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Project: Sea Link EN20026

Deadline 2 – 9 December 2025

Firstly I formally protest that the Applicant has not included my Relevant Representation in many of the tables in the Thematic Topics by Interested Party - REP1-117. Please refer to my Relevant Representation which mentions all of the following topics, several in more than one category:

Table A.2	Air Quality
Table A.9	Construction
Table A.13	Design
Table A.15	Geology & Hydrogeology
Table A.18	Landfall Location
Table A.24	Noise
Table A.30	Safety

If all of these points have not been picked up from my Relevant Representation (RR) it demonstrates the Applicant's lack of care in assessing the RRs and one wonders how many other points have been raised by others but missed and therefore not evaluated by the Applicant. This careless approach seems typical of the Applicant's application as a whole.

I resent the fact that the Applicant has lumped all RRs together, determining the topics and not addressing individual concerns, taking a huge amount of time to do so and restricting the amount of time for Interested Parties to react to their responses. The immense volume of necessary responses within a short timeframe is inherently stressful and detrimental to mental well-being for participants and non-participants alike.

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

Summary:

I am a local resident directly affected by this project. This document is my Rebuttal to the Applicant's Thematic Response (REP1-166) regarding my Relevant Representation.

I'm extremely concerned about a wide range of the assessed subjects, such as loss of good quality agricultural land, persistent construction noise and air pollution, ecological and biological disruption, public rights of way disturbance, road safety and traffic endangerment, damage to tourism, landscape destruction and the cumulative effects of multiple NSIPS and inadequate mitigation. The Applicant minimises project impacts, lacks evidentiary support for key assumptions, and fails to secure community benefits. The proposed project would

permanently alter the local environment, character, and well-being, without adequately avoiding, minimising, or justifying the significant level of harm proposed.

7.1 - Agriculture and Soil

7.1.1 – Loss of Productive Agricultural and Best & Most Versatile (BMV) Land in Suffolk

The claim that impacts are "temporary" is inaccurate. The project will cause lasting damage, including subsoil compaction, drainage issues, and reduced yields that may persist for decades. Restoration plans cannot replace proven agricultural productivity. The farming community requires independent, long-term monitoring and guaranteed remediation.

7.2 - Air Quality

7.2.1 Construction Dust, Fumes & Health Impacts

Due to the expansive, windy environment and the project's extended timeline, exposure to dust and particulates will be prolonged rather than temporary. Current monitoring only reacts to existing conditions, failing to prevent harm. Furthermore, there are no mandatory limits suggested that would necessitate stopping construction work if thresholds are exceeded.

7.2.2 – Impacts on Sensitive Habitats and Plant Communities

Small increases in dust and deposition pose a lethal threat to highly specialised coastal and marsh vegetation. The current reliance on generic desk modelling is insufficient; accurate site-specific baseline measurements and precautionary limits must be implemented instead.

7.3 – Construction Impacts

7.3.1 – Construction Compounds, Haul Roads and General Construction Footprint

Permanent infrastructure such as construction compounds and haul roads causes irreversible changes to landscapes and hydrology. The Applicant offers only vague assurances of 'standard reinstatement' without providing any binding evidence that such measures effectively restore ecosystem function or farm productivity long-term. Sensitive areas require more robust protection, necessitating the total avoidance or significant relocation of compounds away from vulnerable habitats and communities.

7.3.4 – Work Hours, Weekend & Holiday Work

Weekend operations increase community and wildlife disturbance and stress. The negligible impact claims, derived from average day models, do not account for the genuine cumulative effects that require limitation.

7.3.5 - Pollution to surrounding area, including visual, noise, and air quality/dust, as a result of construction works.

In this flat, dry and sandy environment visual, noise and air pollution are inevitable.

7.3.6 - Construction methods effect on landscape and wildlife

Wildlife has already fled from the Sizewell area since work there began, terrorised by the presence of man and machines, light, noise and vibrations, day and night. This witnessed by more road kill, destruction by red deer of temporary fencing around Scottish Power Renewables archeological work in Aldringham. Wildlife is already under great pressure, driven to new territories south and west of the site – straight into the paths of this project which will inevitably have similar effects.

