending series of projects which are being brought forward. There is no recognition about the long term corrosive effect of multiple energy proposals on people's lives, with seven projects. Construction periods are likely to extend into the mid 2030s, if not beyond. How many more projects are they going to be? How can people live peaceably

and planned for the future, when there seems to be no end to the disruption and damage to their environment? This impact on people's property and family life is far from trivial, and must call into question whether these projects are being brought forward in a manner which is compatible with the Human Rights Act.

00:38:58:24 - 00:39:31:01

In essence, National Grid seems to want to have its cake and eat it. On the one hand, everything is too uncertain in relation to future projects, so cumulative impacts cannot be assessed yet. On the other, it seems to want a seemingly endless series of connection offers at Friston. Lastly, I want to talk about the fact that Friston residents receive precious little in return for all the disruption and damage which has been, and will continue to be done to them. The government has issued guidance on community benefits, but that guidance is deeply flawed.

00:39:31:03 - 00:40:00:29

I haven't got time to go into it here, but it is deeply flawed. Some funds have been offered by Scottish Power directly to Friston of a couple of hundred thousand pounds per project, but that is a tiny fraction of the capital expenditure of E2, which is estimated to loan to be £4 billion. It is also a fraction of the real loss which Friston residents are suffering and will continue to suffer. However, National Grid have offered zero financial contribution directed at Friston. That has to be corrected in a meaningful way. Thank you.

00:40:01:15 - 00:40:26:13

Thank you very much. And if you want to submit any of the additional information you've mentioned, then you can please do that with your written submission at deadline Monday. And now we've got the next group of five, please. We've got Tim, Rowan Robinson, Brenda Glen, Rosemary, Gethin Terrace, Gethin and Councillor Sarah Fox for our town council. If you don't want to be filmed, if you just put your hand up, we can bring a roving mic to you.

00:40:47:13 - 00:40:53:23

Thank you. Okay. We'll start with Tim Robinson. You have three minutes. Let's start when you're ready, please.

00:40:56:07 - 00:40:59:23

Good afternoon. And I apologize for my voice. Um, I'll.

00:40:59:25 - 00:41:31:21

Do my best. My name is Tim Robinson. I'm a director of Seas, but I'm speaking on my own behalf. As a local retired resident, I was involved in forming the Suffolk Coast DMO and was a director of that company until 2016. Our destination has been extremely successful in operating its offering, its amazing blend of peaceful landscape, interesting habitats, great outdoor activities, wonderful food and drink and hospitality and outstanding culture.

00:41:32:03 - 00:42:03:23

It is appropriate that we are here today at Snape, which is at the heart of our offer as the Heritage Coast. We are concerned back in 2018, when we first heard the term the Energy Coast for the substation of Friston being proposed. In addition to Sizewell seed, the DMO, as Harry has mentioned,

commissioned research which showed that these two developments alone would reduce the number of visitors by 17%, a number with which EDF in their own research concurred.

00:42:04:21 - 00:42:37:27

16% of the working population of East Suffolk are employed directly in tourism, and almost all the jobs in the area are rely on tourism to a certain extent. Since 2018, it has become clear that National Grid always had a plan to create a connection pub at Friston and to be able to export surplus energy. Their top priority is, of course, profit. The combined impact of all that is now proposed for the area has never been fully assessed.

00:42:38:14 - 00:43:09:11

The 17% identified as the risk in 2018 would surely be well into the 20s. In the light of what we know now, and that will be devastating to tourism. Tourism businesses are already suffering through workers replacing holidaymakers, manual staff leaving to earn 30% more at Sizewell, and day trippers who account for 90% of the visitors to the area. Facing long delays on the roads, they are not going to return.

00:43:10:13 - 00:43:43:26

Our road system is totally inadequate for what is being proposed. The DCA proposes an average of an additional 346 HGV movements per day, at peak times, on part of the A12. This is in addition to the 858 that size will see will bring. Amazingly, the DCA contains no transport assessment, fails to consider seasonality, and even uses January and February figures as the baseline to assess capacity.

00:43:44:09 - 00:44:04:09

They seem to think there will be no problem on the roads. That's not what we've been hearing this afternoon. 15 years of construction work and road congestion will change the nature, nature of this wonderful area forever and destroy its tourism proposition. What? Of course, isn't it?

