

I am speaking this evening as an individual to explain from a personal perspective the impact the proposal will have as a local resident.

I would also like to say that I fully support the points raised by the other speakers who have presented their objections to the proposal.

I live in Ramsgate, I have lived here for most of my life, and I work in Sandwich. I happen to travel to work and back each day by bicycle which takes about half an hour each way and the route follows Cliffsend, the old hoverport, Pegwell Bay and the adjoining nature reserve. Commuting by bicycle is a beautiful way to bookend my day, to spend time outside and in nature and also get some exercise. I see ducks and geese, all kinds of birdlife, the route is full of nature and you can see that the wildlife is thriving. It's also a peaceful route and, as a cyclist, it's safe. There isn't too much traffic and there are shared pathways away from the road.

If the applicant is successful, there's no doubt that this peaceful cycle route will be impacted. The project is predicted to take a minimum of 4 years to build. In that time, what will the impact be? Will the pathways stay open? Will they be safe? Will cyclists be forced to share roadspace with vehicles? Construction lorries and workers will inevitably mean more traffic on the roads. There will be dust and air pollution which isn't easily avoidable when you're on a bike.

And it has already got worse. Since the opportunity to register as an interested party closed, the applicant has announced that they plan to compulsorily purchase the vast majority of the former hoverport as their core location to construct, operate and maintain their planned Sea Link pipeline. This can only mean even more traffic, even more dust, even more impact on the route.

Pegwell Bay is a popular place for us to walk and spend time. It is a peaceful place with wide skies, beautiful views and stunning sunsets. It's also a haven for birdlife and, when the tide is out and you can walk across the bay, you can hear the birds calling to each other and see them gathering and flying.

There is a Country Park which acts as an entrance to the nature and is described by Kent County Council as 'a great destination for a family day out'.

A beauty spot like this would be an asset wherever it were located but it is particularly precious to us in Thanet because the truth is, we live in a densely populated area with a recognised lack of green space. Thanet has a lower per capita green space than other areas and it is being further eroded by vast new housing developments built on green field sites. The impact of the proposed development would be huge for us as we face losing a precious resource for our wellbeing, exercise, time in nature and quality of life.