



Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Hearing Transcript

Project:	Sea Link
Hearing:	Transcript of Open floor hearing 1 (OFH1) – Session 3 Part 2
Date:	6 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)

00:00:07:18 - 00:00:15:05

Okay, the time is now 1145 and we will recommence the meeting and restart the live stream.

00:00:17:00 - 00:00:47:10

Um, before moving on to the next group, I just think it be appropriate to remind everybody that although we are not, um, asking any questions today, today, in the interests of making sure we make best use of the time and hear from everybody, and we will be setting out any questions that we have subsequently to these hearings. So rest assured, we are listening and being fully cognizant of everything that you're saying. Um, okay, so the next group then, please,

00:00:49:10 - 00:01:01:03

I believe we have Judith Stout. Um, if you could introduce yourself and who it is you're speaking on behalf of, you have six minutes. Thank you.

00:01:02:11 - 00:01:04:03

Thank you. Can you hear me? All right?

00:01:04:06 - 00:01:05:17

I can, yes. Thank you.

00:01:05:27 - 00:01:17:22

Thank you. My name is Judith Stout and I work for the Water Management Alliance, which supports several internal drainage boards in the East of England, including the East Suffolk Water Management Board.

00:01:19:14 - 00:01:46:29

The East Suffolk Water Management Board, or the board, is an internal drainage board as defined by the Land Drainage Act 1991. The board's Internal Drainage district covers several river catchments in East Suffolk. This district overlaps with a very small part of the proposed Sea Link development at two locations. Firstly the landfall area near Thorpe Ness. And secondly the river from this area south of Saxmundham.

00:01:48:21 - 00:02:30:03

East Suffolk Water Management Board is the potential regulator for certain elements of Sea Link's proposed works. Specifically those works within the Board's Internal Drainage District and which require consent as per the Land Drainage Act 1991 and under the board's bylaws. These works could include the discharge of water into a watercourse within the Internal Drainage District, and the alteration of a watercourse within the Internal Drainage District. The board is an interested party because of the potential impact of the project on the board's ability to carry out its statutory functions relating to land drainage and reducing flood risk.

00:02:31:22 - 00:02:54:06

The board submitted a relevant representation to the Planning Inspectorate in June 2025, which highlighted concerns about wording within article 20 of part four of the Draft Development Consent Order, which relates to the discharge of water. Our understanding is that these concerns have not been addressed, which is why we have opted to raise them at this open floor hearing.

00:02:56:17 - 00:03:16:01

The board's key concern is that we wish to ensure it is clear to The Undertaker that article 20 of part four of the DCO does not override the requirement for consent under section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. All byelaws made pursuant to that act.

00:03:17:22 - 00:03:30:11

That part four of the DCO relates to supplemental powers. Article 20 relates to discharge of water and is found on pages 19 and 20 of the draft DCO. Version 3.1 D.

00:03:32:18 - 00:04:06:20

We consider that our concern can be addressed by the insertion of suitable wording, which we included in our relevant representation, into paragraph seven of article 20 of part four of the DCO. Similar to the wording that states that the article does not override the requirement for an environmental permit. Nothing in this article and I'm quoting sorry, Nothing in this article overrides the requirement for an environmental permit under regulation 12.1 B of the Environmental Permitting England and Wales Regulations 2016.

00:04:06:22 - 00:04:20:18

A and we would suggest inserting or for consent under section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, or any byelaws made pursuant to section 66 of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

00:04:22:29 - 00:05:01:00

Secondly, although minor in comparison, the board also recommends that paragraph 12 of article 20 of part four of the DCO should include clarification that watercourse has the meaning, as set out in section 72 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. That definition reads as follows. Watercourse includes all rivers and streams and all ditches, drains, cuts, culverts, dykes, sluices, sewers other than public sewers within the meaning of the Water Industry Act 1991 and passages through which water flows.

00:05:01:15 - 00:05:35:01

End of quote. The board's third concern relates to settlement of any disputes. The draft DCO wording at part four. Article 20, paragraph two, states that any dispute arising from the making of connections to, or the use of a public sewer or drain by the undertaker pursuant to paragraph one, must be determined as if it were a dispute under section 106. Right to Communicate with Public Sewers of the Water Industry Act, 1991.

00:05:36:07 - 00:06:04:27

That is, this paragraph appears to suggest the provisions of the Water Industry Act, 1991 are appropriate to settle any dispute relating to a proposed discharge of surface water into a watercourse. The board finds this to be unsatisfactory And contrary to existing provisions for resolution of disputes within the Land Drainage Act and associated byelaws, the board is keen to engage with the applicant to resolve these matters.

00:06:04:29 - 00:06:06:03

One minute left.

00:06:06:10 - 00:06:07:06

Thank you.

00:06:11:12 - 00:06:13:22

So you've got you've got one minute left. I said.

00:06:14:02 - 00:06:15:22

Thank you. Yes, I've come to the end of mine.

00:06:15:24 - 00:06:16:12

Oh. You have any.

00:06:16:18 - 00:06:18:07

Representation. Thank you.

00:06:18:22 - 00:06:28:16

Thank you for that. Um, next. Next please. Could we invite Melissa Baker to speak? And you have three minutes. Thank you, thank you.