00:44:04:28 - 00:44:18:04

That's your three minutes. If you haven't had time to say everything you would like. Please submit it in writing to us and we will take account of it. Um, please can I now have Brenda Glenn? You have three minutes. Thank you.

00:44:20:22 - 00:44:51:05

I am opposed to National Grid's plans to locate onshore infrastructure in the Suffolk Coastal area and endorse everything that sees puts forward in its defence. I moved to this area 20 years ago for the peace, quiet and tranquillity. I have immersed myself in the rich diversity of its habitats, including reedbeds, heath, woodland and beaches, and I have experienced the wonders of the wildlife that call this special place home.

00:44:51:21 - 00:45:25:00

The Suffolk Coastal area is so special that it was nominated by our government for Unesco World Heritage status as part of the East Coast Flyway. So special. Springwatch was based at RSPB mincemeat for three consecutive seasons, covering the wildlife there and in the surrounding areas, and RSPB North Warren, the home of many songbirds, has been used to broadcast the uplifting Dawn Chorus on Radio four.

00:45:25:21 - 00:46:25:15

We are one of the most nature depleted countries in the world, and yet this area offers a sanctuary and is vitally important for a huge range of species, including some very rare ones such as marsh harriers, nightingales, turtle doves. We are already experiencing the devastation of our countryside, the loss of thousands of trees and miles of hedgerows. The terrible impact on our wildlife the noise, air pollution, the traffic jams on our roads all caused by the preliminary works for Sizewell C, and now we are faced with the prospect of the destruction of a broad swathe of land, the width of a motorway through RSPB North Warren and to the south of Walbrzych, causing the further fragmentation of an environmentally sensitive area.

00:46:26:03 - 00:46:57:07

The location of onshore infrastructure in Suffolk Coastal would ensure the industrialisation of the area, radically impacting on our unique habitats, and turn our heritage coast to an enormous energy hub to the detriment of its communities and wildlife. Please, we need to get everything offshore and direct to where the energy is needed to London and the South East.

00:46:59:12 - 00:47:19:05

We must remember that National grid. Who is driving this is owned by foreign investors, and they will not hesitate to sacrifice Suffolk Coastal for the sake of short term profit. Thank you. Thank you very much. Can we now have Rosemary Gething, please? You have three minutes. Thank you.

00:47:21:00 - 00:47:21:25

Thank you.

00:47:22:05 - 00:47:22:28

I'd like to ask.

00:47:23:00 - 00:47:24:10

The Planning Inspectorate to.

00:47:24:12 - 00:47:24:28

Consider.

00:47:25:00 - 00:47:25:15

Two.

00:47:25:17 - 00:47:26:02

Things.

00:47:26:04 - 00:47:26:25

To consider.

00:47:26:27 - 00:47:27:12

The effects.

00:47:27:14 - 00:47:27:29

Which are.

00:47:28:01 - 00:47:28:16

Happening right.

00:47:28:18 - 00:47:29:04

Now in this.

00:47:29:06 - 00:47:29:21

Part.

00:47:29:23 - 00:47:47:13

Of Suffolk. Due to the building of Sizewell C, we were warned of the impending devastation to the countryside. But the reality, as you've heard from already, from a lot of people, is worse than we expected. There are large areas of groundworks which cause misery for many residents. We have to double or treble the usual.

00:47:47:15 - 00:47:50:22

Time it takes to get anywhere because of roadblocks, road closures.

00:47:50:24 - 00:47:51:09

Temporary.

00:47:51:11 - 00:47:52:19

Traffic lights, lane closures and.

00:47:52:21 - 00:47:53:06

Speed.

00:47:53:08 - 00:48:24:27

Restrictions. We have to drive down ever smaller roads and move on beyond the side of the road to allow huge lorry to pass, scratching our paintwork. You've heard about the medical situations already. The effect on tourism is hard to gauge, but this area of outstanding natural beauty is not looking great, with the added effects of all the decrease in trees and hedgerows being ripped up, increased noise and light. There have already been reports of between 16 and 29% decrease in visitors due to Sizewell C.

