

**Response of Walberswick Parish Council to the Sealink DCO
at Deadline 2 (9 December 2025)**

IP Number: [REDACTED]

I am responding on behalf of Walberswick Parish Council as the Councillor delegated to deal with NSIP projects in our area including Sealink. Our response is to **Document 9.34.6** by the Applicant (NG) to the Written Representations submitted by Interested Parties in June 2025.

Overall, the quality of National Grid's response is highly disappointing. Unfortunately, this is in keeping with NG's approach from the start where it has refused to accept and address legitimate and serious concerns nor to consider alternatives outside its preferred development path. Specifically:

- (i) **Environmental Impact:** By broadly grouping together "issues", NG's document fails to address properly the points of detail raised by IPs regarding the different locations impacted by Sealink. NG's approach gives an overly generic and simplistic response, often repeating the same language and denial of impact time and again. The failure to provide data that takes account of seasonal variation, ecosystem dynamics and multiyear baselines undercuts NG's assertion of limited impact. NG further makes unsubstantiated claims that its desired plans are the only ones possible and suggests, without analysis, that it is less harmful than the offshore infrastructure approach commonly used elsewhere. NG goes on to dismiss using brownfield sites on the basis that within the small area in which NG wants to build SeaLink in Coastal Suffolk, there are no suitable brownfield sites. This is nonsensical; if NG chooses a pristine, highly protected environment in which to build, by definition it is not brownfield. Presumably, this emboldens NG to ignore its primary responsibility to avoid harm and instead skip quickly to "minimising" harm and offering limited mitigation.
- (ii) **Cultural Heritage, Natural Beauty and the Tourism Economy:** NG's responses show a dismissive attitude to the importance of cultural heritage and the area's unspoiled natural beauty as the bedrock of the local economy and a major factor in the health and well-being of the people who live here. This is demonstrated by NG's simplistic assertions that hedging and "screening" somehow mean that the value of these assets will not be degraded by the project and/or that years of destruction and disruption are no more than "temporary". This is patently untrue. As presented in the LIR and in hundreds of RRs, Suffolk's Heritage Coast is not a single isolated "site". Rather, it is a sense of place that has drawn visitors here for generations and that cannot survive years of construction and serious disruption and the permanent industrialisation of substations and scarred landscapes that will take decades to heal.
- (iii) **Cumulative Impact:** NG's response to the hundreds of comments on cumulative impact is perhaps the weakest part of its poor-quality document.

NG's desire to downplay this as an issue appears to be at the heart of its approach of considering each problem (environment, transport, health and well-being, economic impact, etc) in isolation rather than its true cumulative impact. It is unfathomable that NG contends that it can simply add its infrastructure construction to an area already overwhelmed by the weight of ongoing projects with unprecedented road works, construction compounds, massive inflow of temporary workers and environmental degradation. NG's proposals for "consultation" and "coordination" amount to nothing more than occasional meetings with other developers, sharing documents and vague statements of intent. NG must demonstrate how the addition of its project would interact with ongoing NSIPs in terms of road traffic, HGV movements, water use, light pollution, construction timetables, AILs, noise and impact on the health and well-being of the local population. To point to one example, NG needs to assess how its ill-conceived 7 days a week construction schedule would interact with the schedules of SPPR and SZC and the impact that this would have on the well-being and mental health of the local population. As a matter of public policy, even if NG cares nothing about the local community, one could expect that NG would want to carefully calibrate how its project risks significant delays and costs by inserting itself into an area already beyond its capacity to cope with the country's largest infrastructure project.

Conclusion: Walberswick Parish Council remains strongly opposed to Sealink and sees no effort in NG's response to make changes to its preferred plans to address the extraordinarily serious problems highlighted by IPs. NG's insistence on underestimating its impact and providing no independent evidence for its claim of no alternatives that would cause less destruction undermines its engagement with ExA. We would like to ask the ExA to hold NG to account by refusing to consider consent until and unless NG provides: (i) independent analysis of alternatives both brownfield elsewhere and offshore, (ii) evidence of robust avoidance of protected landscapes, (iii) full analysis of its interaction with ongoing projects and (iv) enforceable design and construction coordination to lower its cumulative impact.

8 December 2025

Councillor [REDACTED], Walberswick Parish Council