00:06:29:08 - 00:06:59:12

To begin with, I would like to say that I agree with seas and the offshore hub is the best solution. I know that this hearing is to do with National Grid's application for the Sealink project, but it is impossible to see it in isolation when we know of all the other dsos which are being applied for. I am extremely concerned about the cumulative impact of all these proposed developments. The people living in this area are already experiencing the disruption created by Sizewell C.

00:06:59:16 - 00:07:36:21

Every day there is something on social media about delays on the A12, this road closure and that diversion with huge lorries being diverted down single track roads. Not only is all of this inconvenient, but it is also potentially dangerous. How are the emergency services expected to cope? The wildlife has been displaced and is suffering due to the loss of their habitat, with some 30,000 trees cut down and miles of hedges scrubbed out. And this is from only one energy project, the prospect of any more is truly overwhelming.

00:07:37:06 - 00:08:08:03

I live in Saxmundham and drive through Sternfeld and Friston every day to my place of work in Aldeburgh, so my life will be hugely impacted by Sealink, as will the lives of everyone living in this area and those wishing to visit it. I urge the examiners to pursue their research into the offshore hub solution, which is favoured by our neighbours across the North Sea, and visit Sizewell C. We know we need the energy and we know we can do it without destroying our precious and beautiful countryside.

00:08:08:05 - 00:08:43:27

Once it's gone, it's gone. We need to preserve the habitat for our wildlife, which is already struggling to survive. We need to remember that we are part of nature, and that our health and happiness rely on preserving the landscape and looking after the wildlife. Please do not allow National Grid to destroy the peace and beauty of this landscape. The constant noise from construction and ever present hum from the converter and substations, not to mention 24 hour lighting, will destroy the peace and beauty of this landscape forever.

00:08:44:00 - 00:09:15:23

Please do not allow this to happen. It feels at the same points are being made over and over and over again, and we are not being listened to. Please listen to what we are telling you. The decision that is made about sealing will also have a bearing on similar projects here, all over the country and indeed the world. Let's do the right thing and lead the way and ensure the health and wellbeing of the planet for future generations. I would like to finish with a quote from Sir David Attenborough.

00:09:16:00 - 00:09:35:04

He said we have the knowhow and expertise to find better ways to provide power, but for some reason we are not implementing them. We must start caring for our environment and stop destroying it. Otherwise we will not have a future. Thank you.

00:09:35:15 - 00:09:50:04

Thank you for that. Um. Next then please, could we hear from Stephanie Bunn? And again, you have three minutes. Thank you. Sorry. You could you could just press the button on the middle of the microphone so it goes red. Thank you.

00:09:50:23 - 00:10:21:29

I'd like to make three points. Point one. Nature. We had a stag grazing outside our bathroom window a few months ago. An animal displaced by the loss of habitat caused by size. Walls, deforestation, work running loose on the road. Not a happy natural site, but a distressing one. More so-called D vegging for Sealink will make things even worse. I want to keep hearing the cuckoo flying across our valley.

00:10:22:06 - 00:10:59:19

Turtle dove calling. I want to see the miller, the willow and marsh tits flying. Point two heritage and history. Just about a mile or a little more. Up the road from here is the site of a second ship burial at Snape. The other one in this region is Sutton Hoo, the biggest centre for Saxon history in the UK, so I called Saxmundham around here. The Snape burial was partially excavated in the 19th century. There's so much of our cultural heritage we still don't know about, just waiting to be found or else bulldozed.

00:11:00:15 - 00:11:32:01

The whole region, the nature, the history, the landscape is more suited to being a Unesco geo park than an electrical infrastructure site. Aside point three. Aside from the cumulative damage to our environment, heritage and economy that Sealink will cause, we must also take into account the cumulative impact on health people have already, as we've seen, experienced incredible mental distress and suffering because of Sizewell and some of the beginnings of Sealink work.

00:11:32:13 - 00:12:10:04

Right now, there's also impact on emergency services, rapid response. Just someone riding a bike or minor roadworks on the A12 causes complete gridlock without Sea link happening. But there are also long term physical health concerns about exposure to electromagnetic radiation. This infrastructure project is being built right up to Saxmundham, a town with 5000 people. Right up, right, right up next to local housing estates. And very little research has been done on how such close exposure to electromagnetic radiation can affect a population long term.

00:12:10:06 - 00:12:47:07

No government has ever been so foolhardy as to allow something like this so close to a populated area. And the bit of research that's been done does suggest a 10% increase in childhood leukemia, and that's without the impact on the population. We need to find out more. It's an unacceptable risk. Now, really, all I have else to say is that this does need to be integrated, this review. It's a cumulative project. There are more things going on than just Sealink and the incompetence and lack of planning and lack of forethought shown so far is really gives us no faith in it.

00:12:47:09 - 00:12:52:00

So I would request that this is refused this planning application.

00:12:53:29 - 00:13:01:02

Thank you. Um, next please can we hear from Lynn Walker. And again you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:13:02:05 - 00:13:34:09

Good morning. I'm Lynn Walker. I live in Aurora. Uh, I fear the consequences of a disjointed planning approach, often described as being akin to whack a mole involving Sealink with others to follow. And I also believe this proposal will not deliver the promised wins. I'm extremely concerned about the cumulative impact of the proposal being examined here, and I offer anecdotal evidence from four sources about the impact which the is having on the local community.