00:48:25:28 - 00:49:03:12

I'm resigned to having to put up with the devastation that building Sizewell C will have on all of us for a decade or more, but feel it is unfair and unjustifiable to exacerbate the situation further with further destruction by allowing Sealink in its present form. When there are viable alternative solutions to deliver energy closer to the demand. The second thing I'd like to ask is a plea really to the Planning Inspectorate to review National Grid's proposals for the Sealink project from a national point of view, as well as a local one, in order to do what is right for the UK in terms of reaching net zero.

00:49:03:14 - 00:49:25:28

It is vitally important to look at developing projects where which not only benefit the UK as a whole, but do not sacrifice smaller areas of the UK to achieve this. As already mentioned, we're seeing extensive groundworks affecting agricultural, wild and recreational land in the process of building size. We'll see. But in addition, we're seeing the loss of large areas of agricultural land for solar farms.

00:49:27:16 - 00:49:47:15

I fear if National Grid get the go ahead for Sealink, it will open the floodgates to further projects. And you have already heard of up to seven projects on the back of this. The accumulated devastation of all these infrastructure projects in this small area of the UK will have serious, significant consequences for the area and the UK as.

00:49:47:17 - 00:49:48:02

A.

00:49:48:04 - 00:49:52:24

Whole, which is unnecessary when there are well-grounded alternatives being proposed.

00:49:52:26 - 00:49:53:25

Thank you.

00:49:54:00 - 00:49:59:22

Thank you very much. Can I now hear from Terrace? Terrace in three minutes, please?

00:49:59:24 - 00:50:00:09

Hi.

00:50:00:29 - 00:50:31:12

My name is Terence Curtin. Um, as others have said, we are most concerned that the cumulative effect of multiple major infrastructure projects in the same small area at the same time is likely to have a catastrophic effect. Seas are, quite rightly expressed the view that an off shore grid would be a better solution, but National Grid appears to regard this as not being financially viable. But it seems to me that National Grid are focused on their own costs rather than the cost to the community, and hence the nation as a whole.

00:50:31:24 - 00:51:09:15

These projects will have consequential costs that will not affect National Grid or other system operators, but they will affect the local area. They are real. Costs need to be taken into account when considering the proposed alternative of an offshore grid, and I'd like to give some examples. We are already experiencing significant traffic delays, as people have discussed already, and they will get worse if the other projects go ahead. This will result in longer journey times for service providers and hence reduced productivity, and it reduced the number of journeys for healthcare workers, for example, resulting in missed appointments and potentially overtime costs and employment.

00:51:09:17 - 00:51:40:16

For more staff, there will be increased fuel costs and maintenance costs for vehicles, and scheduling will become unreliable, potentially with further knock on costs incurred by people whose own schedules are disrupted by this. There is also likely to be reduced cut customer footfall because of inaccessibility of services, especially for retail and hospitality. We know that tourism is a key part of the local economy. It seems inevitable that an area that is overrun with construction projects is less likely to be at the top of anyone's list for a holiday destination.

00:51:41:05 - 00:52:11:21

Also, large infrastructure projects will inevitably suck up resources, which has an effect on labour labor costs and the supply chain for equipment and raw materials. As a result, local building work and other infrastructure projects such as flood defences. Will become significantly more expensive and there will also be an effect on property costs. In particular, rental costs are likely to increase dramatically for properties that are suitable for engineers and other staff who will be involved in infrastructure projects in the short and medium term, to the cost of local people who are looking for homes for themselves.

00:52:12:18 - 00:52:27:16

So to summarize, all of these things and others will have a real cost, but we are the ones who will bear that, not national grid. I firmly believe that an off grid will be a more cost solution if the true cost of these developments is taken into account. Thank you.

00:52:27:28 - 00:52:34:20

Thank you very much. I can now have Councillor Sarah Fox representing Albert Town Council and you've got six minutes.

00:52:36:23 - 00:52:44:06

Good afternoon. My name is Sarah Fox. I am an old town councillor and I speak on behalf of our unanimous council.

00:52:44:16 - 00:52:45:24

I have lived in Olbia.

00:52:45:26 - 00:52:57:20

For many years and have owned and run restaurants in the high street. My current business is a fishmongers and it's a joint fish restaurant. Aldeburgh Town Council has previously taken a neutral view on.

00:52:57:22 - 00:52:58:20

Consented energy.

00:52:58:22 - 00:53:10:27

Projects such as Sizewell. However, such is the negative impact of the proposed scheme on our town that we object Aldeburgh would be significantly negatively affected.

