

Sea Link Volume 9: Examination Submissions Document 9.34.6 Applicant's Thematic Responses to Relevant Representations Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN20026

Response from Alison Andrews. relevant to i. beach erosion ii. maritime heritage at land fall.

7.6.3 – Beach Erosion Concerns Modelling must be open and conservative. Local residents experience beach changes year-to-year — the Applicant must provide long-term monitoring and a liability framework for any induced erosion.

The Thematic Responses document refers to Document REP 1-051 as providing details in relation to the Sea Link approach to assessing the suitability of the Suffolk coastline for landfall of cables in the Haven.

The bulk of REP1-051 recognises the dynamics and sensitivities of the Suffolk coast quoting many coastal experts in references in sections 1.7.6 through to 1.9.54 AAND 1.11.2 For example 1.7.32 “The Anglian Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme (ACMP) (Anglian Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme, 2022) explain that properties along the Thorpeness frontage have been protected by gabion baskets since 1970 and geotextile bags since 2010. However, recent monitoring by the ACMP has found that the defences have been progressively weakened due to beach drawdown and wave action”.

1.7.42 Transect S040 (which directly aligns with the Suffolk landfall site) is reported to show a net loss of intertidal beach since 1991,

1.7.44 Between 2014 – 2022, the beach has partially stabilised, in that there is no longer a continuous erosional trend, however this section of beach still shows profile variation over the years (Plate 1.17) (ABPmer, 2024a).

1.7.92 East Suffolk Council recognises that this dynamic coast has the ever-present threat of coastal erosion and coastal flooding.

REP1- 051 then concludes however that because the shoreline is very dynamic, any impacts from landfall activities whether deliberate or accidental spills will be negligible because, as the areas to be used are small, the dynamism will soon achieve a new sea bed level while mud and sand disturbances or chemical spills in to the water column will have a negligible effect as they will rapidly be diluted. Can such an approach dismiss impacts on the shoreline so lightly?

The shoreline can change overnight. Has this been taken into account? As an example of what can happen, Concerto fibre optic telecommunications cable became fully exposed overnight by high winds and tides in October 2018, immediately north of Thorpeness Cliffs, after being installed and buried well below the beach by internationally expert company only about 10 years earlier. For the project, Table 1.18 indicates an HDD Depth of lowering: 0 m to -2 m below seabed level. Table 1.18 on page 80 comments The cable system installation is designed such that a regular maintenance regime is not required to maintain the integrity of the link.

Can concerns about any landfall on this Suffolk coast be so easily dismissed as negligible and will the cables be secure. Later, REP1-051 reports in 1.9.27 At the Suffolk landfall site, The Anglian Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme (2022) has calculated there is a long-term erosional trend since 1991. In more recent years (2016 - 2021), there has been notable acceleration in the erosion rate around the landfall site between Thorpeness and Aldeburgh (See Section 1.7). The sensitivity of the coastal morphology at the Suffolk landfall is therefore assessed to be high. But REP1-051 then goes on to say the area affected will be small. Has enough consideration been given to this essentially very mobile shingle, gravel and sandy shoreline and sea bed?.

7.6.4 – Marine Heritage at Landfall Generally, the marine archaeological assessment is incomplete until all new geophysical data are analysed.

The Thematic Document expresses some disbelief in the existence of an Elizabeth port. A map held in the Aldeburgh Moot Hall Museum (reference xAsCONfu.jpeg) clearly shows what was called the Meare (not to be confused with the modern manmade Meare dug out in Thorpeness around 1913) to the north of Aldeburgh and was a harbour for a number of boats. As the port entrance silted up men were paid sums to keep the channel clear in the early 1600s.

Map Elizabethan 1570—80 Aldeburgh Moot Hall Museum

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