

Please could you take a few minutes to read my comments. We have a really special area of Thanet that is under serious threat from the National Grid Sealink project.

Kent Wildlife trust, Bird wise, Save Minster Marshes and others are trying to get National Grid to find an alternative route for the cable linking Suffolk and Kent.

The cable will come through Pegwell Bay which is a National Nature reserve and is also a special protection area and special area of conservation, a SSSI site. Pegwell Bay is also a RAMSAR designated site and we have a SSSI site that will be affected by the Converter station site.

I'm worried about the noise and light pollution from the Converter Station and the fact that it will be nearly 28 meters high. This will be visible for miles around. There will be Super Pylons and 2.25km of new overhead Cables crossing the Marshes and the River Stour, risking bird strike for the migratory birds. On a recent bird count there were 110 species of birds recorded (19 of which are on the UK red list).

The Converter station and sub station will be built on 13 hectares of valuable wildlife rich habitat and will need to be built up on a 2 meter high platform of aggregate to avoid flooding and also concrete pillars 20 Meters deep to stabilise the Marsh land that the Converter station will be built on. The Marshes are a natural flood plain and when this is gone, places down river will flood, including Sandwich which has been centimetres away from flooding before.

I feel this is being built here as it is the cheapest option for National Grid but it will be devastating to these nationally and internationally protected conservation sites. I know this area can never be adequately mitigated for. We already live with the unmitigated damage, in Pegwell Bay, from when the Nemo link was laid in 2017.

I would be interested to see the National Grids Preliminary Environmental Information Report, as far as I'm concerned they have failed to provide suitable assessments on the environmental impacts of this proposed project.

I must stress that I am in support of renewable energy but not at such a cost to wildlife and these special conservation areas. Particularly when there are alternative sites available. I do not believe that National Grid has looked at any other site and has just chosen Pegwell Bay and Minster Marshes as the easy, less costly option.

These are beautiful areas that are under threat. They are a superhighway for migratory birds. Birds such as Turnstones, Sanderlings and Grey Plover rely on the mudflaps and salt marsh of Pegwell Bay. We also have the largest haul-out of Common Seals in Kent and Grey Seals use the area too. These will be disturbed by the Sealink work.

We have Nightingale, Grey Plovers, Turtle Dove, Peregrine, Raven, all species of Owl, Yellow Hammer, Beaver, Water Voles, Brown Hare and so many more species of animals and birds use the Marshes and Pegwell Bay.

Also under threat now is the abandoned Hoverport which has been reclaimed by nature. This area has Lizard orchid and Bee orchid. It is a favourite place of mine to go for a walk and escape the noise and chaos of Thanet.

Please help us to save this really special area.

Thank you for your time.