

My comments & objections to National Grid's changes to access re. the Hoverport, Cliffsend, Kent

Interested Party Reference number [REDACTED]

I am deeply concerned that National Grid are suggesting that small changes are being proposed regarding them accessing the Hoverport at Cliffsend, Kent, when this is not the case. I don't think National Grid have been transparent about their intended use of the Hoverport & have given the public very little time to respond to amendments made. National Grid have not undertaken any environmental assessments for the Hoverport, which supports the Fiery Clearwing Moth & the Sussex Emerald Moth, rare Man & Lizard Orchids & many endangered Red List species of birds including Corncrakes. The Hoverport is one of the few wild, green areas left in Thanet. I often go there all year round to enjoy walks, birdwatching and photography and will be deeply saddened if this is no longer possible (or very limited). I missed being able to go there during Lockdown & it was a joy to be able to return to this special place. It's also a rare flat area which enables wheelchair users to get close to the water & birdwatch.

The surrounding Saltmarsh is protected by international & national SSSI, SPA & RAMSAR designations, which National Grid seems to be ignoring the importance of. I am deeply concerned by the lasting damage to the Saltmarsh which was caused by National Grid's Nemo project & have no faith that their expanded proposals at the Hoverport will not cause further environmental damage.

I am particularly concerned about the Hoverport being turned into a construction site for the next 4 years & the resulting impact of noise & light pollution on wildlife & residents.

The Hoverport is part of a functionally linked wildlife corridor between Pegwell Bay & Minster Marshes & this will impact negativity on wildlife being able to source food, shelter, rest & breed.

National Grid's proposals will also impact local people & visitors, & local businesses including the Viking Cafe, as access to the public will be severely limited and it will be very noisy. The small area which would be accessible will be no longer provide the opportunity for me to enjoy tranquil walks & an opportunity for myself & others to go birdwatching & observe wildlife due to the noise of heavy plant & trucks. I also won't be able to rest and enjoy a coffee with friends due to the noise & probably dust.

If their proposal to use more land at the Hoverport for construction, operation & maintenance of the Sea Link pipeline is accepted, these significant changes will have an even greater devastating impact on the fragile ecosystem & sanctuary for wildlife. The Hoverport site has rewilded naturally over 40 years & the site is very important ecologically. Please reconsider and leave this special place alone.

Yours sincerely

Louise Darrell-Smith