



Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Hearing Transcript

Project:	Sea Link
Hearing:	Transcript of Open floor hearing 1 (OFH1) – Session 3 Part 1
Date:	6 November 2025

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

It is not a verbatim text of what was said at the above hearing. The content was produced using artificial intelligence voice to text software. It may, therefore, include errors and should be assumed to be unedited.

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

FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:08:17 - 00:00:47:00

Okay. Good morning, everyone and welcome. Can I just confirm first that everyone can hear me clearly? Thank you. Can I also confirm with the case team that the live streaming and recording of this event has commenced? Thank you. It is now 10 a.m., and this open floor hearing in relation to the ceiling project is now open. Thank you all for attending this hearing. My name is Luke Regan. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered transport planner. I'm now going to ask my fellow panel members, who have also been appointed by the Secretary of State to examine this project to introduce themselves.

00:00:48:06 - 00:00:50:12

Good morning. My name is Doctor Richard Hunt.

00:00:50:14 - 00:00:53:16

I'm a planning inspector and a chartered environmentalist.

00:00:55:16 - 00:01:05:26

Good morning. My name is Sarah Holmes. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered civil engineer, and I've been appointed by the Secretary of State to be the lead member of this panel to examine this application.

00:01:07:23 - 00:01:12:17

Good morning. My name is Stephen Rennie. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered town planner.

00:01:14:02 - 00:01:19:09

Good morning. My name is Nancy Thomas. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered town planner.

00:01:20:21 - 00:01:51:01

I can confirm that all members of the examining authority have made a formal declaration of interests, and there are no known conflicts of interest. With regards to us examining this application, together we constitute the examining authority, or ICS for this application. There are other colleagues from the Planning Inspectorate with us here today. For those who are present in the room, you may have already spoken to or heard from Louise Haraway, who is the case manager for this project, and Mrs.

00:01:51:03 - 00:02:27:12

Haraway is accompanied by one of our other case managers, Amina Khan, and our case officer, Emma Smith. For those of you who have joined us virtually, you will have spoken to Caroline Allen and Happy Core from our case officers in the joining conference together. They are the case team for this project, and if anybody has any questions or queries they should be your first point of contact. Their contact details can be found at the top of any letter you will have received from us on the Or on the project page of the National Infrastructure website.

00:02:29:06 - 00:03:02:05

Before we consider the items on the specific agenda this morning, we need to deal with a few housekeeping matters and I will try and get through these as quickly as possible. Firstly, can everyone attending please make sure that your phone is switched off or turn to silence? There is no fire test planned for this morning, so should an alarm sound. It is an emergency and we will need to vacate the building. Emergency exits are located in the corners of the room and the doors through which you have entered.

00:03:02:22 - 00:03:19:12

The fire Assembly point is on the Henry Moore lawn to the side of the building. If anyone needs assistance in this regard, please can you let the case team know? Toilet facilities, including disabled facilities, can be found in the lobby.

00:03:21:15 - 00:03:37:04

As far as I'm aware, no requests have been made for any special measures or arrangements to enable participation in this meeting. If anybody does need a break or extra support, please do let the case name the case team know.

00:03:40:13 - 00:04:13:25

This event is being livestreamed and recorded. Our letter of the 19th of September, which we will refer to as the rule six letter, explained that because we retain and publish unpublished the the digital records. They form a public record to which the General Data Protection Regulation applies. The Planning Inspectorate publishes and retains recordings for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision on the Development Consent Order.

00:04:13:27 - 00:04:48:20

So if you participate in this meeting, it's important that you understand that you'll be recorded and you consent to the retention and publication of that digital recording. We are, however, aware that there are a number of people who have let us know that they do not wish to be filmed. The audiovisual team are aware of this, and those people have been seated in a location which is not covered by cameras. This will also be taken into account for those who have indicated they will be speaking in this hearing.

00:04:50:12 - 00:04:55:09

At this stage, please, may I just check? Do we have any members of the press in attendance?

00:04:57:10 - 00:05:06:16

Not seeing any hands. Okay. Um, please may also check. Does anyone else intend to film or record this meeting

00:05:08:15 - 00:05:10:28

again? I'm not seeing any hands.

00:05:13:21 - 00:05:50:24

We will only ever ask for information to be placed on the public record. That is important and relevant to the planning decision to avoid the need to edit the digital recordings. We would ask that you try your best to try to not add information to the public record that you would normally wish to be kept private or confidential. This could include things like your address, your financial circumstances, or

details of medical conditions. If, however, you do feel there is need to refer to something that is private or confidential, please could you discuss this with the case team to explore.

00:05:50:29 - 00:05:55:08

Firstly, if this could be something which is submitted in writing and redacted

00:05:57:00 - 00:06:06:19

at this point. Can I just check? Does anyone have any questions with regards to what I've just said in the room? Not seeing any hands or anyone online?

00:06:09:13 - 00:06:41:07

Okay. Again, I'm not seeing any hands. Um, for those attending virtually. Can I repeat the request made in the arrangements conference? That to minimize background noise, you should make sure your phone is switched off or turned to silence. And you also stay muted with your camera turned off unless you are speaking. I would also ask that if you want to speak, you switch your camera on and either use the raise hand, raise a hand function in teams or ask to speak at an appropriate time.

00:06:41:27 - 00:06:51:16

Can I also remind people that the chat function on teams has been disabled? So please don't try and use this to ask any questions or post any comments.

00:06:53:15 - 00:07:14:14

For those people this morning watching the live stream, should we at any point adjourn proceedings? We will have to stop the live stream to give us clear recording files. As a result, at the point at which we start the meeting in the live stream, you will need to refresh your browser page again. We will remind you of this again should we need to adjourn.

00:07:16:16 - 00:07:53:11

At this point, I just want to say a little bit about conduct during the hearing. We understand that people have strong feelings about the proposed development, but it's important to recognize that we have a process to follow. We therefore ask for good manners and respect, to be shown to each other throughout this hearing. We want everybody to have an opportunity to speak, so please don't speak over anybody else when they are speaking. Additionally, we ask that there is no clapping, cheering or booing as we need to be able to hear what people are saying and enable best use of the time in this hearing.

00:07:54:00 - 00:07:59:29

Please be polite to each other as everybody deserves the same level of respect, even if you don't share their views.

00:08:01:18 - 00:08:14:29

We also understand that people can be nervous when they have to speak in public. Please be reassured that we understand this, and if you stumble over your words or need to repeat something, this is no problem whatsoever.

00:08:16:19 - 00:08:24:21

At this point, again and I just check, is there anything? Any comments or questions with regards to what I've just said from anyone in the room?

00:08:26:11 - 00:08:28:23

No, I'm not seeing any hands or online.

00:08:31:26 - 00:08:33:03

Okay. Thank you.

00:08:35:01 - 00:08:57:10

This hearing then is the split over five sessions, of which this is the third. It will generally follow the agenda that was published on the project page on the National Infrastructure web page on the 24th of October 2025. A copy of this can be found in our exam library at reference EV 4001.

00:08:59:14 - 00:09:10:10

And at this point, I will move over to to move on to item two on the agenda. And this is basically the purpose of the open floor hearing.

00:09:13:17 - 00:09:45:29

Normally open floor hearings are held at the request of interested parties. However, in this instance, we've called this open floor hearing because we want to hear firsthand from interested parties your thoughts at the early stage of the examination. It will also help us to form a view about what we want to discuss in more details at later. If it issues specific hearings and in our written in our written questions, We are familiar with the representations which have been made.

00:09:46:01 - 00:10:11:18

So when speaking, you don't need to repeat these at length. What we are seeking is for you to provide further detail or evidence to help us understand those issues, to make best use of the time. Today, and whilst not wishing to limit anyone's contributions, it will be of great assistance if points were not repeated. You can rest assured that we will have understood the points that you've made the first time.

00:10:13:12 - 00:10:16:11

We are aware that the applicant is attending this morning.

00:10:20:10 - 00:10:39:27

But we will ask the applicant to respond to everything they've heard at all the open floor hearings in writing. It is not the purpose of these hearings to enable the applicant to make their case. Thank you. At this point, I'm going to hand over to my colleague, Mr. Rennie, for item three on the agenda.

00:10:41:15 - 00:11:19:20

Thank you. Good morning. Due to the number of people who wish to speak at the open floor hearing, you'll have seen from the agenda that we have split the hearing into five sessions. This has been the third, with the next session beginning at 2 p.m. today. It is our intention to hear from interested parties who are pre-registered to speak, and who are listed in the agenda for this hearing, after which should time permit. We will also hear from any interested parties who are not pre-registered to speak, but who wishes to speak, and any other person or non-interest party who also wishes to speak.

00:11:19:22 - 00:11:46:27

However, time is tight and this will be at the discretion of the examining authority at this point. Please can the applicant display the speaking list for us? Thank you. Uh, if that could be enlarged as much as possible and hopefully just sort of scrolled up and down for the next couple of minutes so people can see if their names are on there and where they are on the list.