00:13:34:11 - 00:14:15:19

It's already being felt, let alone what will happen if Sealink is permitted. The negative impact on well-being is clear, I think. So a mobile self-employed technologist travels to Alberta twice a week to treat clients. She's now, on average, one hour late due to road closures and diversions. The cumulative impact on her day means that she must cancel clients due to visit her treatment room at home, and this results in a loss of income of £100 a week and over a move to a six day working week temporarily, and a longer gap between visits to fit in all those who are disappointed.

00:14:15:21 - 00:14:48:06

She is extremely distressed about the toll it's taking upon her and her clients who need her. She recently travelled to Ipswich to treat a patient. The journey took the usual one hour, but the return two and a half because three sets of traffic lights were erected while she was treating the client. More cancelled appointments. We have help from a gardener who lives five miles away, who was due to start work last Friday at eight. He arrived at nine due to the traffic chaos.

00:14:48:08 - 00:15:31:13

Now this happens to many of his clients. He's very distressed. They're not happy. And with the onset of shorter working days, his weekly income is dropping in a very real way. There are many carers travelling to housebound patients also experiencing the impact of delays, and their patients are on the receiving end of rushed or cancelled appointments. And in an area with a large elderly population. This is this is deeply felt. On Tuesday, I had a conversation with the appointment centre for Ipswich and told that a growing list of people from this area arriving very late and missing their appointments or finding they've been cancelled.

00:15:31:16 - 00:15:58:22

These are four local examples of the growing impact of one project. Little are those planned but not yet consented, but to which many are turning their minds as a cumulative impact becomes apparent. In my view, the issues of cumulative impact and traffic and transport have not been addressed by the Sealink project and require individual subject hearings at a later date in this process. Thank you.

00:15:59:26 - 00:16:21:10

Thank you for that. And I'd like to thank that group of speakers as well. Please. Um, could we move on to the next group of speakers and invite those up who wish to speak at the top table, please? Um, so the next group is Jan Arthur, Gillian Horrocks, Jonathan Kellogg and Christopher Wilson, please.

00:16:37:26 - 00:16:44:11

So, um, firstly, if we could hear from Janatha, please. And you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:16:46:02 - 00:16:48:03

Hello. My name is Chan Arthur and I.

00:16:48:05 - 00:16:48:20

Live.

00:16:48:22 - 00:16:55:20

In Saxmundham and I've been a resident there for nearly 30 years. And to now witness the destruction.

00:16:55:22 - 00:16:56:07

Of.

00:16:56:09 - 00:16:56:24

Our countryside.

00:16:56:26 - 00:16:57:11

And.

00:16:57:13 - 00:17:04:13

Most of all our communities is devastating. The thought of my peace and tranquility and retirement being shattered.

00:17:04:14 - 00:17:04:29

After.

00:17:05:01 - 00:17:11:22

Years of hard work. As with many of other residents, is my worst nightmare. The project is now.

00:17:11:24 - 00:17:12:09

Its.

00:17:12:11 - 00:17:51:05

No benefit to our area, community or future. In fact, it is a disgrace that it should have been considered for this town, area or county in the first place. The simple fact is, it would be an advantage to save the country a fortune in finance. Give us more fresh and clean air and if it was put offshore, where it can be distributed Repeated to where it needs to be. Hopefully you'll have all had a drive around and once again seen our unspoilt area, with its many species of wildlife and precious, delicate places for birds and animals to thrive and live out their lives in peace.

00:17:51:20 - 00:18:24:10

This always, this always has been in coordination with the residents of the community nearby. This area has been unnecessarily taken over and abused by many different factions of so-called energy producers, without coordination and with any of the other projects going on in the area, or very much public consultation. It's shambolic, disorganized and of a great detriment to us taxpaying residents. All our lives are being completely disrupted by other works in the area, with additions of thousands of workers.

00:18:24:12 - 00:19:12:09

And as they keep promising, promising us more to come. The A12 is so noisy and constantly filled with traffic now that it's impossible and impossible to navigate the many junctions which are causing increased numbers of accidents for the unwary. No extra police, doctors or schools have been in the planning for this influx of money. The nearest hospital is Ipswich, 40 minutes away by road. The mere volume of earthworks and disruption, trucks, diggers etc. has caused so much dust in Saxmundham this past summer, plus the use of our water, which caused a great deal of discomfort to many residents for weeks with murky and discoloured water whilst it was being pumped out into tankers to be distributed to other projects out of town where there is no water.

00:19:12:18 - 00:19:52:07

When it rains, there is mud everywhere, with roadsides being torn up by massive machine wheels and the rest of the time its horns blowing and even more trucks hurtling around the streets and roads at all hours of the day and night, with big arc lights blazing, cutting out our beautiful, wide and wonderful night skies. Is mind blowing to think of the amount of all of this again in our local area, 200m away from large estates. Should you needlessly. Should your needless proposal go ahead. If this is our future with the converter stations and all the other things going on, I pray we have an apocalypse before it all begins.

00:19:53:13 - 00:20:00:10

Thank you for that. Um, next. Then hopefully we've got Gillian Horrocks. Uh, virtually.

00:20:02:15 - 00:20:05:10

And you have three minutes to speak. Thank you.

00:20:05:25 - 00:20:06:24

Thank you.