Any work at North Warren cannot fail to disturb birds and other wildlife.

7.3.7 - Construction traffic will lead to congestion and deter tourism to the area.

Sizewell C construction is already causing significant traffic issues. The A12 is experiencing major congestion, and overflow traffic is making the B1069 through Snape dangerous and difficult to cross at certain times. The A1094 junction is also frequently jammed. This is negatively impacting the local tourist industry, with visitors indicating they will choose different holiday destinations. Further projects will likely worsen this congestion and deter even more tourists.

7.4 - Cultural Heritage

7.4 - Impact on The Heritage Coast of Suffolk including Saxmundham, Sternfield, Friston, Aldeburgh & Thorpeness

The project will have significant negative impacts on the views, sense of place, rural character, and heritage assets of the Suffolk Heritage Coast and the wider Suffolk and Essex Natural Landscape . These impacts include:

Industrialisation of Rural Landscape: The planned converter stations near Saxmundham will bring significant industrial infrastructure to a notable undeveloped rural area, drastically altering the landscape from agricultural to an industrial wasteland.

Visual Intrusion: Significant visual impact is anticipated from the converter stations and infrastructure, including a 6m high bridge over the River Fromus and permanent access roads, which will disrupt key vistas for residents, footpath users (e.g., Sandlings Walk), and visitors; planned landscaping mitigation is acknowledged as a long-term (decades) solution.

Harm to Heritage Assets: The development is expected to cause some material harm to the setting of nationally designated heritage assets, including St John the Baptist Church and Hurts Hall, both of which are Grade II listed.

Loss of Tranquility: The construction phase, which may operate seven days a week, is expected to generate substantial heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic, noise, air, and light pollution, significantly diminishing the current peacefulness of the area.

Cumulative Impacts: This part of east Suffolk faces significant environmental and historical landscape concerns due to the combined impact of Sea Link and other NSIPs. The cumulative effect of these projects, planned for the same area, will overwhelm the natural and built environment.

7.5 – Geology & Hydrogeology

7.5.3 – Risks of Trenchless Drilling at Landfall

HDDs have a record of failures (fluid breakout). The applicant must provide strong contingency plans, third-party insurance, and independent oversight for HDD operations.

7.6 – Landfall Location

7.6.2 – Suffolk Landfall and Nearby Protected Sites (Sandlings SPA, Leiston-Aldeburgh SSSI, RSPB North Warren)

Relocation of compounds is appreciated but insufficient. The Applicant must ensure trenchless commitments are guaranteed, strictly enforced, and subject to independent auditing.

7.7 – Landscape and Visual Impacts

7.7.1 – Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB – now Suffolk & Essex Natural Landscape

This project is partly within the Suffolk & Essex Natural Landscape.

How can there be no “significant adverse effects” with the huge, permanent converter infrastructure and access routes proposed? ‘Natural Landscape’ status requires exceptional caution and avoidance.

7.7.2 – Saxmundham Converter Station Visual Effects on Local Residences

The proposed development would permanently damage the character of rural tranquility through the construction of large, permanent structures like converter stations, substations, and pylons. These changes are irreversible and cannot be meaningfully softened by the applicant's proposed planting schemes. No amount of screening can restore the original integrity of nationally important landscapes like the Suffolk & Essex Natural Landscape.

Residents face a substantial and long-term degradation of their local environment due to ongoing industrial views.

7.7.3 – Landscape Character Change (from Rural to Industrial)

These energy facilities don't just add structures; they re-engineer the rural character, imposing an industrial footprint on natural landscapes.

7.7.4 – Effectiveness of Planting as Mitigation

Screening with planting will take many years and cannot effectively hide tall buildings or pylons; it is merely an imperfect addition, not an alternative to not building in the first place.

7.7.10 – Light Pollution

Light for safety is necessary, but temporary and operational lighting needs rigorous controls to minimise light pollution and disturbance to wildlife. All lighting designs should be agreed upon with local authorities and conservation organisations.

7.9 – Onshore Mitigation

The Applicant's responses place primary reliance on compensation and do not adequately address the higher-priority steps of avoidance and minimisation that should form the core of any mitigation plan.