00:11:49:07 - 00:12:21:17

Thank you. Um, if time is not available during these open floor hearings, then parties can request a further open floor hearing during our later hearings, and we will be happy to hold that. Should we need to do so. Due to the number of parties wishing to speak today, we have set a time limit per person. We have agreed a maximum of six minutes for those representing groups and include membership organizations, clubs and societies, and then three minutes for any individuals.

00:12:22:21 - 00:12:57:00

When you are speaking, you must take account of the time remaining shown on the monitor which will be in front of you. For those attending virtually, I shall let you know verbally when you have one minute left. Please try to finish in your allotted time, as we want to ensure that everybody has the opportunity to be heard today to ensure we can hear from as many people as possible, we ask any. We won't ask any questions once you have spoken, but be assured that if we have any questions for you, we will send them to you in writing following the event.

00:12:57:28 - 00:13:29:25

We will ask people to come forward up to the table at the front. They're up to five people at a time, although some of the speakers in the group may be attended virtually or may not be come to the table at the front for certain reasons. We will still ask each of you to speak in turn, based on the time allocated to you, as shown in the agenda. When we have heard from all five of you. You are welcome to return to the general seating and we will call the next group forward.

00:13:30:19 - 00:14:02:06

Once you have returned to your general seating, please feel free to depart the venue if you wish. But please do so quietly for the purposes of recording and to and respect to those still speaking. It would assist us if written summaries of anything that you say are submitted by deadline one which at the moment is Tuesday the 26th of November. These can include any additional points of further detail you may wish to make, but were unable to today because of time constraints.

00:14:03:03 - 00:14:15:00

Please be assured that when coming to our conclusions, we will give equal weight to both oral and written submissions. And there is no disadvantage to not having presented something orally here today.

00:14:16:16 - 00:14:30:24

Can I just check whether the list currently displays everyone who is registered to speak at the session? Is there anyone who can't see their name on that list? Yes, please.

00:14:37:02 - 00:14:42:23

Okay. If we are noted of that, and if this time at the end, then you'll be able to. Okay.

00:14:44:21 - 00:14:45:11

Okay.

00:14:47:18 - 00:14:55:17

Does anyone have any questions about the speaking process before we get going in the room or online?

00:14:57:11 - 00:15:03:17

No. Can't see any hands. So we'll move on to item agenda for Mr. Regan.

00:15:06:29 - 00:15:29:06

At this point I'm going to invite those listed in the agenda to speak when I read out your names. If you are in the room. Please come to the table at the front and if online, please turn your camera on.

Alternatively, please raise your hand if you do not wish to come to the table and you're in the room and you'll be provided with a roving microphone.

00:15:31:15 - 00:15:57:03

When it's your turn to speak, please turn the microwave microphone on. If you're in the room, that's the button on the middle of the microwave microphone stand and it is read when it is live. Um, please start by introducing yourself and if relevant, who you are representing. A timer will be displayed in the room, and Mr. Ranney will let those online know when they have one minute remaining.

00:15:59:11 - 00:16:30:15

Can I remind you all not to supply any personal details when you when speaking here today, for example, do not state your home address, your age or any medical conditions you may have. Again, as I've said earlier, if you do feel that there is a need to supply this information, please talk to the case team about how this can be done without it going on public record. Okay, so the first five people who I'd like to call forward, please are Counselor Robin Sanders.

00:16:31:03 - 00:16:40:23

Michael Hills. Carl Kasell. Philip pealing and Ken Bates. If you could please come to the table or.

00:17:00:15 - 00:17:14:26

Good morning. Firstly, we have Councillor Robin Sanders. If you could introduce your representing, you have six minutes to talk. Thank you. Thank you.

00:17:15:02 - 00:17:49:15

My name is Robin Sanders. I'm representing Woodbridge Town Council. Woodbridge is a market town principally east of the A12, supporting a wider community both east and west of the A12. There's two large secondary schools and four primary schools, attended by a substantial number of pupils living west of the year 12. Our local concerns are with regard to traffic safety in the economy, but we are also concerned about other communities and environmental impact close to the project site. Woodbridge received an A12 bypass in 1933 due to its highly constrained narrow streets.

00:17:49:19 - 00:18:27:09

The A12 remains the only principal road route from the A14 to access East Suffolk, whilst that road was built in 1933. It has only been improved locally, the biggest one being in 1985 when part of Marsham bypass widened in the intervening 40 years. Less significant improvements have occurred at two roundabouts, the B117 and the A1 152. The single carriageway A12 between separate Hall Road and the B1 438 remain sorry the B117 main that in the development constraint.

00:18:27:11 - 00:19:08:13

B 117 roundabout are operating beyond capacity at peak times and increasing outside those times. Long queues develop back onto margin and bypass and onto the northern part of Woodbridge. Bypass all the entry lanes onto the B117 roundabout and the A12 exit south are affected. This has become markedly worse. We will see traffic and A12 traffic queues southbound are now blocking the B117 roundabout regularly. Suffolk County Council has been developing the £63 million A12 major road network improvement scheme, but this is yet to be submitted for planning but is planned for this coming Friday, the 14th of November.

00:19:09:04 - 00:19:57:14

Determination of that planning application will be around mid-March 2026 at the earliest. The current programme is for the works to commence in January 2027, with completion rather optimistically. Programme for December 2027. These dates assume no delay in the planning, determination, approval and on tendering for the works. The tendered sum comes within the available sum that Suffolk County Council have. We acknowledge if this scheme proceeds on completion, there will be an improvement, but there remain considerable concerns on the basis of the details we saw at the consultation in 2024, the B117 junction will remain at or beyond capacity at peak when taking into account the projected size will see E1 and E2 traffic.

00:19:57:25 - 00:20:27:27

The addition of further traffic from Sealink line link and various other approved schemes were not catered for in the traffic predictions. Approval of Sealink will cause A12 to have even more traffic on this route, and unless traffic is restricted to very early hours and late in the evenings, this whole issue, the Sealink applicant in its published documents, has not made any assessment or evaluation of the impact of traffic and roads between the A14 and the A12.

00:20:27:29 - 00:21:10:11

Farnham. Despite the above, it purely states in its associate document that the completed scheme would increase the capacity of the highway network to accommodate construction traffic. Further, the applicant makes no statement on mitigation or management traffic during and or after the A12 missing construction if it occurs or during its own construction if it doesn't. Woodbridge greatest concern that if there is no A12 improvement is if there is no A12 improvement, but equally, if the A12 improvement does occur when we'll have at least one year of roadworks in mid November 2023, we experienced the impact.

00:21:10:13 - 00:21:25:19

We had an emergency gasworks on the on the edge of the A12 on its single carriageway. Large volumes of vehicles entered the town. Chaos reigned. The town was gridlocked. We cannot sustain that for a year.

00:21:27:09 - 00:21:58:13

There are strong desires in Woodbridge and in the surrounding area that the sealing applicant acts in a responsible way, and in some ways, like size will see a restrict HGV to solely the use of the A12. Provide bus transport for workers from Ettrick or Morrison Park and ride, encourage use of public transport and additionally positive, discourage or preferably ban leaves and staff cars using the A1152 and the B roads that lead up to here at Snape through Tunstall.

00:21:59:02 - 00:22:30:15

These vehicles will also go through bridge on the B1. 438. Woodbridge is also concerned about the safety of the main site axis of the A12 at the B1 121 junction, due to the short slip road and poor sightlines, but also because we are concerned that major works at that bridge will impact railway train services from Woodbridge. This is a busy line. Finally, but importantly, there is concern that the environmental impact of crossing the river froze.

00:22:30:17 - 00:22:49:16

That is a particularly fine example of a shallow Suffolk valley of high environmental and landscape quality that cannot be replicated. We seek that Sealink puts in sensible, reasonable and appropriate mitigation.

00:22:53:14 - 00:23:01:24

Thank you, Councillor Sanders. Next, please can I invite Michael Hills to speak and you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:23:04:06 - 00:23:35:03

I'm sure that we're now all very familiar with the everyday topic of conversation around us. What on earth is. Where did all this traffic come from? You know, it took me half an hour to drive from Snape to Leiston. And why are they digging up all the fields and cutting down all the trees and so on? But what is amazing is that the majority of local people still don't seem to understand that this marks the early stages of the Sizewell onslaught, as well as National Grid doing what they call exploratory surveys involving armies of chainsaws and bulldozers.

00:23:35:14 - 00:24:14:23

We're witnessing the start of the destruction of our much loved countryside, but what we've seen already is nothing compared to what they have in store for us. It's not going to blow over. We need to prepare ourselves for the devastation to wildlife, to community, to property, to tourism and much more. If Sealink were to be given the go ahead, most of the people you'll hear talking today are much better informed than me about the precise details of what's going on right now. So I'll leave that to them. I would like to make a different point. I don't regard myself as a Nimby because it's not my backyard that's being dug up, and I'm also of the generation who will never see this brutal venture reach its hideous Conclusion.

