

Planning objection to Change Request (CR1) of the Sea Link (EN020026) project at Pegwell Bay, Ramsgate, Kent.

Key Objections:

Unnecessary land grab at the old Hoverport site

The proposal introduces new land take, new rights, and new construction activity in an extremely sensitive area, it cannot be classified as a "minor" or "non-material" change.

Overreach of Land Rights

National Grid is seeking a broad and flexible envelope of land rather than a precisely defined area including the strandline and land along the old Hoverport, exceeding what is practically required. This will affect a large area of the saltmarsh and recreational space for people's well-being. Neither has there been any examination of the substructure of the cement platform to sustain its proposed new function which was developed with hardcore including coal waste which will add to contamination of the saltmarsh.

Ecological Risk

The land at the old Hoverport site is intrinsically linked to SPA (Special Protection Areas) and Ramsar designations. Future surveys and mitigation by National Grid do not address the immediate harms. The noise from vehicle movements, concomitant pollution to air and ground, artificial light and physical construction. Indeed, the attitude to the environment is no more meaningful than a corporate game of 'I-Spy'. It has taken over half a century for wildlife to regain its previous unique habitats and the National Grid now wants to destroy this in a few years and according to my MP, Polly Billington, will require further phases of energy construction. Ecocide!

Disturbance to Protected Species

The land is subject to Section 26 of the CROW Act (restricting access to protect birds). The project focuses too much on "injury thresholds" and ignores "behavioural disturbance" to seals and birds. As I mentioned already – 'I-Spy' ecology which is a depressingly low knowledge and intellectual bar for any organisation let alone one which is actively greenwashing.

Compulsory Acquisition

Because the change requires new land rights without the consent of affected users, it triggers the Compulsory Acquisition Regulations, which have not been justified as "proportionate" or the "minimum necessary."

Conclusion

This latest proposal just adds to the grave threat to wildlife, environment, public amenity and the history of this natural part of East Kent. If allowed to go ahead it will be the wildlife version of slaughtering anything that moves in a Gazan-like area of international importance for migratory birds and sustaining an irreplaceable ecosystem and public amenity for future generations.

Clare Dove

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