00:20:06:26 - 00:20:07:25

I'm doctor Gillian.

00:20:07:27 - 00:20:30:00

Horrocks. This Heritage Coast, where I've lived and worked for 40 years, is threatened by what I believe is now called clustering energy projects. That is in time, geography and prolongation. Using different logic maps, I counted eight special protection zones, eight triple C's, three Ram stars, SA's five.

00:20:30:02 - 00:21:01:12

Rigs as geology 34 nature reserves and its marine zone is of course designated SP and SAC. It's a climate change buffer zone and a cooling river zone with terrestrial and marine benefits. This is a major connectivity corridor which links in and supports protected areas of ecological importance. It also links Norfolk's coastal connectivity corridor with Essex's coastal connectivity corridor.

00:21:01:20 - 00:21:32:06

Its importance is huge. The continuous long term projects will harm some of the rarest, most precarious habitat on the planet in a time scale it cannot recover from. But we're living this already. For example, traffic management is unpredictable. Uncoordinated. Time and money costly. Large vehicles using banned routes and degrade single track roads at our cost. Trains have been disrupted.

00:21:32:08 - 00:22:03:09

Emergency vehicles are impeded. Hedges and trees have been removed in shocking numbers during nesting season, with rare migrating birds unable to breathe. Large earthworks force mammals out, which cause our TOS. Archaeological. Archaeological site clearance is apparently not carried out by ecologically aware workforces. Infrastructure like mobile phone services even is already inadequate, and we're only at preparatory stages of two projects.

00:22:03:19 - 00:22:12:21

In short, efficient project management and local authorities supervision are, let's say, not visible. Subcontracting means poor communication.

00:22:13:06 - 00:22:14:15

Sorry. One minute left.

00:22:14:26 - 00:22:15:19

Sorry.

00:22:16:01 - 00:22:17:11

Sorry. One minute left.

00:22:17:18 - 00:22:59:24

Thank you. A lot of managerial responsibility. Cluster projects use ambient air pollution detectors. Ceilings. Order limits are often within 1000m of settlements in ecologically sensitive areas, which compromises a healthy environment of both habitats. There are 1482 school aged children in this catchment area. Some schools are close to works or works traffic flows and remain inadequately accounted for in plans. Meanwhile, UK Energy Research Centres 2025 study shows that ambient air monitoring is an inadequate measure of the damages caused by airborne pollution to children's neurodevelopment, cognitive and motor skills.

00:23:00:12 - 00:23:16:05

Noise. I live about two miles away from sizeable Casper's pre-construction works, yet I hear them. The imposition of energy onto Heritage Coast is like a forced marriage made in hell. Please grant us divorce.

00:23:19:05 - 00:23:30:14

Thank you for that. Um. Next, please. Can we hear from Jonathan Kellogg. And you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:23:32:04 - 00:24:11:20

Good morning. My name is Jonathan Kellogg. I'm a resident of Snape, and I'm a chartered surveyor. I'd like to highlight and make three observations to the planning inspector. Firstly through 2017 to 2019, alongside others I input to local group. Leave the layers alone. Who lobbied East Suffolk Council in their Local Plan review subsequently adopted in 2021. Our representations were focused on the agricultural land to both the West and the east of the historic south entrance road, that is, the B1121 into Saxmundham from the A12 and Bixby's Corner.

00:24:12:08 - 00:24:46:24

We secured protection from development and infrastructure for this land, given its significant historic value to the town being an original site of the Suffolk County Showground and likewise Hertz Hall, its history and setting. It is across this land and woodland. The ng unbelievably seek to carve the axis road to their proposed converter station, among other sites that ESC and the town council reviewed for development and infrastructure also included the land to the east of Saxmundham.

00:24:46:26 - 00:25:22:04

The proposed site Benji's Sealink converter station. After analysis by ESC, then this site was dismissed, given concerns over drainage levels, consequent flood risk and to protect the settlement boundary. This DCO application location seems at the very least being polite about it. Inconsistent notwithstanding the DCA procedure. Put simply, this application drives a coach and horses through the adopted local plan with far, far reaching consequences.

00:25:22:16 - 00:25:59:15

Secondly, I believe this Sealink and line link application is very poorly planned. It's disjointed, it's exploitative and extremely opportunistic and is, quite frankly, akin to a nightmare feeding frenzy approach. Moreover, very, very late in the current consultation process, almost as if planned, Ng have

introduced change of order limits affecting Benwell Railway bridge, Friston substation and the Neolithic henge form, and they provided only a very limited one month public consultation period.

00:25:59:27 - 00:26:30:05

The here and now is that the East Suffolk area and our communities are really, really struggling to comprehend and come to terms with the everyday effect of the plethora of monumental decrees being enacted within a tiny rural area of 30mi². I really hope that the inspector team has a proper opportunity to travel around the area for themselves to witness this at firsthand. The effects on our complete local roads and rail infrastructure network is happening right now.

00:26:30:24 - 00:27:08:20

The cumulative impacts of these vast concurrent DCO projects are overwhelming us all inspectors. These plans and the cumulative impacts are now on a such scale as to represent, in my view, environmental vandalism on a generational scale. This is quite appalling. Wrong plans, wrong place. Sorry, that's the three minutes. Thank you. Please listen to us. Thank you. Thank you for that. Um. And thank you to that group of speakers. Um, if we could now, um, move on to the next group of speakers and invite those who are here and wish to come to the top team at table to do so.