00:53:10:29 - 00:53:11:14

By.

00:53:11:16 - 00:53:38:24

The proposed scheme, its residents, its businesses and its local economy. Further, there is a disregard for internationally important natural habitats. National government planning policy sets out for objectives, economic deliverability, environmental and community impact on three of these counts economic, environmental and community impact.

00:53:38:26 - 00:53:39:16

There has been.

00:53:39:18 - 00:53:51:08

Inadequate consideration with regard to the first count. Economic objectives. The economy of Alberta is primarily based on tourism and predominantly focused on.

00:53:51:10 - 00:53:51:25

The.

00:53:51:27 - 00:54:20:28

High street and the beach. This includes restaurants, shops, galleries, a cinema and a theatre, amongst other things. All would be negatively impacted by the proposed scheme. As so many of our businesses have confirmed to you in a petition, the application has simply not faced up to Aubrey's position as the centre of tourism in this part of Suffolk, or to the needs of the people of the town and its visitors. I will mention today just two.

00:54:21:00 - 00:54:21:15

Aspects.

00:54:21:17 - 00:54:53:23

Of many. First, the proposed traffic severing, stroke interference of the only roads into the town from the 1864 and from the north, i.e. Leiston and Thorpe Ness, would isolate us as visitors are prevented or deterred from making the journey. We also face problems at the roundabout into the town as the applicant piles more traffic on what the Scottish Power inspectors described as adverse transport and traffic impacts during future construction of that scheme.

00:54:54:17 - 00:55:28:22

Further, while construction is going on, how are the residents in a town with a heavy concentration of elderly people going to be protected in health emergencies when the nearest A&E hospital is 23 miles away? The journey is already long and further delays would only exacerbate that. Considering the second account environmental objectives, the negative impact of the scheme on the RSPB North Warren Reserve and the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths national landscapes will seriously damage the town.

00:55:28:26 - 00:55:49:26

These are a major part of our tourist attraction. The landfall is not, as the applicant claims, between Aldeburgh and Thorpe Ness. It is legally, culturally and in reality an integral part of our town and its attractions. On the third count, i.e. community impact.

00:55:51:27 - 00:55:54:05

Construction activity arising.

00:55:54:07 - 00:55:55:08

Including the increase.

00:55:55:10 - 00:56:30:02

In traffic, noise and disruption, can only have negative effects. We trust that the inspectors will reject this application, but we must guard against the other possibility. Despite claiming in public that communities should be rewarded for hosting new transmission infrastructure, the applicant has so far never contacted Old Town Council about this application and we would welcome a dialogue with them. Thank you. Thank you very much. And now can we have the last group which is Paul Atkinson and Gordon Young.

00:56:30:29 - 00:56:32:27

You can come down to the table please.

00:56:43:00 - 00:56:52:11

I understand that there's a mr. Wheelwright who hadn't registered but would also like to speak. And I think we do have time if you'd like to join the group at the front of the table.

00:57:08:10 - 00:57:12:18

Thank you. Okay, so we'll start with Paul Atkinson first, please. You've got three.

00:57:12:20 - 00:57:13:05

Minutes.

00:57:13:23 - 00:57:16:18

Good afternoon. My name is Paul Atkinson and I speak today.

00:57:16:20 - 00:57:17:05

As a.

00:57:17:07 - 00:57:17:26

Resident of Saxmundham.

00:57:17:28 - 00:57:18:13

And.

00:57:18:15 - 00:57:22:10

An infected person living approximately 500m from the converter site.

00:57:22:23 - 00:57:24:12

Let me begin with access.

00:57:24:18 - 00:57:26:27

National grid has known from the outset that Ben.

00:57:26:29 - 00:58:02:14

Hall Railway Bridge cannot support the 300 ton transformers required for sealing their proposed fix, reinforcing or building on top. This is not a minor adjustment. It exposes the flaw in their site selection. This location was never viable. They chose a new western route because it's shorter. But shorter doesn't mean safer. The size will Link road, a consented, purpose built route designed to carry construction vehicles, was dismissed for being longer. They bypassed the route and good planning with it, and the chosen route demands a major new bridge over the river from us.

