

This is my second time speaking at a DCO. Like everyone else this is not how I want to spend my time.

For seven years this terrible blight has affected us. Our lives have been turned upside down as we see how privatised utility companies run roughshod over our land.

These companies, that by law, have to put maximising their returns to shareholders above everything else, care nothing about us or our land. We are expected to believe their bold statements about there being “no alternatives” and this being the cheapest option. We know and can prove that this is simply not true.

One look at the list of proposals that are being lined up for this area shows that a co-ordinated and holistic approach is needed to tackle this issue. Does National Grid really think that the governments of Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands decided to go for a more expensive option when they placed their infrastructure offshore? Of course not. Anyone can tell you that clever accounting can make one plus one equal whatever it is you want it to equal.

How does National Grid analyse cost? Do they account for the permanent loss of prime agricultural land? Do they account for the loss to the tourist industry and local business as visitors stay away and cars and vans have to take endless detours to avoid roadworks? And do they take any account whatsoever to the physical and mental toil all of this is taking on us, the people who live here? The answer is a resounding no.

National Grid didn't even have the courtesy to turn up to the Scottish Power hearings even when asked to attend by the inspectors, this is the type of company we are dealing with. This is the kind of company that will run rings around this hearing and ask you, the inspectors to take them at their word when they promise to “take issues raised into account” and “do their best” to address our concerns. Hollow words.

I wish to ask the inspectors to listen, really listen, to what we are saying. Please do not treat us as just upset locals who just need these hearings to “get things off our chest”. There is real expertise and knowledge here amongst us. We don't want a “there there” pat on the head. We want you to really challenge the assumptions and bold statements made by National Grid and give equal weighting to the expertise and evidence presented by SEAS and other groups. That is your job. Successive governments have

lost control of utility companies as they carve up our land and pour sewage into our waterways. We are relying on you to reclaim it. Privatised utility companies will do nothing to come up with better solutions unless they are forced to by inspectors, regulators and government.

The mental strain on all of us is intolerable. The destruction of so much land is intolerable. The injustice of all this work being squashed into this small area is intolerable. We know that there are better solutions, we must force these private companies to accept that.

I support all the work and evidence presented but Suffolk Energy Action Solutions.

Thank you for your time and attention