00:24:15:03 - 00:24:25:16

Yes, we all have to put up with years of noise and traffic, but we'll manage. But surely it's not all about us. The real losers will be our children and their children.

00:24:27:09 - 00:24:57:29

They may be born in this unspoiled countryside, but they're going to grow up in an ever increasing industrialized area with all the associated problems caused by noise, the pollution, the breakdown of the communities. That's one hell of a legacy for us to leave them in 15 years time. When teenagers see pictures of how beautiful the area once was. They want to know why they're surrounded by huge concrete buildings, who put them there, and why did you let them do it? The area will have changed beyond recognition, and it will have lost its communities and its charm.

00:24:58:01 - 00:25:37:04

The wildlife all but vanished. And even if they can find somewhere to work and to live. Will young people really want to remain in such a depressing place? We all agree that the country needs more affordable energy, and that wind power must be the answer. What we don't agree about is that generated power where it will be delivered, ruining precious areas of outstanding natural beauty and digging up the fragile coastline to build substations the size of three Wembley stadiums cannot be the only answer. For years, seas have been advocating a better, cheaper and less destructive way to proceed by which the power can be connected to available onshore brownfield sites such as the Isle of Grain.

00:25:37:11 - 00:26:02:24

This space does not require the destruction of communities and wildlife, and it's located far closer to where the power is needed. But National Grid don't care about us. Why would they? They're motivated solely by making more money for their wealthy shareholders, who, incidentally, are largely based in America and Abu Dhabi. So please, God, let common sense prevail and let them think again. Thank you.

00:26:05:00 - 00:26:13:14

Thank you for that. Um. Next, please. Got an invite. Carl Pearsall to speak. And again you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:26:13:26 - 00:26:45:16

Thank you. Good morning. Great words. Last speaker. This is an apt place to breathe in the beauty. Tourism is the lifeblood of our area. It sustains our business, our hospitality and way of life. But what happens when that lifeblood is drained away by disruption and destruction? Our coastline and countryside, once known for peace and natural beauty, are now in grave danger. By these plans, tourists are being replaced by what some locals call the Orangemen the construction workforce. We face overwhelming cumulative impacts of multiple projects all at once.

00:26:45:20 - 00:27:18:29

I've never been against Sizewell, but wow, it's impacted the area so much more than I ever imagined. Every day life is being disrupted. Nine days of no trains last week hit local businesses, burn all bridges. If reinforced, how many more days will be lost and blocked? But to the A12, this project will be a blight on the countryside if it goes ahead. Saxmundham alone is planned to grow residentially by 40%. Local farmland is being taken the solar installations. On top of that, the county council is asking residents to suggest land for more housing.

00:27:19:01 - 00:27:54:29

This past week, major water infrastructure projects have been announced. £63 million investment in the A12 added to the mix. We're not just losing land, we're losing our rural identity. Too many national infrastructure projects, all concentrated here, will destroy communities and livelihoods under the cloak of net zero. At what point do these aggravated impositions become unacceptable? There is a real emotional toll as we watch our home environment change before our eyes. Despite the demand created by Sizewell C, local housing values on Zoopla are down compared to other local areas over the last 12 months.

00:27:55:01 - 00:28:26:07

Heavy lorries that aren't part of Sizewell work are being pushed onto narrow country lanes, causing congestion, delays and danger. Dog walking, daily travel and even getting to the Ipswich hospital are all affected. Sealink would bring significantly more of the same type of disruption with long term noise light pollution. It's proposed only as a result of long term planning. Let's do better. My mother moved here for her retirement, seeking peace and nature. Now her extended family visits are harder.

00:28:26:09 - 00:29:00:07

The Orwell Bridge requires maintenance as well, and the enticement of nature has been replaced with traffic and disruption. There is a better solution. An offshore grid, a proven technology used by our European neighbors, offers a real alternative to this land based destruction. It could protect both countryside and wildlife as well as tourism. Economy. These proposals are the destruction of nature in the name of nature being realistic. Our national emissions are a tiny fraction of the global picture compared with China, US and other developing nations.

00:29:00:09 - 00:29:15:16

Ah, sacrifices here will make no measurable to global temperatures. So why destroy so much for so little impact. Offshore is the replacement for destruction. This is everybody's nature. It's your countryside. Do the right thing and stop this.

00:29:17:03 - 00:29:25:24

Thank you for that. Next, please. Could I invite Philip Peeling to speak? And again, you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:29:27:29 - 00:29:30:03

Philip. Healing. Saxmundham.

00:29:30:27 - 00:30:05:09

I have been a resident of Saxmundham since retirement 20 years ago, and prior to that visited the area on holiday for many years. I am worried about the cumulative impact of so many energy projects undergoing construction at the same time in one small region will have particularly extreme adverse effects on the traffic flow of local road network, road safety, exhaust fumes and noise pollution, etc.

00:30:06:02 - 00:30:40:00

we are already experiencing these issues from the preliminary works for the two sides. We'll see. Power stations. Although construction is not due to start for 18 months, the A12 is intermittently closed or has one way traffic operating with traffic lights. When the A12 is closed, the diversion is via

diss, an extra 60 miles on the journey. Many of the minor roads in the area are intermittently or permanently closed.

00:30:40:05 - 00:31:14:11

This is annoying to residents, but must be a nightmare for the emergency services and the local tourist trade. I'm also concerned that the ceiling project will have on the local housing and medieval 12th century church at the top of Churchill, Saxmundham. This large site, positioned so close to rural housing is unforgivable due to the noise, visual and traffic pollution it will cause during and after construction.

00:31:15:15 - 00:31:47:27

I have similar concern with the large construction proposed in Friston village. What, if any, provision has been made to reduce noise pollution after construction, sinking buildings low into the ground and building earthbound bound earth bunds around to cover the eyesore? Wary Seely is one of the many electrical infrastructure projects in our area.

00:31:48:08 - 00:32:24:17

Since the energy is produced at sea and should be connected to other European grids for interchange. Then why not run the cables at sea down to Essex or Kent, where the energy is required. This is how it would be treated in Europe. Finally, I strongly suggest a visit to this beautiful rural area of East Suffolk by all, with any responsibility for this and any other projects being planned over the next 15 plus years.

00:32:27:07 - 00:32:33:01

Thank you for that. And that's the first five speakers complete. So. Oh.

00:32:36:14 - 00:32:36:29

My name.

00:32:37:01 - 00:32:37:16

Is.

00:32:37:18 - 00:32:38:03

Ben.

00:32:38:05 - 00:32:39:25

Bates, Mr. Bates. Yes. Thank you. Three minutes.

00:32:40:00 - 00:33:11:25

My name is Ken Bates. I'm from Saxmundham. I'm talking about food world. Food security at risk. Cross-party committee has concluded that UK food production can drop by more than a third by 2050, by 2050, due to climate change. East Anglia will be unable to grow cereal crops and warmer countries such as Iran are already struggling with increased desiccation, severe droughts, higher temperatures and soil salinization, making farming increasingly challenging and threatening world food security.

00:33:11:28 - 00:33:48:19

The wheat harvest in Iran is down 60% this year due to high temperatures and drought. Likewise, Spain and Portugal's production this year is also down due to heat and drought in the coming years. Our arable land will be much needed to avoid world food shortages. With that in mind, we shouldn't be using this most valuable commodity to build large scale infrastructure projects that belong on brownfield sites and offshore. If the if the converter stations get the go ahead here, it will prove to be the equivalent of the Californian Gold rush.

00:33:48:21 - 00:34:24:01

The attraction of cheap connectivity to the grid will result in large scale solar panel farms. These farms will obliterate our beautiful landscape, and the construction of these monsters will bring our roads to a standstill. And of course, it's not just solar farms, but data centers and anything and everything that can be plugged into this new dumping ground. No longer a green and pleasant land. The A12 is already being ground to a near standstill at times, and this is only the beginning. This coming on top of the construction of size, will see the converter stations at Saxmundham.

00:34:24:27 - 00:35:05:22

Substations at Friston. And now we hear that Essex and Suffolk Water are proposing another major infrastructure development around Saxmundham. These projects are clearly too much for our rural area and will impact greatly on local communities. Our rural infrastructure has changed inexplicably, our once green and pleasant land consigned to the history books. If National Grid did the right thing for our country, they would build the converter stations offshore, leaving this precious land full of triple C sites and our best and most versatile agricultural land to nature, and for the growing of the much needed food for all our futures.

00:35:05:24 - 00:35:06:18

Thank you.

00:35:07:21 - 00:35:16:18

Thank you for that. And thank you to the five of you. It's now time to move on to the next five speakers, please.

00:35:20:10 - 00:35:33:06

Um, so please. Now, could I invite Humphry Hawksley, Piers Sturridge, Nicola Fulford, Tim Beach and Councillor Josie Barnett to speak, please?