00:27:08:22 - 00:27:18:05

So that is, um, Stephanie Randolph. Um, it's Alison Andrews,

00:27:19:21 - 00:27:23:13

And Stephanie Williams. Thank you.

00:27:38:05 - 00:27:39:12

So firstly.

00:27:39:14 - 00:27:40:16

Excuse. Sorry.

00:27:40:18 - 00:27:42:12

Excuse me, it's Chris Wilson here.

00:27:42:14 - 00:27:46:18

I was due to speak at the end of the last group of speakers.

00:27:48:10 - 00:27:48:29

Um.

00:27:52:21 - 00:27:59:12

Oh, yes. Sorry. Yes. Um, could I invite you to do that now, then, please? And you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:28:01:09 - 00:28:38:06

Yes. Chris Wilson from Altrincham. Cam Thorpe, having listened to others at these open floor hearings, it's difficult to add to the many impassioned pleas from those who will be most impacted by

the seedling project, on top of all the other insect projects within the small five mile area of Suffolk. The evidence is compelling. You don't have to travel far from the location of these open floor hearings to witness. The Suffolk's AoNB national landscape has been sacrificed for government's ill conceived energy policies. So, as you'll see, has already destroyed vast swathes of East Suffolk countryside, designated landscapes and wildlife sites.

00:28:38:28 - 00:29:11:27

This has recently been compounded by E1 North E2, their onshore infrastructure and fully supportive of renewable energy. It has to be built following a well thought through strategic process. There is no justification to inflict further environmental destruction in East Suffolk, nor that which will occur in Kent. There needs to be an issue to consider the whole need for Sea Link. Having spent nearly a decade of my life heavily involved in the science of sea consultation process.

00:29:14:01 - 00:29:51:01

And the subsequent DCO Examination, the planning policies and legitimate concerns of the interested parties and even the examining authorities recommendation of refusal were simply waved aside by the Secretary of State. I plead to the Planning Inspectorate here because its ceiling is not just a tick box exercise to implement a poorly planned infrastructure project. Sealink appears to have ignored the planning hierarchy that requires the scheme to firstly avoid impacts and adequately consider alternatives, be that to offshore wind farm connections or different onshore cable routes.

00:29:51:05 - 00:30:26:21

Existing cable routes seem to have been planned by someone looking at a map, just selecting what they considered to be, um, the line of least resistance. Rather than trying to avoid designated wildlife sites and landscapes such as RSPB North Warren, a cottage in the Fens is on the edge of RSPB North Warren Reserve, once in the midst of pristine wildlife habitat and beautiful landscapes. It is to be surrounded by sizeable sea. A1 North A2 and S structures and if this project is approved, see link as well.

00:30:27:09 - 00:30:57:17

I urge the plan inspectors to consider the mental strain. Residents of East Suffolk are experiencing from the cumulative impacts of so many large and projects, both in terms of having to cope with the endless consultations, but also from witnessing the destruction of the surroundings they love and cherish, and the disruption to their daily lives by, say, enough is enough and the thoughtless destruction of their much loved environment has to stop. There's no wonder that the UK is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world.

00:30:57:19 - 00:30:58:18

Thank you.

00:31:00:08 - 00:31:10:12

Thank you for that. Um, if we can move on to the next group, then please. And first, if we could hear from Stephanie. Ranulph. And you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:31:11:29 - 00:31:43:15

My name is Stephanie Renouf and I'm a resident of Walbrzych. A lot has been said this morning and I forgive me if mine's repetition, but I would just like to say my two main principal concerns are really this awful cumulative impact and multiple uncoordinated energy infrastructure projects in this very small region of East Suffolk. And secondly, the detrimental effect on the regional economy and the well-being of our local communities. We know this is just one.

00:31:43:17 - 00:32:14:06

Sealink is just one of a wave. At least six energy infrastructure projects proposed for this rural and coastal area of East Suffolk. My concern is that these large scale overlapping projects have been planned in isolation, lacking vital coordination on timings and transport, with an utter disregard to the combined destructive effects on our landscape and communities. The need for offshore wind and grant reinforced a reinforcement is undisputed.

00:32:14:08 - 00:32:49:15

But for one geographical region, which by its very composition and nature is so unsuited and inappropriate to bear such a huge and disproportionate burden is wicked. The preference for onshore proposals over offshore infrastructure solutions is simply nonsense. Effective coordination and control are imperative. We have a proven blueprint. Our North Sea neighbours have demonstrated really how to play nicely, kindly, fairly and with consideration.

00:32:49:17 - 00:33:29:26

They've shown us the benefits of a holistic network design, favouring brownfield sites rather than sacrifice their rural locations and communities without such coordination. The potential consequences to our individuals and communities are dire. We face 12 to 15 years onslaught of life saving. Life changing disruption. Preliminary works, besides will see, are giving us an awful foretaste of what truly lies ahead. Increased traffic on already strained roads, destruction of protected habitats and historic landscapes, loss of amenity and the ruination of beloved tourist routes.

00:33:29:28 - 00:33:35:18

These changes threaten everyday safety and health for residents of all ages.

