

Attached is my formal speech, with some additional data to support it. On a personal note I would like to add how totally, utterly hopeless I feel about this situation. I feel that the inspectorate, and our politicians, are not listening. I am living in grief for the loss of nature and Suffolk, coupled with this feeling of total helplessness. I question whether anything we say will matter - because short term needs and profits are always prioritised against nature, people's health and our long term futures. I would love to be proved wrong.

Sea Link Planning Objections

Imagine a world with no trees, with no fields, no birds, no wildlife.

Or imagine a world where we can no longer produce enough food to feed the nation.

Or where the already struggling NHS mental health service crumble because so many people struggle due to loss of green space and being surrounded by nothing but environmental destruction.

That is the reality that we face. That is what is on the horizon. That is impact we will see from such wanton destruction of nature.

We must protect what little of nature is left. We must be the voice of the trees, the birds and the wildlife.

We must act now to protect our beautiful countryside and protect our own health and health of this nation and this planet.

And we must act now before it is too late.

The UK is frequently cited as one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world due to significant declines in its species and biodiversity since the 1970s. Data shows the UK has lost nearly half of its biodiversity since the Industrial Revolution, with 16.1% of its species currently threatened with extinction. ⁱⁱⁱ

The UK is in the lowest 12% of global countries and territories for biodiversity intactness, according to the Natural History Museum's Biodiversity Intactness Index (BII).ⁱⁱⁱ This places it last among the G7 nations for the amount of nature remaining. To put this in context the UK has lost more biodiversity than nearly any other country in western Europe and more than many other nations, including China. The consequences of this is projected to have economic impacts, with nature loss expected to decrease UK GDP significantly if no action is taken.^{iv}

As of 2024, only about 3% of England's land and 8% of its sea were effectively protected for nature, despite a government target to protect at least 30% of the land and sea for nature by 2030^v

We also face a serious risk to our country's food security by the industrialisation of farm land. Concreting over fields not only has a negative impact on nature but also the UK's ability to feed itself long term.

According to *UK Food Security – Outlook to 2050* report 771,000ha of farmland lost since 2000; up to 3.96million hectares at risk by 2050. Per capita food production down 5% over the past 25 years. Meanwhile yields are slowing due to extreme weather, input restrictions, and policy-driven disincentives. The result of this is that food imports may

need to rise by 160-260% under worst-case projections. Should the external political situation ever deteriorate the UK could face starvation.^{vi}

On a personal note I cannot begin to describe the negative impact on my health of witnessing so much wanton destruction of nature around me. I moved back to Suffolk, having lived all over the world. It is one of the most beautiful and amazing places to live. Yet this is all at risk. Every day we see the impact from already approved projects such as Sizewell C. Tree after tree gone. Birds crowding in gardens as their homes are gone. Traffic, pollution and construction. The thought of more destruction is unbearable. My mental health is in decline and I fear for my own health and wellbeing if things carry on along this path. The link between nature and biodiversity, and health is clear.^{vii} At a time when we see record numbers of people struggling with mental health, with the NHS struggling to provide the support needed, we should be doing everything we can to protect nature, and subsequently the nation's health.

We have so little left we cannot afford to lose any more. The planning inspectorate has an ethical and moral obligation to protect this country, and its long-term security, rather than sacrifice it for short term profits or political goals. Please stop this environmental annihilation, before it is too late.

ⁱ <https://naturalengland.blog.gov.uk/2023/09/29/state-of-nature/>

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