00:36:08:12 - 00:36:17:10

Good morning all. So firstly, may I invite Humphrey Hawksley to speak and you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:36:17:27 - 00:36:51:23

Thank you. I'm speaking virtually, so I hope you can hear I'm Humphrey Hawksley. I'm a journalist. And as a BBC correspondent for many years, I reported on multinational corporations. And one thing I learned is that their imperative, as we've heard, is to deliver profits for shareholders, often at the expense of local communities. With this project, hear, alarm bells began ringing and they haven't stopped. Now, I have little idea about the technicalities of this project, but I do know that too many questions remain suspiciously unanswered.

00:36:51:25 - 00:37:30:09

Why here? Why not in Kent? Why not on a brownfield site? Why so many separate companies? Why not offshore? And so on? Why no answers? Because they don't have to. Because this project is high profile net zero and energy security. Green lit from the top of government. And the energy industry believes it will have a free hand even in this early days. Unlike in Europe and North America, these developers are refusing to help protect our crumbling shoreline while they plan to shred the seabed and the coastal land with no one knowing the true impact.

00:37:30:11 - 00:38:05:27

And check those rusting, dilapidated road signs on all this traffic that's around the looks as if they've been stolen from a junkyard and the Only Fools and Horses television sitcom. They blight the area. They deter visitors. They damage the local economy. The signs warn of construction sites when there are no construction sites. They don't tell us which company put them up, why and for how long they will be there. This is a project at the moment with minimal transparency, minimal oversight and maximum profits.

00:38:05:29 - 00:38:20:09

So imagine over the next ten years or so. The same hubristic lack of candor being multiplied in the thousands at a much more significant level than a road sign. The developers get away with what they can. And in my.

00:38:20:16 - 00:38:21:01

Opinion.

00:38:21:06 - 00:38:52:23

They believe they can dodge being held to account. So what to do? For one, we know that we are right to be skeptical. We are all familiar with the scandals of the Post Office, blood, Grenfell, Hillsborough and others. The institutional cover ups allowed to unfold while communities suffer. Now all of us in this room have a responsibility to ensure that the same does not happen here, and we're not all back again for a public inquiry as witnesses on opposite sides of the fence.

00:38:53:06 - 00:39:20:05

If you're convinced that the dots join, the infrastructure is needed here. The materials and design will be to the highest and safer standards, and all of that can be fully scrutinised. Sign it off. But if you don't have that information, if doubts linger. If questions are not answered, I urge that until they are, your signatures are withheld. Thank you for giving me this slot.

00:39:21:17 - 00:39:33:27

Thank you for that. Um. Next, please. Could I invite Pearce Torridge to speak, and you have three minutes. Thank you. Sorry. Please, could you press a button on the microphone? Thank you.

00:39:34:06 - 00:40:05:10

My name is Pearce Sturridge. I'm a hospitality and visitor perception consultant and have lived in Suffolk most of my life. I spoke at the SVR public inquiry two years or three years ago. About the effect that power company's infrastructure works would have on local tourism and business in this

part of Suffolk. I have to apologize. I got my evidence very wrong, but not as very wrong as Spears team, who claimed there would be minimal disruption and little effect. The reality of the situation is worse, much worse.

00:40:05:27 - 00:40:43:23

Already, businesses in the area report a drop in takings of up to 30%. Tourism numbers are down by around 15%. Holiday bookings have dropped by 24%, partially because of many of the holiday cottages have been rented by the power workers. These levels of collapse turned many businesses from viable to unviable. Visitors come to Suffolk for peace, fresh air, big skies, relaxation to enjoy the rural and seaside tranquillity and for an appreciation of culture and better things.

00:40:44:05 - 00:41:15:18

Suffolk has always been. London's much needed lungs. Holidaymakers are happy to spend money in the shops, pubs, restaurants and other attractions. But many power workers tend to bring microwaves and then buy ready meals and cans of beer in the cheaper supermarkets and save their money. Local hotels talk of minimalists secondary spend power workers tend to start early and retire early, so no nighttime economy. There are no boom towns.

00:41:15:20 - 00:41:46:02

There are no gold rush for the local businesses. Coming to Suffolk used to be a rural adventure. The drive from Woodbridge or Lowestoft was a pastoral delight. Open countryside, grazing cattle, ancient trees, sleepy villages giving you all a real sense of arrival. But today you are faced with marl upon marl of red and white fencing, thousands of safety cones, unnecessary speed restrictions. Tottering. Temporary. Undecipherable. Yellow AA signs.

00:41:46:04 - 00:42:17:19

Slow moving lorries. Traffic jams. Ripped out Hedges. Scarred. Countryside. Disappeared. Woodland roadworks. Road closures. Temporary traffic lights and unacceptable long journey times. More a sense of dystopian Armageddon than a sense of arrival once visitors know this. Why should they come to Suffolk? There are plenty of other options without these problems. The damage is already being done. AI, TripAdvisor, Mumsnet and similar websites are even now warning of the changes.

00:42:17:21 - 00:42:44:22

The chaos and the mess. This will destroy current levels of tourism and thereby the businesses that rely on it in the past five years. Sorry. In the past year five shops have closed in Aldeburgh, four in Leyton and five in Saxmundham. All have empty shops. This is not a short term problem. The reputation of the area will be tarnished for many years after the last state, the last day glo clouds have, you could work and leave.

00:42:44:24 - 00:42:58:04

Just the three minutes is up. So I'm sorry, but, um, thank you for everything that you've said. We are interested in anything else that you do wish to say, and we will consider that fully if you submit it in writing at the next deadline. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

00:43:01:03 - 00:43:06:23

Next, please. Could I invite Nicola Fulford to speak. And again you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:43:07:22 - 00:43:37:07

Thank you. My name is Nicola Fulford. Um, and I live in Friston. I'm in a grade two listed house, uh, which is adjacent to the SPR substation site. We, um, we share a boundary. Sorry. I find this incredibly stressful. Difficult. Um, everything is wrong about this project. And I want to speak to the reality of what it's like living next to this.

00:43:37:12 - 00:43:40:14

I'm sorry if you like to say. If you like, I do.

00:43:40:18 - 00:43:51:00

Because you need to understand how awful this is, okay? And you're proposing putting this text down? We are just a little village, and this proposal is for a town.

00:43:57:01 - 00:44:36:11

There is no joy. Our lives are ruined. And so far, all we've had is archaeological, archaeological digs. And that sounds completely harmless, but good Lord, it's been like the M25 has been being built next to our house. The dust has been unbearable. There's meant to be dust mitigation. There was none. We had to be. The police have actively get in touch with Riccio, who's a delight, who said, don't worry, I've got this shot, close the site down, rang us back, reassured us it's now in place, so on it goes.

00:44:36:13 - 00:45:07:00

It was not in place. More dust. So I'm walking the dog. I talked to someone on site and said, could you please explain? They closed the site down there, and then the archaeologists were complaining because they couldn't work in the dust. So it is up to us. You know, you try and do the right thing by putting things in place to protect us. But human nature, you know, it was all apparently down to money. According to archaeologists, they didn't want to spend. Whoever employed them didn't want to spend the money on the houses.

00:45:07:02 - 00:45:38:01

And it's it's our community, um, that suffers. Um, I don't want to be speaking here at all. I hate speaking. My husband spoke at the last one. He couldn't possibly speak. I know you say we're not meant to talk about our health, but we are incredibly unwell. And we are one of many who are incredibly unwell. You must must Consider the human impact that this is having on all of us.

00:45:38:20 - 00:45:43:00

I'm sorry. Excuse me. Sorry.

00:45:44:26 - 00:45:46:19

Thank you very much for that.

00:45:52:05 - 00:46:02:23

Can I? Can I just say that that we completely understand anything you submit in writing to us has the same weight as anything we hear today orally. So please do put your submission in.

00:46:06:18 - 00:46:07:18

No. We do.

00:46:17:14 - 00:46:19:14

No, we. And we do understand.

00:46:36:05 - 00:46:46:09

We do. We do understand there is a lot of feeling about this, about this proposed moment. So please do, please do try and give us something in writing as well. So we have it for the record. Thank you.

00:46:49:02 - 00:47:04:21

Thank you. Um, Tim Beach, if I could invite you to speak, please. Um, if you could explain who it is you're, um, representing. You have six minutes. Thank you. Sorry. Could you just turn your microphone on? Thank you. Sorry.

00:47:05:05 - 00:47:05:20

I'm a.

00:47:05:22 - 00:47:06:07

Member of the.

00:47:06:09 - 00:47:06:24

East.

00:47:06:26 - 00:47:07:11

Suffolk.

00:47:07:13 - 00:47:08:11

Community Energy Partnership, which.

00:47:08:13 - 00:47:08:28

Basically.

00:47:09:00 - 00:47:09:24

Represents.

00:47:09:29 - 00:47:11:06

Many towns and parishes.

