

Sea Link Alison Andrews contribution – written version with additions to statement given at the Open Floor Hearing on 5 November 2025.

I am a full-time resident of Aldeburgh, and like many others hear speaking for all generations and for the future of the area, as parents and children are at work and school.

My concerns, expanding my registration submission, are

1. Is Sea Link actually needed?: the answer to that is not clear and it needs answering.
2. Have these plans been properly thought through? Blue Transmission London Array Limited has submitted that crossing arrangements and proximity agreements may be needed in relation to their cables which Sea Link seem to be unaware of. Also, have Sea Link actually thought through whether, should any power come in via Sea Link and get passed on to Friston, the existing powerlines starting at Sizewell have the capacity to take it on? Or will that mean more development or upgrading of the power lines? Have plans been joined up? During the Open Floor Hearing it became increasingly apparent that a lot has not been thought through.
3. I support the calls for Issue Specific Hearings to look at other possible networks, for transport and cumulative impact and more.

4. If wind power can and is being brought down to the north of England by undersea cables from Scotland, why cannot the same be true for taking power to London where it is needed? It is also not just a question of route but changes of route on and off land result in reduction in the electricity transmitted. From the evidence heard so far, it seems this idea has received little serious attention.

5. Next, road infra structure inadequacy.

5.1 Consideration should not just include feasibility for the developers: it should also be about whether living and working in the areas affected over a sustained period of years would be economically sustainable, tolerable and safe.

Has the Applicant taken any notice of the many comments made in the several consultations in to which we all put a great deal of knowledge and suggestions?

5.2 Access: Aldeburgh has barely three roads in or out of it -the A1094, the B1122 to Leiston, the two of which meet at the sole roundabout into Aldeburgh, and the coast road to Thorpeness; Thorpeness only has two (one via the B1353 to the B1122 and the coast road to Aldeburgh). While work is going on along the coast road between the two settlements, and also inland from the old railway line west of North Warren from where access to the B1122 may be needed as well, Thorpeness will only have one exit, and Aldeburgh just two, possibly one if the B1122 is limited too, along which people, schoolchildren, businesses, services, deliveries and emergencies (ambulances, fire and coastguards), together with all the site traffic must travel: a single road blocking accident would have wide repercussions. Is that wise and safe?

5.3 In assessing traffic volumes were the developers aware that while the census population of Aldeburgh is about 3000, around half the housing is for second homes and holiday lets: for much of the year the actual population is double the 3000 and at peak summer, bank holiday and half terms times it may rise to 10-15,000 including the many day visitors? The same huge periodic peaking of population is true of Thorpeness. Has this been built into the assessment of traffic impacts? There is little road capacity for NSIP size projects as well.

5.4 Much has already been mentioned already about access inland to and from these two coastal settlements: it is vital for residents, businesses and visitors. The journey to our nearest hospital, Ipswich hospital is normally 40–60-minutes; it will become much worse, with road hold ups, even just two HGVs getting entangled wing mirrors as they try going in either direction by the Aldeburgh golf club where the 'A' road is doubly hazardous having a very steep blind hill as well as being narrow. We are already experiencing with the start of SZC and EA1N and EA2, that businesses are having to deal with adding possibly an additional a fifth to a third, may be much more, of their time per hour in additional journey times which then further erodes earning power- all because the road infra structure is simply not up to one, yet alone 2 to 5,6 or more, NSIPs.

5.5 In the period when the onshore landfall work and that west of North Warren marshes is ongoing, where can huge vehicles be kept along the sea road except on SSSI land. Our shingle shoreline with rare vegetation is in itself a rare occurrence.

5.6. What recompense for the holiday industry and retail businesses will there be for losing many customers when access to the very popular Aldeburgh- through- to- Thorpeness driving and walking route is out of bounds or too unpleasantly noisy or disrupted? Once a reputation for quiet is lost it will take years to recover.

5.7 Impact on the whole of East Anglia. The single main national access road to the area is the A12. Our experience with SZC NSIP works so far this year has already proved that with the extra traffic, much of it heavy vehicles, the limited capacity of that road is to the detriment of all eastern Anglia. The need for any more NSIPs must be absolutely proven.

6. Cumulative impact of several NSIPs.

6.1 We have all now been living with the impact of the first of several NSIPs and a start for EA1N and EA2. Huge traffic increase, destruction of the countryside, mental health impacts, loss to businesses have all being vividly described- this is first hand daily experience, we are not crying wolf. Now it is also clear people's mental health is an issue: This will be a growing problem.

6.2 It is one thing to have 1 or 2 months of serious delays, we can put up with that, but every day, seven days a week if Sea Link's plans are approved, for five years while SZC, EA1N, EA2, Sea Link and the Suffolk water supply project are ongoing, is quite another. And, with other NSIP plans in the pipeline this undermining of the local economy, health and welfare could be going on for 15 years or more as yet more of the overlapping NSIPs come on stream.

6.3 We know now what it is like living through having just two NSIPs starting out on our doorstep. One is bad enough, several at the same time or overlapping over successive years is very concerning. The toll on mental health with stress caused by several factors-, just looking at the devastation, noise and dust on construction sites, coping with unforeseen traffic lights and other obstacles, having to allow 20 minutes or more above normal travelling times for every journey whether going to school, to work, moving between jobs, for emergencies, or even the station at Saxmundham. One shop assistant has said "they never told us it would be like this". A visitor arrived looking drained- with an hour's hold up at Glemham (that is on the A12 road which the ambulances have to use to get emergency patients from this part of Suffolk,) and then a slow drive onto Aldeburgh but worse the destruction of the countryside had gutted her, what will happen to the tourist economy? Other friends who have lived long in this area now can't recognise where they are.

7. More major projects to come:

7.1 On top of the NSIPs being planned, in late October, Essex and Suffolk Water have started a consultation on a new water supply route for east Suffolk including Sizewell passing close to the Saxmundham end of the Sea Link proposals: yet another project to be done in the next five years. This one is significantly unavoidable because SZC failed to organise adequate water supplies until challenged about their plans in the SZC DCO. How many more ill-thought through NSIP applications will suddenly find other unforeseen essentials that have to be constructed and compound what is already an unmanageable cumulative impact.

7.2 That impact at best is slowing down the local economy, but with narrow margins local businesses, whether in the tourist industry or serving them, may become unviable. The impact will make daily work, school and family lives more difficult and costly.

7.3 But, it will also drag down progress of the NSIPs themselves. Their own tight deadlines will simply not be met because the basic local transport infrastructure is not capable of bearing such a load.

8. Protection of the local natural capital: If NSIPs are to come, any permission given to NSIPs should have an explicit duty of care enforceable by a different authority, independent of the NSIP management: NSIPs must do only the essential not 'just in case' destruction. It should not take, as it did last month, a demonstration of some 40 people getting local headlines, to get SZC to decide to chop down only two one-hundred-year-old oak trees, instead of nine.

The Sea Link project runs in and closely adjacent to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: it is designated as a National Landscape on a par with a National Park. It and its immediately adjacent truly rural countryside need protecting for the millions who visit the area for rest and relaxation now and for the next generations.

9. Lastly, and very importantly, in terms of national security, is it wise to combine two, and possibly in all six or seven onshore electricity hubs close to what may become the only UK major nuclear plant, within the same 5–10 mile radius. The East Coast has always been vulnerable throughout the centuries to hostilities from the Vikings to World War II but the collective plans to have significant energy supply plants within a very confined area makes the United Kingdom, not just this small area in East Anglia, highly vulnerable to attack.

Alison Andrews

26 November 2025