

Project: Sea Link EN20026

RE: Response to Applicant's Document 9.34.6 Applicant's Thematic Responses to Relevant Representations - REP1-116

I am writing this Written Response as a Suffolk resident who will be impacted by the Sea Link Project and in response to the Applicant's Thematic Response to my Relevant Representation (REP1-116).

I am greatly concerned that the Applicant is still proposing that Sea Link will cross Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB/National Landscape and have a major impact on the Sandlings SPA, Leiston-Aldeburgh SSSI and designated nature reserves nearby. Sites such as North Warren were acquired by the RSPB in order to protect and enhance them. A project the size of Sea Link presents many challenges to these vital ecological sites. When combined with other large-scale projects like Sizewell C, this collective destruction becomes inexcusable. Suggested mitigation measures will not immediately compensate the wildlife that has had its breeding locations disrupted. The Applicant has not given strong enough evidence that certain species can be successfully relocated either. Therefore such ecologically-sensitive locations should be avoided in the first place. National Policy stipulates that the "avoidance" of harm should have a higher priority than the "minimisation" of harm. It is the role of the UK Government (via the Planning Inspectorate) to protect these areas and avoid mass ecocide.

I would also like to draw attention to the impacts of Sea Link on the tourist economy. My job, and that of many colleagues, may be at risk if tourists no longer visit the Suffolk Coast. Our income is reliant on people wanting to visit the area, but they will be deterred by ongoing blocked access, roadworks and construction work taking place locally. The Applicant has not provided strong enough evidence that this noise and disruption can be mitigated against. Their case studies of tourism losses from other projects are not comparable to this one. They should use current data on the impacts of Sizewell C construction on visitor numbers to estimate the cumulative impact as well.

Finally, the Applicant constantly states that the chosen Sea Link locations are the "most suitable" or "least harmful" but they do not provide enough evidence that all options were properly assessed. I would like to see a thorough, objective assessment of alternative options to the Applicant's current proposals. This should properly consider offshore solutions and brownfield sites. It should also be an independent process, not governed by the priorities of National Grid PLC or any other multinational utility company.

I therefore remain strongly opposed to the current Sea Link proposals.