00:58:02:16 - 00:58:34:25

A quiet, ecologically rich corridor near veteran trees and grade two listed Hurts Hall. National grid downplays this structure but adds up to six meters tall. It's more like a motorway bridge. It would dominate key views, a route that defines the character of this landscape. This isn't mitigation, it's the consequence of choosing the wrong site. Traffic modelling is also flawed. Data was gathered in January and February, the quietest months, but Saxmundham and nearby villages swell with visitors in spring and summer. That seasonal reality has been ignored.

00:58:35:07 - 00:59:08:26

To the wider context, the Saxmundham site was never accessed for a single converter station. It was introduced late, not through robust evaluation but as a reactive bolt on national grid. Talks of coordination but not co-location, and that distinction matters. Coordination aligns timelines. Co-location concentrates infrastructure. It's the physical footprint, not just the scheduling that communities are being asked to absorb. Alongside Sealink, Line Link is expected to bring a second converter station to the same location, yet National Grid claim it cannot be visualized.

00:59:08:28 - 00:59:39:21

That's misleading. During the 2023 consultation, massing diagram showed three projects together. The examining authority has rightly asked for cumulative visualizations and they must be delivered. Communities deserve to see the true scale of what's proposed. These projects are being assessed in isolation, but we live in the overlap. The converter stations, access roads, bridges and trenches aren't happening in a vacuum. They are happening in a region already stretched to breaking point. How much more can we take? Finally, the converter itself.

00:59:39:23 - 01:00:15:08

The part that will impact most directly its scale, its noise, its visual dominance. These are not theoretical concerns. They are daily realities. And yet National Grid still hasn't shared a final design. No commitments, no clarity. The only meaningful mitigation is to build these stations at an appropriate location or bury them. Anything less betrays, community is forced into beside them. Given the scale, the setting, and the cumulative burden already placed in this region, the examining authority must reject ceiling and decline to make a recommendation for consent. And if this is the beginning of the so-called grid upgrade, then let it be said loud and clear it's our Suffolk that's being downgraded.

01:00:16:02 - 01:00:19:28

Thank you very much. Um, can I now hear from Gordon Young? You've got three.

01:00:20:00 - 01:00:20:15

Minutes.

01:00:20:17 - 01:00:53:14

Good afternoon. My name is Gordon Young. And an effective party living approximately 500m from a proposed converter station site at Saxmundham. I speak today as someone whose home, my surrounding landscape and wellbeing would be directly affected. I do so in full support. Suffolk Energy, Action Solutions and Saxmundham. Against needless destruction. Two groups that have worked tirelessly to raise awareness and bring forward evidences. I also fully endorse all the points raised by the others during this hearing so far. Let me begin by stating that I fully support the UK's transition to green renewable energy.

01:00:53:16 - 01:01:24:08

However, that transition must be achieved in a way that is responsible, balanced and fair to the communities affected. The current proposal for sealing, in particular the choice of Saxon for its onshore infrastructure, failed to meet those standards. It represents a very worst example of piecemeal, uncoordinated infrastructure planning. The project should not be looked on at in isolation. The lightning converter station is embedded in this application. The site selection is deeply flawed.

01:01:24:10 - 01:02:04:18

It is not easily accessible. The landfill and cable trench routes impact vital protected and natural habitats. The chosen locations. Elevated, visually prominent and unacceptably close to homes and heritage assets. The proposed converter station would dominate the local skyline, permanently alter the surrounding rural landscapes. The new bridge and access road across the river from would require carving through the historic settings of Hertz, or in Saint John's Church, official signpost to Converter City. The recent admission by the applicant that the Ben Hall Railway Bridge cannot support the transformer loads, further demonstrating the adequacy of the local road network for the proposed scheme.

01:02:05:02 - 01:02:09:13

Even Suffolk County councillors described this as a disproportionate solution to a self-imposed.

01:02:09:15 - 01:02:10:06

Problem.

01:02:11:01 - 01:02:44:08

Here in East Suffolk. We are being overwhelmed by the onslaught of major energy projects. It is frankly becoming a dumping ground within a five mile radius. We have Sizewell C, Scottish Powers A1 and A2, Faslane Connection hub, Sealink line link and and the recently announced Essex Suffolk Water project. So over the next 12 to 15 years we've faced continuous construction, noise, traffic and dust. The Heritage Code's becoming a building site. It is, quite simply, a disproportionate burden for one small area to bear, which is demonstrated by that map.