00:33:37:07 - 00:34:22:25

What seems evident is that the National Grid Ventures feels that it can make its own rules, their environmental statement neither adequately or lawfully assesses these consequences. It fails to model realistic world case worst case scenarios and disregards the sequential impacts on our fragile coastline, which are susceptible to flooding and erosion, or the landscapes of land or the landscape, noise, ecology, traffic, transport and heritage. Finally, I would like to add that in the Suffolk Coast 2023 survey, they highlighted the huge risk of job losses and revenue declined to a visitor economy valued at nearly £700 million and supporting over 14,000 jobs in East Suffolk.

00:34:22:29 - 00:34:35:29

More alarming is the lasting reputational damage through perception and potential lack of economic recovery. This Sea Link project must be relocated or rejected.

00:34:36:08 - 00:34:52:16

Thank you. Um, next, if I could invite Alison Andrews to speak. And if you could also, um, explain who it is you are speaking on behalf of. Please. Thank you. Um, you have six minutes initially, I believe. If it's for the association. Thanks.

00:34:52:18 - 00:34:53:03

Um.

00:34:53:05 - 00:34:58:02

Thank you. Good morning, and thank you for coming to sleep. I am Alison Andrews.

00:34:58:04 - 00:34:58:21

Chairman of.

00:34:58:23 - 00:34:59:14

The Old Nore.

00:34:59:16 - 00:35:00:14

Association.

00:35:00:16 - 00:35:03:09

Formed in 1991 with some 2000.

00:35:03:11 - 00:35:03:28

Members.

00:35:04:00 - 00:35:11:05

Working to protect and preserve the old Nore estuary and its rivers for the benefit of the public. I will touch.

00:35:11:07 - 00:35:11:29

Some of the.

00:35:12:03 - 00:35:12:18

Points.

00:35:12:20 - 00:35:13:05

In our written.

00:35:13:07 - 00:35:45:21

Statement in relation to landfall issues. The concern is cumulative damaging of the coastline with natural forces alone. It is extremely dynamic, shifting with every storm. This matters because if anything interrupts the North-South sediment drift that affects the shingle defence in front of Aldeburgh and the shingle bank to the south, which makes and protects the east flank of the old nor'easter. There will be problems in the last two months. Again, climate change has risen, has shown us how dangerous things are becoming.

00:35:46:02 - 00:36:17:12

Changes to the shingle shoreline in front of Aldeburgh have shown how mobile and fragile the coast is increasingly so because with climate change we have greater storms, we have greater road wave erosion. The sea level is rising while the coast is retreating faster. In the last two weeks, a section of the edge of the ten metre high cliffs has actually fallen into the sea. A second house on the top has had to be demolished because it's going to fall into the sea.

00:36:17:14 - 00:36:49:07

It had a potential life of some 30 years, which virtually disappeared in a few months. These dramatically collapsing, thoughtless cliffs are an extension southwards of the very same cliffs that the Scottish Prior Renewable have been given permission to come in under the drilling there until it comes out on the surface of the land, is planned to be ten metres below the sea level, but above that level lies not hard rocky cliff but a quaternary sand dune crossed on the top. Drilling is very likely to hasten the instability.

00:36:49:10 - 00:37:25:04

Just north of that is the size will see project. Just at the moment its landing platforms are now being built out over the shore, which again may affect sediment movements. It seems that the shape of the Sizewell banks to the north have been changed in the storms recently, which will also affect sea currents and wave action. All these add to the instability further south and this is where this project comes in. It is proposed to bring sea link cables to landfall only just a mile further south of Thorpe Ness at North Warren, through the extremely friable Coralline Crag.

00:37:25:06 - 00:37:57:18

Using horizontal drilling with the faster erosion of cliffs, sea level rise and the potential of the seabed disturbance caused by horizontal direct drilling, this fragile coastline could become even more unstable, to the detriment of the flood defences further south. Enough has been said on inadequate road capacity on the impact on the area. I just wanted to mention in our submission, we listed economic studies we've done on the value of the old Nore area, and I would like to pass to the inspectors via the helpdesk.

00:37:57:20 - 00:38:40:00

A copy of our newsletter of spring 2025. Because internet transmission wouldn't work with this, and it's why people have written why they come to the area. 735 people filled in the survey form. You will see that the area in the word cloud is a destination of choice because of tranquility, peace, countryside, quiet, unspoiled wildlife and much more. The imposition of several nips conflicts completely, with the attractions that enable the area to earn 70% of its economy from tourism, and that does not even cover the impact of disruption on the cumulative cumulative impact of several insects in this tiny corner of the country.

00:38:40:02 - 00:39:17:11

Already, just Sizewell C has had a very damaging effect for us. For more than ten years, a volunteer community partnership has been working to upgrade the 41km of river flood defence walls of the Alderney Estuary. The clay walls were built some 6 to 800 years ago and need renewing every 70 years, but these have been hardly touched since the estuary wide restoration after the 1953 floods.

Finally, in January 2023, approval and grant of £11 million was given the go ahead for repairing the walls in the upper estuary from Snape Maltings here down to Aldeburgh.