00:47:11:08 - 00:47:12:02

In East Suffolk.

00:47:12:04 - 00:47:12:19

Extending.

00:47:12:21 - 00:47:48:12

From Lowestoft to Woodbridge. Um, I just want to make a personal reflection. I spent 30 years within the police service in Suffolk, both operationally as a and as a senior officer, and after retirement, I committed to be a member of the Community Speed Watch volunteer. And in that context, I just wanted to emphasize the importance of the limited and fragile road infrastructure to all of our communities, and particularly all the blue light services. I can only echo some of the previous personal accounts you've heard. This is an issue that's been under considered previously, and the applicant's DCO continues to do that.

00:47:48:14 - 00:48:19:29

I could expand. There's limited time, but I feel it should be covered and we feel it should be covered in a transport ish and on consultation. We've raised concerns and they've been flagged right across East Suffolk around the general cumulative impact and specifically traffic and transport impacts of what can be termed the CIP energy projects literally from 2018 onwards, initially with the consented ScottishPower, then size. We'll see, then Nautilus, then Sealink, then Lie and Link.

00:48:20:11 - 00:48:55:21

Those concerns remain unaddressed in our view within this by the applicant in this DCR, despite repeated assurances at statutory and non-statutory consultations that the issue of cumulative impact would be addressed and comprehensively within this DCO. We have also asked repeatedly for the asset projects to be coordinated, and that we have some form of representation at any and in some of their meetings. None of that is apparent and none of it has occurred. And we've repeated those requests through Desnos and and we have made no progress with it.

00:48:55:23 - 00:49:42:25

And the DCO does not seem to reflect that. And at various times at the existing size, we'll see traffic and transport forums. There have been specific requests from members for input and engagement from National Grid around Sealink and Line Link. Those have been declined, and it was interesting to note that both the County Council and East Suffolk reflect in their representations disappointment with National Grid's engagement or lack of it. We repeatedly, as communities in East Suffolk raise concerns around mental health and wellbeing issues for everybody impacting on communities, and particularly given the sheer number and complexity of the projects and consultation, I don't think I need to say anything more on that at all.

00:49:42:29 - 00:50:22:00

Um, transport. In the view of ACIP, the DCO at chapter seven is the deeply unsatisfactory document around the transport and traffic issues. Principally, in our view, it does not reflect the detailed research analysis and just suggested mitigation that we had expected from meetings, feedback and submissions that we as towns and parishes have made literally over the years. The DCL contains no full traffic assessment document, but rather what's called a traffic assessment note, which, given the scale of the projects, would appear contrary to the National Planning Policy framework.

00:50:22:04 - 00:51:05:10

It it's also of concern to us that the baseline figure. Research reflected in the DCO was carried out in the winter of 2024, which isn't regarded in Professional Highway's assessment terms. As we understand it, as a neutral month for traffic analysis, it completely avoids the repeated requests made by many communities of the need to recognize significant tourist impact on traffic over the standard

peak period of July and August. The traffic analysis as outlined in the DCO has no specific junction analysis, which is again a matter that many of our communities and Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk have raised as being potentially significant to both congestion and road safety.

00:51:05:12 - 00:51:22:10

It's simply not there. Although the DCO references the need to manage construction and workforce traffic, there is no real detail about how that could be done, and there's no attempt to replicate what was done with Sizewell C. See.

00:51:24:11 - 00:51:25:01

And.

00:51:26:29 - 00:51:57:12

Cumulative impact. Skip noted that chapter 13 of the DC on Cumulative Impacts has an extensive list of other projects, both planned and consented, which it purports to assess. Escape is concerned that despite specifically and from a really early stage, asking for consideration the potential cumulative impact of this project and all the others listed in chapter 13, the DCL document holds no real detail on the potential impact of concurrent development.

00:51:57:14 - 00:52:38:20

It's striking there's frequent reference to ongoing work and the need to continue it, but no real reflection or recognition of the issue. And arguably, the issue is dismissed. And as you've heard from others, um, it's at odds with the original SPR and S Sizewell C hearings, which again, I've attended, which reflected significant concerns around traffic for those projects alone. As you've heard from others, the tan concludes, I won't go through the whole thing. It's around cumulative impact at 6.2.2.13 that no significant cumulative impact effects on traffic and transport are expected as a result of the construction.

00:52:38:22 - 00:53:09:20

Construction traffic associated with the Suffolk Onshore scheme, when combined with construction and operational traffic associated with other committed developments in isolation or when considering all committed developments combined. Frankly, we find that an almost incredible statement the applicant's development will generate a significant additional level of vehicle trips on the road and will have a really significant impact on the whole of this county, extending from Woodbridge to Lowestoft.

00:53:09:22 - 00:53:10:18

Thank you.

00:53:11:08 - 00:53:17:12

Thank you, and thank thank you to the five of you for for speaking to us today. Um.

00:53:19:15 - 00:53:24:17

Oh. Sorry. Again. Yeah, sorry. Councillor Josie Bassinets, please.

00:53:27:14 - 00:53:28:14

Thank you.

00:53:28:26 - 00:54:03:20

Um, my name is Josie Bassinet, and I'm speaking today as the councilor from Beswick Parish Council delegated to deal with and CIP projects in our area. I have three areas that I would like to highlight. These are the inclusion of Lyon link in the C link DCO, the cumulative impact on our communities, and the impact on the natural environment. My first point is very basic. Lyon Link is a completely different project from C link. All that connects these two projects are the same company shareholders wishing to develop and profit from them.

00:54:03:22 - 00:54:37:14

It is incredible, therefore, that we found in the ceiling DCO a request for approval for Lyon Link substation land. There is no Lyon Link project for now. It is simply a proposal for an interconnector that is universally opposed as grossly inappropriate. Its proposed landing site and cable route are within protected habitats and in the very heart of historic Walbrzych village, before trenching another 14km to this location next to the seedling substation.

00:54:38:01 - 00:55:12:27

I know that this is not a hearing on line link, and that is precisely why the Sealink DCO cannot be allowed to bypass the proper processes and sneak lion link through the back door. There is absolutely no reason for the Lion Link interconnector to come ashore here. We ask, therefore, that the Planning Inspectorate turned back this DCO, which tries to force some kind of prejudgment of lion link to justify the building of sea link. My second point relates to the cumulative impact, and particularly I'm going to speak on the economic impact.

00:55:12:29 - 00:55:59:12

And on this I support others on the need for an issue specific hearing. I would like to highlight. This is an article from this weekend's Ft, which shows that the national study done of deprivation, first one since 2019, has confirmed that Britain's coastal communities are among the most deprived areas of the country. But this is not the case for arts here in Suffolk. Ours are vibrant. This is because our economies of our towns and villages, as you've heard from others, are not post-industrial areas but are rather built around the provision of natural beauty undeveloped beaches, peaceful landscapes, dark skies, undisturbed wildlife.

00:55:59:14 - 00:56:31:28

It is just shocking. As a nation, we should even consider putting nips here to destroy exactly which that which preserves us. There are so many more appropriate options in addition to this cumulative economic impact, I would like to focus on the cumulative impact on human health and well-being. Those like me and all these other counselors, charity NGOs, people who are here today have lives that are literally taken over by the need to act on these insights.

00:56:32:00 - 00:57:02:18

We are all volunteers. We few of us are experts, and we now spend years in a David and Goliath fight with these enormous developers who drop projects on our communities one after another. You heard this from my colleague sitting next to me. We sit by passively, then our communities are crushed. But

engaging with these serial, uncoordinated projects calls us days, months, years of time, and incredible stress. We must fundraise to get some expert advice.

00:57:02:20 - 00:57:34:04

We must set up and operate websites to keep our bewildered and dispirited residents informed and involved. If a project goes through. We must then represent our villages and towns on various forums and working groups to try to hold the developers to account. We are already exhausted. I just use as an example. I personally represent Walbrzych on Sizewell forums and working groups, which are essential for us to protect that little bit of mitigation and voice we have. One of these met just last night.

00:57:34:10 - 00:58:06:21

I mean, I look around, half the people in this room were at this meeting for 2.5 hours last night. They dragged themselves out of bed and come here today. It's relentless and we can't keep doing this. It is wrong to put more Ansip infrastructure on the shoulders of the same small communities, and pretend that we can engage properly. The impact on our physical and mental health is unsustainable and unjustified, and is particularly unacceptable when there is absolutely no compelling reason for putting Sea Link here.

00:58:07:14 - 00:58:37:19

Finally, I would like to make a point on how the environmental impact of Sea Link is particularly severe because of the cumulative effect. I would like to share with the panel that during the Sizewell C hearings, which I and many others here attended, we talked about the Marsh Harriers, which are, um, going to lose important foraging habitat because of the size. We'll see. Development size will see itself put up its hand and admitted this.

