

## **Written Representation**

### **Sea Link (Development Consent Order Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission PLC)**

#### **Submitted by:**

**[REDACTED], Head of School, Chilton Primary School**

(also submitting as a parent and resident within the local community)

**Date:** 18-11-2025

## **1. Introduction**

I write in relation to the proposed Sea Link project and the infrastructure planned for Minster Marshes and Pegwell Bay. This Written Representation sets out my strong objection to the siting of this development at Minster Marshes.

I do so as Head of Chilton Primary School, serving children and families across our community, and as a parent raising children who learn from, explore, and benefit deeply from this unique natural landscape.

## **2. My interest**

At Chilton Primary School, outdoor learning and engagement with nature are central to our ethos. We currently lead a project funded by the Royal Society, enabling our pupils to track migrating bird numbers and understand how to make our local environment a safer haven for wildlife. It is teaching powerful lessons about responsibility, stewardship and community identity.

Minster Marshes and Pegwell Bay are irreplaceable as living classrooms. The greatest learning we offer is not inside the walls of a school building, but outside — where children can experience the real world, not a simulated version of it.

I also write personally, as a parent. My children, like many in our community, have grown up exploring this space. It is part of who we are.

## **3. Concerns**

### **a) Loss of biodiversity and irreplaceable bird habitat**

Minster Marshes is one of the few remaining places locally where nightingales survive. Their national decline is well documented, yet here they persist, and our children are lucky enough to hear them. That would not survive the industrialisation proposed in this development.

How can we teach our children to care for and understand their environment if, by the time they have grown, there is nothing left of it to protect?

Migrating birds rely on the wetlands each year, and once disturbed, they do not return. No amount of mitigation can replace the stability of an established ecosystem.

#### **b) Impact on children's wellbeing, education and identity**

Chilton Primary places wellbeing, outdoor experience and community engagement at the heart of learning. If the activity and access around Minster Marshes were lost to construction and industrialisation, a generation of children would lose something that cannot be rebuilt or relocated.

#### **c) Generational loss**

Housing development is one thing—communities understand need and growth. But the construction of a vast industrial installation on protected marshland is another entirely. It is permanent. It is destructive. It turns natural beauty into infrastructure.

My children will not be able to bring their children here if this goes ahead. Because the birds—and the wildlife supported by them—will no longer exist.

#### **d) Environmental function and long-term consequences**

Marshland protects us from flooding, stores carbon and sustains biodiversity. Once built on, it is lost.

### **4. The voices of children**

These children—who will live longest with the consequences of this decision—have asked to share their words. They speak with honesty and clarity that adults sometimes lose:

**"When we go to the marshes we feel calm. When the birds fly over us, it feels like we are part of nature. Why would anyone want to take that away?"** — Year 5 pupil

**"We are learning about migration and how birds need safe places to land. If they build there, where will the birds go?"** — Year 4 pupil

**"I heard a nightingale for the first time last year. It made me feel proud of where we live. I don't want to grow up and never hear it again."** — Year 6 pupil

**"You teach us to help save nature, but how can we help if grown-ups don't listen?"** — Year 3 pupil

**"Please save the marshes. They belong to all of us and we will look after them."** — Reception pupil

These are not political arguments. They are human truths.

If we silence the voices of children now, what does that teach them about democracy, fairness or hope?

## **5. What I ask the Examining Authority to consider**

- That the voices of children are central, not decorative.
- That the educational, ecological and emotional value of the marshes is recognised with equal weight to technical assessment.
- That alternative sites are fully and transparently examined.
- That harm of this scale cannot be justified while less damaging options may exist.

## **6. Conclusion**

Our children deserve the chance to hear nightingales, to watch migrating birds land on the marshes, and to understand the natural world through lived experience.

To proceed with this development here would be to take something that can never be rebuilt, replaced or repaired. It would end an ecosystem, silence a landscape, and betray a generation.

For all these reasons, I respectfully but firmly ask that Minster Marshes is excluded as a site for this development.



Head of School, Chilton Primary School  
Parent & Local Resident