00:39:17:17 - 00:39:50:12

A year later the costs had soared to 27 million. Some of the increase initially related to construction amendments, but a significant part is down to the extraordinary increases in essential local resources, driven by the start of an incipient size will see the salaries of digger drivers are now not 25,000 a year, but 60,000 a year, plus trainee free training. The cost of boating clay is now not noting not £14 but 25, despite seeking now to do just half the project.

00:39:50:14 - 00:40:25:06

We are still trying to see how much of the amended product can be kept pessimistically. We might lose some a bit more. Another cheaper solution will have to be also found for the rest of the estuary. Given the economic climate caused by not just nationally but by the insects, more insects over the next ten years will mean the meagre resources in the area will continue to be, well, overpriced. Does that mean that all and your area faces the prospect of winter storm surges with inadequately repaired walls? The 1953 floods were terrible.

00:40:25:08 - 00:40:56:26

In 2013, 26 houses and a flood and a pub were flooded at Snape and took months to make habitable. This could be repeated any time. Are we going to have to wait for another 10 or 15 years until the ships have completed what they want to do and local resources, people and materials are freed up? The negative impact of all the road and construction work could, at least in part, be compensated by making our coastal jewels more sustainable into the long term and therefore improving tourist appeal and investment.

00:40:57:03 - 00:41:01:03

By the way, do come and visit the estuary if you'd like to go on a boat. Thank you.

00:41:02:19 - 00:41:10:22

Thank you very much for that. Um, I believe you also have a further three minutes, if you wish to speak in a personal capacity. Thank you.

00:41:11:16 - 00:41:47:00

Um, yes, I'm Allison Andrews, and this time, my capacity of a resident of Marlborough who, like lots of other people, are very passionate about the area. And I should add that we might all look rather old here, but the younger generations, our children and our grandchildren are all working really hard and going to school. So we've got to stand up for this area, for themselves, for them as well, for the future. My concerns expanding my registration to the mission. It's not just sealing, is it actually needed? The answer is far from clear and sounds even worse the more we hear.

00:41:47:07 - 00:42:18:03

But has it even been properly thought through the evidence so far? I come across some, uh. It just hasn't been properly thought through. It's not ready. I would support the calls for a special hearing to look at possible networks and indeed all the calls for special hearings on infrastructure road

inadequacy. This is not just about Sealink access, but it is about the whether it is possible to go on living in the areas affected and to be tolerable and safe.

00:42:18:05 - 00:43:05:15

Aldeburgh has only three roads in and out of it has only two. While walking work is going on on the road Coast road between them, Thorpe Ness will have only one exit Aldeburgh only two along which people, school, children, businesses, services, deliveries, emergencies together with all the the site traffic must travel. A single road blocking accident would have wide reproductions. Is that wise or safe in assessing traffic volumes? I fear the Sealink may not have realised that while the census population of Aurora is about 3000 people, Half the housing is for second homes and holiday lets, so for much of the year the actual population is double that and at peak times can rise to 10,015 thousand.

00:43:05:28 - 00:43:35:18

Thorpe ness, similarly too has a strange population profile. Has this been built into the traffic impacts? It seems not. What recompense will there be for holiday industry and retail businesses? We will, which will lose many customers when the access to the very popular Aldeburgh thoughtless driving and walking route is out of bounds, or too unpleasantly noisy or disrupted once the reputation for acquired is lost. It will take years to recover.

00:43:37:21 - 00:44:09:14

We have all been living with the impact. We have heard a lot about the community impact and it's serious. But I just want to emphasise one point I think needs to come out more clearly. We can all cope with 1 or 2 months serious delays, we can put up with that. But every day for five years whilst highs will see Sealink and Suffolk Water Supply Project are ongoing yet alone longer than that 15 years because size will see us here. Is that enough? Is that. It is not tolerable. The amount of stress and strain it puts on the area and the losses to businesses.

00:44:11:10 - 00:44:32:16

Very briefly, if any tips come here, they must have an explicit duty of care enforceable by a different authority. It should not take a demonstration of 40 people, as it did the other day, to get Sizewell C, to decide to chop down any two 100 old year year old oak trees instead of nine. This project is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

00:44:33:09 - 00:44:39:06

That's enough for 30 minutes, but we are interested in anything that you do wish to say. But if I could ask if you could.

00:44:39:08 - 00:44:40:00

I still had.

00:44:40:16 - 00:45:05:09

It wound over again to another, another minute. But we are genuinely interested in anything you wish to put to us in writing, and we will consider that folly. So thank you for that. Thank you for all of your Annotations. Um, but I just asked the applicant, please, at this stage, just to display the running order. The bottom section of it. Because I think we're getting to a point where we only have a.

00:45:08:09 - 00:45:44:24

Yeah, yeah. A few people to hear from. So can I just firstly, um, invite Alan, call it up to speak who I believe is here. Um, I think also we had Theresa Tollemache, who, uh, expressed a wish at the beginning of the session to speak. Um, before I invite those two people to speak. Can I just ask, is there anybody who was registered to speak on this session, um, that we haven't heard from? Hopefully we've gone through the table and you've all been covered, but could I just ask for a hand up if that isn't the case?

00:45:46:18 - 00:45:56:24

I'm not seeing any hands. Okay. Thank you. Um, so firstly. Then please, can we hear from Alain Poulet? And you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:45:59:09 - 00:46:15:22

Thank you. My name is Alan Collet and I am the author of Kestrels Home, a book about the biodiversity at RSPB North Warren and The Haven and the threat. It is under a copy of this book will be submitted to the panel.