00:58:37:21 - 00:59:09:13

But the argument at the time, which the government accepted, was that there were nearby undisturbed habitats where these and other bird species could exist. It was on this basis that the mitigation for the harrier was agreed on Sizewell. But now some of these alternative habitats are being threatened by Sea Link and these other projects. And this undermines completely the Sizewell mitigation argument, and it makes a complete mockery of this entire process.

00:59:09:15 - 00:59:29:28

We can't pretend that ceiling can be judged in isolation. As much as NGV would like to pretend it is not the first or the only sip in this tiny bit of land. Like our human communities, wildlife along the Suffolk coast has nowhere left to go. For these reasons, Sea Link must not be built here. Thank you.

00:59:33:20 - 00:59:55:25

Thank you for that. And thank you to that group of speakers. If I could now please invite the next five speakers, um, to speak. And that's Stuart Robson. Michael mahoney. Elizabeth bennett. William Parker and Marianne Fellows, please. Thank you.

01:00:23:29 - 01:00:33:17

Good morning all. Firstly, please could I invite Stuart Robson to speak? Who is virtual? I understand, and you have three minutes. Thank you.

01:00:34:09 - 01:01:07:29

Good morning. I'm Stuart Ian Robson and I'm an Aldeburgh resident. Whilst I share others concerns about ceilings impact, I will speak today about relevant aspects of its design and need. Ceilings purpose is stated as building grid resilience, which the applicant told me means increasing capacity and removing the vulnerability deriving from sizeable single overhead cable connection for the 30 mile run south to Bramford. Turning first to capacity with size sites will see start up date now pushed back to the mid 2030s.

01:01:08:05 - 01:01:31:00

Nautilus relocated to Grain and dining and consented. The justification on capacity grounds alone seems weak. Also I see sizable B's, B and C's combined power is to be carried by overhead wires alone between the Sizewell site and Friston. So please look closely at the capacity justification.

01:01:32:15 - 01:02:02:11

Turning to the single line vulnerability. Removing this through ceiling seems highly sensible, except that the proposals don't currently deliver that between Sizewell and Friston. This means an event at just one pylon in that stretch could take all sides. Will B and C produced power off grid spending billions on Sealink. But leaving such a vulnerability isn't sensible, so I urge you to investigate Further,

01:02:03:29 - 01:02:36:18

the applicant say they wanted to terminate at Sizewell but were told there was no suitable space. It's their apparent inability to question that which has led directly to all the extra infrastructure now proposed in East Suffolk. And in my view, the real issue here is not, of course, space sizeable as the area Sealink requires is small. Instead, the response likely results from disjointed thinking and excessive caution amongst the multiple parties that own and operate at the sizeable site.

01:02:37:18 - 01:02:38:17

One minute left.

01:02:38:29 - 01:03:15:17

The good news is that as the examining authority, you have the ability to scrutinise why your rating isn't being delivered. And I urge an issue specific hearing on this issue. To assist, I'll give you three reasons why the no remit, size or response may be wrong. Firstly, this unit was announced at the old Sizewell A turbine hall had been demolished clearing an area the size of a football pitch for future use. The question you will want to examine is why is that not use for spare land? For for ceiling living locally, there are also many staff not directly involved in the day to day operation of sites will be working on site.

01:03:15:19 - 01:03:45:15

Could they not be relocated to a nearby off site office? And there are very large car parking at Sizewell, but there are now remote car parks established with bus drivers. Transport for sites or C workers. So perhaps those remote car parks can be used to reduce on site parking the clothes and issue specific hearing to investigate terminating Sealink within the Sizewell site to deliver full dual routine, as well as to consider the capacity need, would be of huge benefit to all. Thank you.

01:03:46:19 - 01:03:47:26

Thank you for that.

01:03:49:19 - 01:03:56:12

Um. Next, please, could I invite Michael Moseley to invite to speak. And you have three minutes. Thank you.

01:03:59:07 - 01:04:00:22

Marnie. Thank you.

01:04:01:26 - 01:04:02:25

Um, I'm.

01:04:02:27 - 01:04:33:12

Speaking in a personal capacity. Um, I own a large field, some 45 acres just to the west of the substations site. The way that things are going is likely to be the only undeveloped piece of land in the area. And that is the way that I want to keep it. National grid needs to carry works outwards to upgrade the pylon lines on my land. And those works are outside the way. So in theory, I should be an effective party.

01:04:33:14 - 01:05:07:15

But I'm speaking today because I wanted to get this request in earlier rather than later. I've been having discussions with National Grid on off probably about a year. Initially we had productive discussions because they recognized the works were outside the way leave, and we were discussing the issues around biodiversity and whether my land could be used to improve biodiversity, which would be appropriate given it's right next to the National Grid Connection hub. We had those discussions, then all of a sudden they were abruptly ended and I heard nothing more. A few weeks ago, National Grid had a meeting with my neighbors.

01:05:07:17 - 01:05:39:19

I was not invited to that meeting, but I gate crashed it anyway. Whereupon National Grid indicated that they thought their works were within the terms of the existing whaling, which I dispute. Um, but I had not been formally told that in any way, shape or form. So imagine my surprise when looking at the land rights tracker. It says in a formal document, as part of the application, that they were going to rely upon their existing rights. Neither I nor my land agent had received any formal notice of that.

01:05:39:24 - 01:06:10:15

You mentioned good manners earlier. I think this is an example of extremely bad manners. Now, what I want to on the basis of that, I have my land agent check what exactly National grid we're up to, and he received a reply. which from which it was clear that National Grid had not received proper legal advice as to whether or not the works were within or outside the way laid. So we don't know what that advice is. But I'll tell you this if their advice is that the rights are within the way.

01:06:10:17 - 01:06:44:14

Leaf, I shall go and see counsel's advice, which no doubt because we know what councillor like. They will say that the works are outside the way leave. But this is rather silly, because what I really want to

do is to develop a private, private nature reserve open to everybody on part of my land. Funnily enough, I have discussed this with Sizewell C and Sizewell C, have a number of grants which they said would be available to me. Why do I have to rely on Sizewell C when it's national grid that are damaging the biodiversity in our area? So my offer here is to National Grid.

01:06:44:16 - 01:07:01:28

I would like to have a discussion with them with improving and preserving the biodiversity in our area. I'm sure they will find me They're unreasonable. So I would hope those discussions could start sooner rather than later, rather than just wasting money on rather expensive lawyers. Thank you.

01:07:02:13 - 01:07:10:18

Thank you for that. Next, please. Could I invite Elizabeth Bennet to speak? And again, you have three minutes. Thank you.

01:07:10:20 - 01:07:15:00

My name is Elizabeth Bennet and I'm a resident of Saxmundham in 2014.

01:07:15:16 - 01:07:17:18

Can you just move the microphone? Thank you.

01:07:17:29 - 01:07:48:09

In 2014, our current Secretary of State for Energy Security said this. I want to challenge unaccountable power, be it public or private. I care about the inequalities of power. Everyone, not just a few at the top, should have the chance to shape their own lives. The irony of this statement is not lost on me. As Daley now appeared, the shaping of our lives in the rural communities is being eroded, altered in terms of our everyday habits.

01:07:48:18 - 01:08:21:13

For each journey undertaken, One has to. One has to consider what diversionary route traffic restrictions that are sprung up literally overnight. How long will my journey take today? Is it really viable? After all, we, the ordinary people, are paying a heavy price with little consultation, or so it appears. Only last evening I attended a meeting at the Foma Centre in Saxmundham to examine the plans for Suffolk water recycling, transferring and storage projects.

01:08:21:15 - 01:08:53:10

Yet further disruption criss crossing the A12 as new pipelines are proposed to take water from Saxmundham to Sizewell. The cumulative impact of all these energy plans, concentrated in such a small area, upends all that we once prized. I once read a description of Suffolk that resonated with me in Suffolk's heart. Rivers Glyde fields of green greens stretch far and wide. The sun break glimmers on the coast.

01:08:53:12 - 01:09:28:15

A tapestry of dreams to boast. Today we are faced with acres of solar power farms, rural roads, the A12, many of the little byways snarled with traffic in HGTV's local wildlife corridors, torn apart by wide scale decimation of mature trees and hedgerows, pipelines carved deep underground light,

constant noise pollution. This tapestry of dreams indeed has become a nightmare for so many. A once rural economy, a thriving tourist industry threatened like never before.

01:09:28:20 - 01:10:03:13

There seems to be an insidious creeping of mistrust and misinformation amongst the ordinary people. Who is listening to us? Who is going to care for our future food security if all is laid waste under tons of concrete. I volunteer at the museum in Saxmundham, an unassuming building that opens up like the Tardis to reveal the heritage and pride in its rural past. This museum, like so many, rely on the goodwill of volunteers, but its mainstay are tourists, who leaves a little satisfied that they, too, have experienced a glimpse of our rich past.

01:10:03:18 - 01:10:26:27

Saxmundham needs tourism to thrive. So yes, I feel the inequality of power is all around in those who wield it to carve up our landscape, and I endorse all that is laid out by sees. It is now a time for a new route map, one that looks at alternatives at brownfield sites closer to where the power is required at an offshore connectivity hub.