7.10 – Traffic and Transport

7.10.1 – Local Road Suitability (Suffolk)

Due to the lack of resilience of rural roads, the Applicant's routing plans must incorporate firm restrictions, HGV size limits, enforced diversion signage, and local traffic calming measures throughout the construction period.

7.10.2 – Saxmundham, Leiston, Friston Impact

These roads are used by local services, including emergency vehicles (ambulance, fire, and police) and school runs. Usage of the B1069 through Snape village where I live has seen an increase following the commencement of the Sizewell C. Inevitably, incidents and delays will occur in practice; these must be managed and mitigated irrespective of the statistical outlook.

7.11 – Noise & Vibration

7.11.1 – Construction Noise Suffolk

Noise modelling underestimates open-field transmission. When the wind is in the right direction I hear piling at Sizewell from the fields around Snape. Friston is two miles from here. There must be enforceable noise limits and a complaints/penalty mechanism.

7.13 – Socio-Economics / Tourism / Jobs / Housing

7.13.1 & 7.13.2 – Impact of Suffolk Onshore Scheme on Tourism

Tourism here relies on peaceful landscapes and coastal amenity. These qualities will be destabilised for years. Impact case studies used by the Applicant aren't comparable and downplay impacts.

7.13.3 – Loss of Tourism Jobs & Local Employment Opportunities

The Applicant can't guarantee local employment for all specialist positions, emphasising the need for binding local employment targets and training initiatives. The assessment overlooks the potential for tourism businesses to experience extended, multi-year downturns. To effectively address this vulnerability, there is a need for robust, long-term community investment strategies and explicit guarantees designed to protect tourism businesses from suffering financial losses over an extended period.

7.14 – Ecology & Biodiversity

Surveys lasting only three months are inadequate for assessing such a critical topic. The project will inevitably have a negative impact on the environment and biodiversity within Suffolk's protected areas, including the Sandlings SPA, the Leiston to Aldeburgh SSSI, and the RSPB North Warren Nature Reserve. East Suffolk's existing protected sites—such as the Suffolk & Essex Natural Landscape, SSSIs, and SPAs—have already suffered significant damage from both Sizewell C and Scottish Power's preliminary work.

7.15 – PRow / Walking & Cycling

7.15.1 – PRow Impacts

Alternative provisions should be completely operational and equal in terms of distance, safety, and general experience before any temporary closure is put into effect, as these closures cause major interruptions that reduce both accessibility and local amenity.

7.23 – Alternatives, Site Selection & Assessment of Options

7.23.1 – Reasonable Alternatives Inadequately Considered

The claim that the chosen locations are the best available options is unconvincing because the provided evidence doesn't demonstrate a thorough assessment of all reasonable alternatives. Alternatives were limited by the applicant's convenience, not by genuine consideration of broader impacts. For a proper alternatives assessment, independence, transparency, and environmental leadership are essential, and should not merely serve to justify sites already chosen.

7.23.2 – Avoidance Hierarchy Improperly Applied

National Policy stresses avoidance of harm should be the first principle but in many topics (eg landscape, tourism locations, bird and other wildlife habitats) the Applicant has placed a greater emphasis on minimising project impacts rather than completely avoiding sensitive areas.

Avoidance not minimisation should always be the default especially in protected areas (the Natural Landscape, Heritage Coast, SPA, SSSIs, tourism areas).

7.23.3 – Lack of Transparent Comparative Analysis

A transparent assessment method is absent from the application. The reliance solely on narrative claims of "less feasibility," without a comparative scoring system, prevents the Examining Authority from confirming that alternatives were evaluated consistently and objectively.

7.23.4 –Cumulative Infrastructure Burdens Not Fully Considered

Alternative locations which would ease cumulative stress on communities appear not to have been seriously considered; both Suffolk and Kent are already handling multiple NSIPs. Selecting a route or site based solely on electrical efficiency ignores the lived reality that one area may already be disproportionately burdened.