00:46:17:15 - 00:47:04:13

But today, in a room 4600 miles away, preparations are being made for the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference. It is perhaps ironic that it is taking place in Brazil, home to the Amazon rainforest, which we all know is under threat from climate change and logging for economic gain. I suspect most people here would express concern about the deforestation of the Amazon. But what if we invited some of those loggers to Sizewell and Friston and then showed them the linear destruction, the happening due to Scottish Power's excavations and the plans for Sealink and the other potential energy and water supply projects in this area.

00:47:05:13 - 00:47:16:11

What would they think about our extensive acts of deforestation? I think an accusation of gross hypocrisy would be uppermost in their minds.

00:47:18:01 - 00:48:06:24

In my written submission, I highlighted that under the National Planning Policy framework, developers are required to follow a mitigation hierarchy, and I claimed that national grid ceiling proposals fall at the first hurdle, namely the requirement to avoid areas of high wildlife value. I believe that National Grid have also failed to recognise the findings of the 2021 Dasgupta Review commissioned by the government into the economics of biodiversity, which warned us that we have failed to reflect the impact and cost to nature in our consumption and calculations of worth, value and prosperity through the uncontrolled development of our countryside.

00:48:08:05 - 00:48:43:29

I would urge to urge the planning authority to openly challenge the applicants, to demonstrate how the wider impact on nature has been fully and explicitly taken into account in the ceiling proposals. And clearly, there are other practical, when clearly there are other practical and financially viable solutions open to them, which would pay greater respect to the value of nature. National grid ceilings proposals,

when combined with other current and proposed energy projects, threatens the very existence of our own rainforest here in East Suffolk.

00:48:44:21 - 00:49:05:06

Like the Amazon rainforest, We destroy ours at our peril. And therefore, I ask that you decline this application, which is tantamount to an act of ecocide. One thing's for sure, National Grid certainly won't be winning the Prince William's Earthshot Prize any time soon. Thank you.

00:49:06:14 - 00:49:14:15

Thank you for that. And, um. Finally. Then, please, can we hear from Teresa Tollemache? And again, you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:49:14:17 - 00:49:15:13

Thank you.

00:49:15:24 - 00:49:16:18

Uh, my name is.

00:49:16:20 - 00:50:03:14

Teresa Toll Marsh, and I live between Snape and Aldeburgh. I feel that so much has been said so eloquently and with great feeling and passion. There is probably no more than I can add. However, as a local resident and someone who has spent all my life in this part of Suffolk, I feel such a strong sense of belonging to a part of the British Isles that we always understood as the heritage coast, Aptly named as a place of diverse and rare natural habitats, an ecologically fragile area of wetlands, ancient forests and coastal heathland that must be kept in its natural state for our grandchildren and the future generations.

00:50:04:15 - 00:50:26:14

But now the horror story is unfolding, and we are about to lose this outstanding area of natural beauty, to be scarred by gigantic industrial structures. And our heritage coast is now being known as the Energy Coast, and will become one of the largest industrial estates in the UK.

00:50:28:12 - 00:51:04:29

For the next 15 years, we will be living in a building site of gigantic proportions, sitting in endless traffic jams, hearing the sound of construction and a workforce of thousands to be housed locally. By the time the whole area has been destroyed, there will probably be new technology. Will will make this whole project a white elephant. The cumulative impact of the National Grid's land grab across the region will be intolerable and impossible for the local infrastructure to bear.

00:51:05:10 - 00:51:43:12

As we have heard through this hearing of more plans, including a 1000 acre solar park adjacent to the existing plans on top of the construction of sites. We'll see. Where will it end? We are living during a critical time of climate change on the planet, and we do have a responsibility to do all we can to use alternative energy. But we have a duty to keep our beautiful and productive countryside for future generations. There are alternative offshore solution solutions which have already proved to be economically viable.

00:51:43:23 - 00:52:00:03

As we see what our European neighbours are achieving. They are way ahead of us. These disastrous plans must go offshore and to brownfield sites. I hope that this panel will make sure that our voice is heard.

00:52:01:24 - 00:52:05:27

Thank you for that. And thank you to everybody who's spoken in that group.

00:52:09:04 - 00:52:32:27

Um, I'm just aware that we are slightly ahead of time. This session was programmed to go until 1 p.m., so, um, firstly, could I just invite anybody who is in attendance who didn't preregister to speak? If there's any of you who wish to say anything, um, you would be more than welcome to do that now.

00:52:35:00 - 00:53:03:19

I'm not seeing any hands. Okay. Um, could I also ask those in attendance and virtually. If there is anyone who has registered to speak either this afternoon or this evening and wishes to speak at the end of this session, again, that will be welcomed if you wish to do so. If you could just indicate any desire to do that by raising a hand, not seeing any.

00:53:05:23 - 00:53:07:17

Okay. Um,

00:53:09:07 - 00:53:35:00

at which case I will like to thank you all for your contributions this morning. We will give full consideration to everything that you've put to us. Um, and as we noted earlier, um, the applicant will be providing a detailed written response to everything we have heard today at deadline one a, we'll now adjourn this hearing and recommence with session four, which commences at 2 p.m. this afternoon. Thank you.