01:10:28:13 - 01:10:29:11

Thank you for that.

01:10:29:13 - 01:10:30:05

Thank you.

01:10:30:15 - 01:10:41:19

Um, next, could I invite William Parker to speak, please? And again, you have three minutes. Thank you. Good morning. I and many others in the wider community are jaundiced.

01:10:41:21 - 01:10:42:06

About this.

01:10:42:08 - 01:10:42:26

Process.

01:10:42:28 - 01:10:49:24

We've been through the stress and this trauma before. However, as you are already experiencing, once again.

01:10:49:26 - 01:10:50:11

We.

01:10:50:13 - 01:11:03:09

Want our voice heard and we need you to listen. I co-own a business in Thorpe Ness, providing accommodation for multi-generational families who come to enjoy the traditional beachside holiday enjoying the environment.

01:11:03:11 - 01:11:36:02

Sea swimming, the peace and the quiet. The prospect of marooned in Thorpe Ness between multiple infrastructure projects is incomprehensible, and I am aghast to understand why. I have to highlight we need to keep the coast road between all Thorpe, Ness and Auburn open at all times. The destruction of wildlife and the wider environment, especially in the designated areas, means that we believe that we will have to close our business, disappoint our loyal customers and let down our local suppliers.

01:11:36:04 - 01:12:12:05

How can we genuinely welcome people to the chaos, the noise and the pollution that's engulfing this area? I've lived locally for 25 years, and I'm feeling that this is the last straw, forcing me to seriously consider Roy living future. I'm sick of the anarchy on the fragile road network. The loss of mobile phone and internet coverage and the collapse of local service provision. This is an unequal process. The applicant has very deep pockets. Who employs the most articulate of barristers and the most compliant of consultants, as local people will, where the applicant regards us as collateral damage.

01:12:12:19 - 01:12:46:28

I anticipate that we may be mislabeled as NIMBYs, but the local community actually is extremely well informed. We have amongst us highly qualified experts in the technical detail and we have a passion for the area. But we are tired of being ignored, told half truths or having critical information withheld. Therefore, if we have to operate whilst you have to operate on your terms of reference, I ask you the committee. Three things. One. Rigorously and skeptically examine everything they are told by the applicant.

01:12:47:08 - 01:13:21:04

Two if and there's a big if, if you accept this application that you apply strict and long term conditions regard to the restoration of nature and environment. And three, you ensure that the application is required to coordinate its work with other concepts and an obligation to reduce the impact on the local community and to communicate effectively with the local population. I fully support the local community Action group, says cease and include for the offshore hubs to help protect this precious area.

01:13:21:06 - 01:13:22:01

Thank you.

01:13:23:13 - 01:13:31:04

Thank you for that. Um, next please. Could we hear from Marianne Fallows? And again, you have three minutes. Thank you.

01:13:34:16 - 01:13:46:04

Good morning. Panel. I'm firmly rooted in this glorious place. I treasure these roots, my Suffolk roots. Not my words, but Benjamin Britten, who founded Snape Maltings and.

01:13:46:06 - 01:13:47:10

The Opera Festival.

01:13:47:13 - 01:13:49:07

And how he speaks of.

01:13:49:09 - 01:14:24:06

How this area inspired and sustained him. Britten words were also used successfully to defeat proposals for a local airport, recognising the harm that industrialisation would bring to this area, which is not suited geographically, environmentally, economically, morally for any sort of industrialisation. Other words from the past your colleagues SPR East Anglian one. North East Anglian two panel. The balance of benefits over harm only just met. How can any other additional infrastructure be approved by yourselves? Two words.

01:14:24:08 - 01:14:55:07

National grid neither National grids, net worth 93 billion, has prioritised dividends to shareholders of 211%. Instead of investing in a grid in the past. They haven't put forward an insert themselves for a super connection hub, it wouldn't be approved under guidance for exemplary approach to site selection and design as you know. See link if the need case is true. Proves that Friston is the wrong place for a connection hub if there isn't the capacity to connect to the grid.

01:14:55:09 - 01:15:31:01

Why was it chosen? If ceiling is for future capacity instead, then recommend refusal now and ask for a pause. Or better still, if NGF is listening, withdraw. Provide a sustainable, coordinated strategic solution using new technology. Brownfield sites nearer to demand via offshore mesh. There are many significant harms, uncertainties, inconsistencies and part truths which I will send you with complete references to the whole volumes that I have read thousands of pages in my own time,

01:15:32:28 - 01:16:05:05

from the narrow study areas to TV's every six minutes one. Every six minutes one. Every two. Speakers. Line link rejected the landfall at scallop Aldeburgh, my home for over 60 years due to the economic, ecological harm and constraints. Yet Sealink has chosen that very place. You know the words on the scallop at obra, the memorial to Benjamin Britten. They read I hear those words that will not be drowned when appointed.

01:16:05:07 - 01:16:36:08

You must have wondered why over 5000 people took the trouble to register as interested parties, and how many people have movingly given their testimony through these open floor hearings? There's only one reason there's significant, disproportionate harm Sealink and other projects that will come if the approval for Sealink is given. I respectfully request our words and thank you everyone On to you and not drowned.

01:16:39:06 - 01:17:06:08

Thank you for that. I'd like to thank all of that group of speakers, please. Um, I think if we could just do the next group, and then I think we'll be pausing after the next group for a short comfort break. But, um, if we could invite, please, the next group to speak, which is Alicia Duncan, Matthew Denny, James Hardcastle, Nicola Corbett and Christine Corlett. Thank you.

01:17:35:06 - 01:17:39:03

Firstly, could I just check? Is Alicia Duncan in attendance?

01:17:40:28 - 01:17:42:20

No. Okay. Thank you.

01:17:48:15 - 01:17:54:18

But I also check if James Hardcastle is either in attendance or online.

01:17:57:10 - 01:18:07:18

No. Okay. Thank you. Um, in that case, firstly, please, could we hear from Matthew Danny, who I believe is online, and you have three minutes. Thank you.

01:18:09:20 - 01:18:16:06

Uh, thank you and good morning. Um, my name is. Oh, sorry. I need to put the camera on.

01:18:18:12 - 01:18:51:18

Okay. Sorry. Uh, my name is Matthew Denny. I'm a resident of Walbrzych, and I'm a professional ecologist with a PhD in disturbance impacts on birds. I'm concerned about the quality and breadth of the surveys and assessment underpinning the habitats Regulations assessment for the ceiling proposal. Um, there's inadequate survey effort for both marsh harrier and nightjar, which are qualifying species to the nearby protected Special Protection Areas.

01:18:52:12 - 01:19:27:11

For example, much of the seedling development area is within within the foraging range of marsh harriers breeding in the nearby Old Ta or estuary and mincemeat warblers special protection areas. Yet, despite marsh harriers being known to use the Sealink proposal area, the species is not even mentioned in the Suffolk section of the Habitats Regulations. Assessment for Sealink and dedicated surveys for the species were not undertaken, which does not follow standard practice.

01:19:28:27 - 01:19:45:18

The Habitats Regulations assessment must consider whether the integrity of a population of a qualifying species will be impacted by the proposal, and I do not believe this is possible to assess due to the deficient baseline survey data.

01:19:47:15 - 01:20:18:18

There are two specific derogation tests at the appropriate assessment stage of the Habitats Regulations process, which I believe the sealing proposal does not pass. Test one is the consideration of viable alternative solutions. I assert that sealing was too limited in considering suitable alternatives, and this is the same for the line link proposal, which is partially included within this DCO.

01:20:19:26 - 01:20:59:15

And test two is whether the proposal meets imperative reasons of overriding public importance. And given the evidence others have presented during this open floor hearing, questioning the need for sealink at all, the project is clearly not imperative. So I had asked the examining authority to pay particular attention when reviewing the adequacy of the baseline ecology surveys and assessments, and to consider in detail the above Habitats Regulations tests, which I believe this DCO application fails to address and meet.

01:21:00:03 - 01:21:21:03

And I'd also question by the separate line link converter station should be partially consented under this application and formally request that there is an issue specific hearing on cumulative impacts to include the combination effects on European protected species. Okay. Thank you.

01:21:22:01 - 01:21:23:12

Thank you for that.

01:21:25:02 - 01:21:34:12

Next, please. Could I invite Nicola Corbet to speak? Um, if you could introduce who it is you're representing and you have six minutes to speak. Thank you.

01:21:34:28 - 01:22:14:02

Thank you. Um, Nicola Corbet, listen. Come. Town council, we're taking this opportunity to express dismay in addition to sizeable Caspar. We are now faced with the first of many more proposed energy projects to add to the impacts we are already experiencing. The Sealink project will mean our special corner of the continually eroding Suffolk coast will shoulder even more responsibility for UK energy security. The community of Leighton has a proud industrial heritage and for 60 years the parish has been host to nuclear power and it is now embarking on over a decade of major construction upheaval for size will see during consultation precisely.