7.23.5 –Rejection of Offshore Alternatives Insufficiently Explained

Justification is needed for the dismissal of potential offshore solutions. Transparent engineering and environmental evidence is required to show why alternatives that could have reduced community impacts were not pursued. Currently, these options appear to have been prematurely discounted.

7.24 –Climate Resilience

Long-term infrastructure should not be sited in areas susceptible to flooding, coastal erosion, or hydrological risks. The applicant has not demonstrated that future climate scenarios were adequately incorporated into the site selection process.

7.26 – Coordination with Other Projects

Effective strategic coordination is currently lacking, with activity limited to operational discussions and shared paperwork. To address residents' concerns, a demonstrable, strategic programme is needed to stagger construction windows, explore shared compounds, and reduce cumulative impacts.

Considering each development on its own fails to account for the overall harm; the sheer volume of concentrated building activity in a localised area fundamentally undermines the landscape's character and peaceful nature.

7.31 – Programme, Timing and Ecological Seasons

7.31.6 – Timeline, Tourism & Workforce Accommodation

To mitigate the risk of peak-season tourism impacts and local housing shortages, the Applicant must mandate workforce accommodation plans that do not displace existing community members.

7.31.7 – Scheduling and Bird Breeding/Wintering Seasons

Construction scheduling needs to avoid sensitive bird seasons. If this isn't possible, stringent avoidance measures and habitat compensation, coupled with continuous long-term monitoring, must be mandatory.

7.34 – Inter-Project Cumulative Effects

The Applicant's failure to undertake a comprehensive, holistic assessment obscures the true, magnified loss of tranquility and local character caused by numerous projects converging within this single landscape. The cumulative impacts will be substantial, leading to a demonstrable reduction in residential amenity and potential mental health issues among the local populace. This environmental degradation will also likely deter visitors, thereby causing significant harm to local businesses.

7.34.2 – Friston and Regional Cumulative Effects

The environmental, traffic, ecological, and socio-economic impacts of transforming Friston into a major industrial hub via these multiple substation projects have not been sufficiently evaluated or addressed.

7.34.4 - Cumulative Effects on roads

The project's contribution to road congestion and traffic is likely to be significant, exacerbating existing disruptions from Sizewell C and other initiatives like EA1N/EA2. The cumulative pressure will severely strain the already unsuitable local road network, and this overall impact is critically underplayed.

7.35 – Combined Effects

The Environmental Statement's conclusion regarding 'not significant' residual impacts post-mitigation is contested as fundamentally deficient. This assessment fails to adequately capture the profound, permanent degradation and loss of amenity experienced by local communities. The true measure of impact must originate from the lived experience of affected residents near critical infrastructure components (converter stations, substations, haul routes, and compound locations), moving beyond abstract technical thresholds.

Permanent Landscape & Character Change

Even with mitigation measures, the permanent industrial footprint of the converter stations, substations, trenches, access tracks, and overhead lines is a major, unresolvable residual impact on rural and coastal landscapes, as it cannot be fully addressed by planting or bunding.

Ongoing Biodiversity Impacts

Certain habitats, once disturbed, suffer permanent residual losses rather than temporary inconveniences. Functionally mature ecosystems—including ancient hedgerows, coastal grasslands, and saltmarsh edges—take decades or longer, or sometimes never, to fully return, which the Applicant must acknowledge.

Compounded Stress Over Decades

The Applicant fails to recognise the substantial long-term burden placed on communities impacted by the overlap of multiple NSIPs (Friston, Saxmundham). The accumulation of residual economic, psychological, social, and environmental impacts necessitates a comprehensive, cumulative assessment that has not yet been provided.

Conclusion

I remain strongly opposed to the Project as currently presented. The Applicant repeatedly minimises negative impacts, provides unsubstantiated assertions, and relies on mitigation and compensation measures that are unenforceable. The proposed development is likely to cause permanent or long-term harm to several areas, including agriculture, ecology, heritage, landscape, tourism, local well-being, and community character.

The Examining Authority must require stringent avoidance of sensitive areas, legally binding mitigation and design protections, independent oversight, guaranteed community benefits, and better project sequencing, coordination, and contingency planning. The only alternative is to withhold consent until these conditions are met.