01:02:45:06 - 01:03:21:00

The combined impact with permanently altered landscape and damage our local economy and undermine community well-being. For those of us living here, this does not represent progress, but an erosion of our place and trust in the planning process. Clean energy is vital. They must be delivered in a manner that is strategic, equitable and sensitive to the community to host it. The proposal current proposal does not achieve that balance. I urge the examining authorities to scrutinize any case for sealing, to recognise the fundamental flaws in its site selection, and to assess the severe cumulative impacts already imposed on coastal Suffolk.

01:03:21:02 - 01:03:21:25

Thank you.

01:03:22:09 - 01:03:38:15

Thank you. And can I just reiterate what I said to Mr. Nicoll earlier? If you are affected by compulsory acquisition, please do ask the speaker a compulsory acquisition hearing so we can hear more details for your objections. Thank you. And finally, now, can we hear from Mr. Wheelwright, please?

01:03:38:17 - 01:03:44:12

Thank you. Three minutes. Thank you for letting me speak. Can you hear me? Is this Mike working? Yeah. Um,

01:03:46:10 - 01:03:48:13

thanks for letting me speak. This is a response to hearing.

01:03:48:15 - 01:04:19:18

What I've heard today. I didn't intend to speak today, but I felt compelled to. Uh, my wife and I agree. Educated artist who found ourselves housed in Kristen some two years ago. And over the last 24 months, we've seen an incredible impact of the work that's been undertaken for Seelig so far. Um, one dimension that's missing from this and there's not being qualified is the spiritual aspect of what's being done here. The eco side that's being conducted is quite prolific. Uh, the amount of animals that are being displaced and being killed on the roads for what's going on already.

01:04:19:21 - 01:04:57:06

The flora and fauna impact is incredible. We're seeing a depletion of species. We're seeing the impact on the ecosystem as we're artists that work in the land and do photography and work in that, in a celebration of something we're seeing being taken away from us having living in the center of Forrest. And not only do we see the impact of these non persons being ignored, and that we are now trying to work in our own way to mitigate the damage that is being done. Many people who are here will understand that due to the contractor nature of this work, we are seeing dangerous driving, we're seeing speeding, we're seeing littering.

01:04:57:08 - 01:05:30:09

All this has an impact not on just the humans, but also on the non-human persons that are underrepresented. Um, every day we're seeing the fact that we can't travel anywhere. Um, the center, the center of the village. I mean, you need to go there and just look at a medieval village. Right next

to it is devastation and the size equal to the village itself. We have a neighbor, an octogenarian neighbor who's lived in the village their whole lives, who cries regularly and is unable to drive down certain areas due to what they're seeing.

01:05:30:20 - 01:06:03:12

Um, not only is it just the animals perspective of the non-human damage, we're also looking at the damage to the folklore. Um, most people here be unaware of the fact that there's Wyatt Hanna, which is a deity that was worshipped in the area of Friston. Um, we found out about this due to the fact that it's become a folklore relevant within the children who grew up in Friston. And none of this is being taken into account in a spiritual dimension. It's about a relationships with others. And most of the people here are angry because of their relationship with the land and the other persons that are unrepresented here.

01:06:03:14 - 01:06:35:11

Just talking about environmental damage does not represent the life forms that you are dispatching alongside us. The future of Friston is as a person who lives there. It's a ghost town, an aging population that will never be replaced, and without the mitigations that are rewarded by Scottish Power, that National Grid are refusing to acknowledge noise flooding and that will empty the village in ten years time. It will be an empty space. You might as well knock it down now. It will be gone if you allow this to carry on.

01:06:36:14 - 01:07:09:21

Thank you very much. So I'd like to thank you all for your contributions this afternoon. We have heard everyone registered to speak in this session and one extra person, but we don't have time to add any other registered unregistered additional speakers now. We will potentially have time in the sessions tomorrow, so please do contact the case team. If you didn't get a chance to speak today and you would like to. As we noted earlier, if you could submit what you've said in writing at deadline one A, which is currently the 26th of November 2025, and the applicant also will provide a detailed written response to everything we've heard today, also at deadline one.

01:07:10:12 - 01:07:16:23

So we will now adjourn this hearing and recommence the session two at 5:30 p.m. this evening. Thank you.