01:22:14:04 - 01:22:45:16

Residents were assured that the countryside to the south and west of Leighton would not be impacted by construction, and the loss of recreational amenity on the seismic state will be compensated for in these locations. However, the impact of the SVR projects and potentially the Sealink proposals leaves Leiston facing even more upheaval to the south and west, and Sealink would begin at the very peak of the size of sea construction. It's fair to say that only a year ago, our community had not envisaged the true impact of being the host for Sizewell C.

01:22:45:27 - 01:23:20:16

Cherished countryside has become unrecognisable to make way for permanent and temporary infrastructure, and the scale of the project is beyond what many imagined. We know that sizeable sea will eventually provide a considerable contribution to the UK's energy security, but this rural area should not be burdened with more responsibility. We need to see light at the end of the tunnel. Residents working outside the town, or those who travel between customers locally, already face a frustratingly time consuming journey as they negotiate traffic and roadworks associated with the projects currently under construction.

01:23:20:26 - 01:23:57:27

Hospital trips and other appointments now take far longer, and emergency vehicles accessing the town faced delays. It has to be noted that Layton is 60 minutes away from the nearest accident and emergency hospital without any delays, more than any other town in Suffolk. Contractor numbers and deliveries will continue to increase and impact our daily lives despite infrastructure upgrades and associated development services will see residents with no links to the current projects are already starting to move away from the town. Some simply to avoid seeing the changing landscape all around us, others to escape the impact on their daily lives.

01:23:57:29 - 01:24:37:11

And those who seek a quieter life can be forgiven for moving elsewhere. Even residents who have roots firmly within the parish are making life changing decisions about their future. Retired and semi-retired residents make up a large proportion of our voluntary sector and contribute to childcare support for their wider families. This vital generation must be encouraged to remain in our town. We are concerned that the result will be an unbalanced, unsustainable economy. As the town's demographic shifts to becoming predominantly a dormitory for construction workers, the council is working hard, very hard to ensure the current projects do not define our town.

01:24:37:21 - 01:25:14:03

Adding further energy infrastructure. This already challenging task would no doubt require extra determination and energy. The tourism offer for Leiston and the surrounding towns and villages is already challenged by the consented projects, and Sealink will further damage the special qualities that visitors are seeking. Tourist accommodation, much in demand has already been sought out by construction workers and this will only worsen despite extra accommodation being provided by the developer. Leasing companies was proud of our unspoilt, although diminishing, beach and foreshore in the hamlet of Sizewell, which is enjoyed by so many.

01:25:14:09 - 01:25:46:05

We believe the development of Sealink will make our beach even less desirable for day trippers and holidaymakers due to the cumulative impact on travel times and the visual impact all around. When we met, we asked Sealink representatives how many mature trees and hedges would need to be removed to provide a temporary haul road and cable route. The answer minimal, was not a satisfactory response. We asked whether the size or link road could be utilised to deliver materials, instead of building a temporary haul road that would hold the link road is yet to be built and cannot be considered an option.

01:25:46:07 - 01:26:28:29

This was not a satisfactory answer either. We respectfully bring to your attention that predicted contractor numbers increased considerably from peak construction at Hinkley Point C. This must be considered fully when contemplating the impact of adding the Sealink data to the traffic and workforce. Numbers predicted for size, or see HGV movements for size will see a capped. But what is the point of capping vehicle movements for one project only to allow several more developers to add their own. In conclusion, the emerging effects of the size or PSBR projects means we are facing the next ten years plus with trepidation, particularly if further projects are brought forward in this rural area.

01:26:29:12 - 01:27:00:15

We therefore request that alternatives are investigated as a matter of urgency before our town and the neighbouring parishes become an industrialised cul de sac. Construction years might be deemed temporary, but could have a long lasting effect on our community. Well, after construction is complete, we are already seeing evidence of collective anxiety in the community, from low level effect to delayed journeys to work and appointments, to the impact of seeing the countryside change beyond recognition. Understandably, tempers are frayed.

01:27:00:21 - 01:27:34:18

Our town is already doing its fair share for UK energy security, so please do not burden us with more less income sides with sympathetic to the concerns raised by our neighbouring parishes. We are collectively Actively in this together, but our own parish carries an extra challenge as hostesses will see. Thank you for taking our views into consideration consideration and we sincerely hope the panel can foresee the further impact facing this community. Should the Sea Link Project be recommended for consent in this location? Thank you.

01:27:35:04 - 01:27:42:18

Thank you for that. Um, please. Now, could I invite Christine Collett to speak, and you have three minutes. Thank you.

01:27:44:05 - 01:27:44:28

Good morning.

01:27:45:11 - 01:27:48:13

My name is Christine Collett and I live in Aldeburgh.

01:27:49:09 - 01:27:50:03

The question.

01:27:50:05 - 01:27:52:03

I keep asking myself.

01:27:52:07 - 01:27:53:25

Is, why are we all.

01:27:53:27 - 01:27:56:25

Here doing our very best to help.

01:27:56:27 - 01:27:57:12

Convince.

01:27:57:14 - 01:27:58:23

You to defend.

01:27:58:25 - 01:28:02:21

And protect our local landscape and wildlife, when.

01:28:02:23 - 01:28:03:25

There are already.

01:28:03:27 - 01:28:11:27

Laws in place to protect them? Surely the whole point of formally designating landscapes.

01:28:12:00 - 01:28:13:09

As AoNB.

01:28:13:15 - 01:28:21:02

And so this is to ensure that they are cherished and protected forever. And if this.

01:28:21:04 - 01:28:21:19

Is.

01:28:21:21 - 01:28:22:26

Indeed the case, then.

01:28:22:28 - 01:28:23:13

It shouldn't.

01:28:23:15 - 01:28:27:00

Be necessary for us or for you to be here.

01:28:29:10 - 01:28:30:19

Shame on National.

01:28:30:21 - 01:28:31:09

Grid.

01:28:31:11 - 01:28:32:02

For showing.

01:28:32:04 - 01:28:32:19

Such.

01:28:32:21 - 01:28:33:15

Disregard.

01:28:33:17 - 01:28:34:02

To.

01:28:34:04 - 01:28:36:09

Our legally protected landscapes.

01:28:36:12 - 01:28:36:27

To the.

01:28:36:29 - 01:28:38:20

Wildlife that live there, and.

01:28:38:22 - 01:28:39:07

To.

01:28:39:09 - 01:29:12:12

All the people who enjoy them as a sanctuary for recreation, relaxation and mental well-being. Have they forgotten how the Covid lockdown taught us the value of nature, open skies, countryside and the sights and the sounds of our wildlife? To have proposed this project in this rural location, knowing full well that it risks causing such significant and potentially long term damage to RSPB North Warren and other.

01:29:12:14 - 01:29:12:29

Fragile.

01:29:13:01 - 01:29:28:05

Habitat habitats. Was disrespectful and arrogant. They clearly think they are above the law, and can disregard the legislation that has been put in place to safeguard not only our landscapes, but our wildlife too.

01:29:29:23 - 01:29:56:22

This same disrespect has already been shown by EDF and Scottish Power, both of whom, as I speak, are felling trees like there's no tomorrow and desecrating our protected landscapes and given the chance. National grid and many other energy companies will do the same. It has to stop. East Suffolk stands on the edge of a dramatic and traumatic change to.

01:29:56:24 - 01:29:57:13

The historic.

01:29:57:15 - 01:30:36:02

Use of its land for agriculture, wildlife and tourism. We are the guardians of our countryside and it is our responsibility to preserve it for future generations. So please do not allow the sights and sounds of the birds and animals we treasure to be replaced with those of HGTV's cranes, diggers and Drilling Equipment. If planning permission is given for this Sealink project, it will make a mockery of the AoNB and SSI designations which should be valued and respected by us all.

01:30:36:07 - 01:30:40:22

And therefore, I urge you to turn down this application. Thank you.

01:30:41:22 - 01:30:43:03

Thank you for that.

01:30:48:21 - 01:31:21:14

I think now is probably a good time for us to stop for a break, because we've been going for an hour and a half. Um, so firstly, though, before I just, um, explain the arrangements for the break. Could I ask the applicant just to show the the, um, the running order for the speakers, please. Um, I think it'd just be helpful if you could display, um, the numbers 21 to 25 so that the people who are speaking after the break are aware of of who's up and they can.

01:31:21:16 - 01:31:55:05

Yeah. Um, make appropriate arrangements and sit down at the table if they want to. Um, okay. So the time now is 1131. So I think we should take a short adjournment to allow for a comfort break. Um, I propose to break for 15 minutes. So that's, um, 11:45 to return. Um, for those watching on the live stream, you will need to refresh your browser page, um, to return to view this hearing when we recommence.

01:31:55:11 - 01:31:59:28

So see you all in, uh, at 1145. Thank you.