

Interested Party Ref: [REDACTED]

## Objection to SEALINK Development Consent Order (DCO)

My name is Stephanie Renouf, I am speaking today as a Walberswick resident.

My two principal objections to the SEALINK proposal are

1. The cumulative impact of multiple, uncoordinated energy infrastructure projects in East Suffolk.
2. The detrimental effect on the regional economy, and the wellbeing of local communities.

SEALINK is just one of a wave of at least 6 energy infrastructure projects proposed for the rural and coastal areas of East Suffolk. My concern is these large-scale overlapping projects have been planned in isolation, lacking vital coordination on timings and transport, with an utter disregard to the combined destructive effects on our landscape and communities.

The need for offshore wind and grid reinforcement, is undisputed. But for one geographical region, which by its composition and very nature is so unsuited and inappropriate to bear such a huge and disproportionate burden, is wicked. Especially as that region is being used as a conduit to supply energy to the South East. The preference for onshore proposals over offshore infrastructure solutions is nonsense, given that the obvious environmental, economic and societal benefits.

Effective coordination and control are imperative. We have a proven blueprint. Our North Sea neighbours have successfully demonstrated the benefits of holistic network design, favouring brownfield and previously industrial sites rather than sacrifice their vibrant rural locations.

Without such coordination, the potential consequences to our communities are dire. We face 12 to 15 years onslaught of life-changing disruption. The construction of Sizewell C is already providing a foretaste of what lies ahead: increased traffic on already strained roads, causing danger to parents walking their children to school, to everyone who enjoys relatively safe cycling as a means to get from home to work or socialise – we have few, if any public transport, so the road network is crucial. How nerve-wracking will it be for parents juggling work, school, home and social commitments wondering if their loved ones have arrived. And the dust and physical discomfort and detriment to breathing and health of the effects of construction. We know and have seen this has not been considered. These changes threaten everyday safety and health for residents of all ages.

National Grid's Environmental Statement neither adequately nor lawfully assesses these consequences. It fails to model realistic worst-case scenarios and disregards the

sequential impacts on our fragile coastline, which is susceptible to flooding and erosion, or the effects of landscape, noise, ecology, traffic and transport, heritage, amenity, health, and tourism. Furthermore, it does not offer coordinated mitigation measures.

SEALINK must not be considered in isolation.

Point 2) The SEALINK (NSIP) will cause significant, long-term harm to Suffolk's tourism economy, recreational amenities, exceptional and protected habitats and rural character. The coastal area is home to a thriving ecosystem of independent local businesses, focused on locally produced food, hospitality, culture, heritage, arts, tourism, the coastline, and protected unique green landscapes. These natural, rare habitats and dramatic features attract locals, day visitors, and tourists alike, providing essential income to the community, a sense of place and well-being.

The Suffolk Coast DMO 2023 survey highlighted the huge risk of job losses and revenue decline, to a visitor economy valued at £693 million and supporting over 14,600 jobs in East Suffolk. More alarming is the lasting reputational damage through perception, and potential lack of economic recovery.

Across the country, many rural communities face tough challenges in creating jobs, providing housing, and fostering socially active, healthy environments—particularly for the young and elderly. It is therefore deeply ironic and troubling that our life-affirming green coast is at risk of such unnecessary destruction, jeopardising the very qualities that enable mental wellbeing and communities to thrive.

For these reasons, the application for Development Consent for SEALINK must be rejected.