Submission ID: SAFB670B9

Net Zero or Ground Zero?

Written representation and comments relating danger to life and safety risks increased by Sealink and subsequent co-location of other projects. There is a need for more detailed and objective specialist assessments of potential population safety hazards caused by a high concentration of large infrastructure projects on the Suffolk Coast.

I have been following the Planning Inspectorate first phase of hearings streamed online. I was unable to attend Snape Maltings but was impressed to hear a good range of clear and strong arguments against the cumulative impact of so many infrastructure schemes.

In the news, during the first few days of November 2025, there has been growing global awareness of what is being reported as Russia having declared a hybrid war across Europe, including the UK, and our forces being deployed to deal with Russian drone threats at a Belgium's Doel nuclear plant 9th November. Basically, the landscape of threat to electricity supply is changing – cyber security is still seen as the highest risk but any critical infrastructure is vulnerable. As in the Ukraine war, targeting and destroying Converter stations and Substation locations have been key to their campaigns.

In terms of the consultation process so far, environmental impact and the need for energy security have been at the forefront. What appears to be missing are significant security concerns regarding potential dangers to human life.

Two such high risk factors are:

1.The health effects of Electromagnetic fields (EMF) associated with large scale electricity infrastructures. This has been raised in early consultations and submissions but not responded to.

2.The risk to Suffolk, but also the rest of our Country, by providing an easy target for attack on a substantial and far-reaching part of our power networks.

When I moved to live on the Suffolk Coast in 2019 my solicitor said he was obliged to point out the bad news – the proximity to Sizewell Nuclear Plant. However, the good news was that if something happened to the Nuclear Plant I would not know much about it. Those in Ipswich and beyond would suffer the most!

Surely these two areas of risk are critical issues to consider in the context of Sizewell C, Sealink and subsequent planned projects.

Firstly EMF: Previous submissions and research that was presented to NGET warned that we would be facing significantly increased intensity of electromagnetic fields across the more densely populated areas. This research also highlights the huge and destructive impact of EMF on wildlife. This whole issue really needs to be strategically and expertly surveyed and risk-assessed now based on both Sealink and other forward plans. Independent expert assessors must be consulted. I have notified the HSA for East of England but not received a reply.

The impact of what is effectively a harmful pollutant will develop exponentially as each new project goes forward and massive infrastructure electricity connections are made. This represents a potential danger to both the human and animal occupation across the areas affected. It is tempting but not acceptable for developers to use scientific uncertainty, and excuses about not being able to measure it, as a reason to brush over this issue.

I realise the current DCO is focusing on Sealink but who will be looking at the bigger, safety and security cumulative picture before all these planned projects take shape? It will be too late to act retrospectively. Campaign groups with volunteers are limited by funding and unable to pay for experts in the EMF field to present such a complex, technical, specialised case at DCO level. Such experts can surely predict the impact with some degree of accuracy based on current plans. National Grid has played a role in advising the Government on EMF issues (SAGE) in the past but how conflicted will their advice be in this matter? Indeed, I did try to contact a number of known UK experts on EMF, mainly located at Universities, but had no response. I later learned from a document that those people had already been recruited by National Grid to be on an advisory team. It, therefore, remains a mystery as to why there has been no guidance or response forthcoming in the consultation process so far. Clearly it seems EMF is often dismissed. However, if there are subsequent cases of EMF effects on human or animal welfare in the future who will be held accountable and liable for the consequences?

Powerwatch.org.uk on their website state very clearly "When it comes to EMF issues, one of the most frequently heard phrases is "There is no evidence to support EMFs having health effects" or simply "There is no conclusive evidence". This is completely wrong; there is an enormous body of evidence out there, but public and even academic awareness seems to be very poor". They also state on their website – "The bigger the substation, the higher the electromagnetic fields are likely to be and the further away a property has to be. Measure the fields, it is easy and vital to do so".

"Substations are not hazardous because they are substations. It is because they are surrounded by electromagnetic fields that the equipment and cables they contain produce, that they have to be treated with caution. Measured electromagnetic fields such as those produced by substations have been associated with health effects such as cancer, depression, dementia, infertility, miscarriage, heart problems, etc.

The Powerwatch website offers some clarity on basic issues to consider plus a detailed library of research: -

- Electromagnetic fields (which are associated with the health problems) There are two types of electromagnetic fields produced by overhead and underground cables and the substation equipment itself; electric fields and magnetic fields. The strength of the electric field depends on the voltage. Electric fields from substation equipment are unlikely to extend beyond the equipment housing, as they are screened by practically all building materials. Magnetic fields are caused by electric current flowing when people use electrical power. For all practical purposes magnetic fields cannot be stopped and will travel through walls as if they were not there.
- Larger substations are associated with higher EMFs. The nearer they are to a property, the higher the levels of magnetic fields are likely to be inside.
- Building materials and some trees reduce electric fields, but magnetic fields travel through pretty well everything.
- Cables- There may also be underground cables leading to or away from the transformers. Electric and magnetic fields also come from underground cables. The electric fields will be zero as they are screened by earth, concrete, sand etc. The magnetic fields are very high near to the cable, higher than from overhead cables because they are closer to you".

Secondly, and more tangibly, Are we going to be an inevitable target for attack?: It seems that there is a huge risk to our Country as a whole of concentrating so much infrastructure of national importance in such a small area. A perfect target for Putin or any other potential aggressors. The consequences of such an attack on a key part of our power network are beyond comprehension. In one hit on the Suffolk Coast it is possible that the whole Country could be brought to its knees.

To what extent are the residents, visitors and wildlife on Suffolk Coast seen as collateral damage?
What are the consequences and liabilities of such an unthinkable but increasingly possible attack on our energy network and who in the chain of command will be held accountable for the consequences of such an event? Who will be blamed as being responsible for the decision making leading up to it?
How can such potential dangers be both assessed and mitigated? Or can't they?
How far can it be guaranteed that, if the area is developed as planned, it will have maximum continuous security and complete round the clock protection from attack?
Is there a need to consult our Intelligence agencies for an informed view on the matter now?
Surely this kind of massive life-threatening danger poses the ultimate argument for not proceeding with the cumulative plans. They are literally putting a target on our backs and posing a huge national security risk.
As a resident of Coastal Suffolk, I am supportive of Net Zero achieved in a timely and carefully considered fashion but I am at the same time extremely worried about us ending up with Ground Zero instead!
Please can these questions be addressed now – not put off until later.