

Sealink meeting November 5 2025

I want to make 3 points:

1. Nature. We had a stag grazing right outside our bathroom window a few months ago. This was an animal displaced by the loss of habitat caused by Sizewell's deforestation work, running loose on the roads. Not a happy natural sight, but a distressing one. Should Sealink begin, there will be much more so-called 'devedging', which will exacerbate things further and will make things even worse and have a cumulative ecological impact, not just on our community, but on the whole unique natural heathland environment in our region. I want to keep hearing the cuckoo flying across the valley, the turtle dove calling, the willow and marsh tits. These rare species are continuously threatened by encroaching loss of habitat.
2. Heritage and history. Just a mile or so up the road from here, the site of this open hearing, is the site of a second ship burial at Snape. The other one in this region is Sutton Hoo – the biggest centre for Saxon history in the UK. The Snape burial was partly excavated in the 19th century. Imagine what cultural significance this second site might have. Just underneath the surface in this region there is so much of our cultural heritage we still don't know about, just waiting to be found, or else be bulldozed. We know we have a rare horse burial at Walberswick, a woodhenge, and various significant hoards. The whole region, with its unique ecology and such significant heritage that it is already called the 'Heritage Coast', is more suited to being a UNESCO Geopark than an electrical infrastructure site.
3. Aside from the cumulative damage to our environment, heritage and economy that Sealink will cause, my third point is that we must take into account the cumulative impact on health. People have already experienced incredible mental suffering because of Sizewell. Right now there is also impact on emergency services, rapid response, travel times to hospitals. Just someone riding a bike, or a minor road works causes complete gridlock these days.
But there are also long-term physical health concerns about exposure to electromagnetic radiation. This converter station is being built right up to Saxmundham, a town with well over 5000 population, right up to local housing estates. Very little research has been done on how such close exposure to electromagnetic radiation can affect a population long-term. No government before has ever been so foolhardy as to allow something like this so close to a populated area. The research that has been done suggests a 10% increase in childhood leukaemias, and that's without the impact on the overall population. We need to find out more. In a town the size of Saxmundham, this is an unacceptable risk which will weigh on the planning authorities for decades, should it go ahead.

Finally, other projects will follow Sealink, and yet we're discussing this as if the overall plan does not count. But it does. The whole proposal should be submitted, if it has to be

at all, it should be as one integrated proposal, so people see the full implications and can make a balanced judgement. Just a week ago, a key extra part of Sealink, the Benhall railway bridge, was submitted last minute for planning. This is terrible practice and indicates the lack of forethought and competence of the businesses that are proposing these projects. And, the thing is, it's a proposal for a multinational company, National Grid, American, UAE, to build on our farmland, our heritage, our nature, from their point of view as cheaply as possible, (why wouldn't they?) destroying our environment, cultural history and local economy in the process. We should be following the lead of our North Sea neighbours in Europe – the Dutch, Danes and others, using offshore cables, brownfield sites and up to the minute technology – and above all, really good planning.

I can only reiterate my oral submission, and add that the open floor hearing was quite a profound experience. Listening to all the speakers with their lifetime's knowledge, their expertise on all things from business to water, to transport, no-one could fail to be moved, or to see that the National Grid proposal is weak, poorly thought through and lacks any kind of serious insight into either the needs of an infrastructure project or how to work within the UK landscape and its community in an ethical and humane way. Hearing the speaker from Sealink, who was unable to answer any question clearly or with facts, as opposed to obfuscations, was yet further convincing that this is not a fit organisation, nor a fit plan for this incredibly finely balanced ecological and historical region.