



Event Transcript

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| Project: | Sea Link |
| Event: | Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) - Day 3 - Part 1 |
| Date: | 30 January 2026 |

Please note: This document is intended to assist Interested Parties.

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FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:05:06 - 00:00:32:24

Time is now at 10:00. And I'd like to welcome you all to the continuation of issue specific hearing. Two for the application by National Grid electricity transmission from an order granting development consent for the seedling project. My name is Sarah Holmes. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered civil engineer. I've been appointed by the Secretary of State for the lead member of the panel to examine this application. I'm now going to ask my fellow panel members, who have also been appointed by the Secretary of State to examine this project to introduce themselves.

00:00:36:15 - 00:00:41:05

Good morning. My name is Doctor Richard Hunt. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered environmentalist.

00:00:42:22 - 00:00:47:26

Good morning. My name is Nancy Thomas. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered town planner.

00:00:48:23 - 00:00:53:22

Good morning. My name is Luke Regan. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered transport planner.

00:00:55:03 - 00:00:59:11

Good morning. My name is Stephen Ranney. I am a planning inspector and a chartered town planner.

00:01:00:21 - 00:01:35:17

I can confirm all members of the examining authority have made a formal declaration of interests, and there are no known conflicts of interest with regard to with examining this application. Together we constitute the examining authority or ex for this application. There are other colleagues from the Planning Inspectorate with us today. For those who are present in the room, you may have already spoken to or heard from Louise Hathaway, who is the case manager for this project. Mrs. Haraway is accompanied by Stella Clark, who is our casework officer. For those of you who have joined us virtually, you will have spoken to Caroline Allen, Harper Kerr and Emma Smith, our case officers in the joining conference.

00:01:35:20 - 00:02:03:11

Together, they are the case team for this project. And if you have any questions or queries, they should be our first point of contact. Their contact details can be found at the top of any letter that you've received from us, or on the project page of the National Infrastructure website. In addition, there are technicians from CVS international who are attending solely for the purpose of managing the recording and live streaming of the hearing. If you have any questions regarding the application process in general? Could I ask that you please email the case team who will be happy to help?

00:02:07:23 - 00:02:42:06

Good morning again. For those who were not in the hearing yesterday, I will quickly go through some housekeeping matters. Can everyone attend? And please make sure that your phone is either switched off or turn on to silent? There's no fire test planned for this morning. Should an alarm sound it is an emergency and have to vacate the building. Emergency exits are located on this side of the room with assembly point to the west. If anyone needs assistance. Uh, can you let the case team know? Toilet facilities, including disabled facilities, can be found down the corridor close by in that direction.

00:02:43:09 - 00:03:17:28

For those attending the satellite venues to minimize background noise, please make sure your phones are switched off or turned on to silent. If you want to speak, please raise your hand and the roving mic will be brought to you. For those in attendance virtually. Can I repeat the request made in the arrangements conference that to minimize background noise, you make sure your phone is switched off or turned on to silent, and then you stay muted with your camera turned off unless you are speaking. I would also ask that if you want to speak, you switch your camera on and either use the raised hand function in Ms.

00:03:18:00 - 00:04:01:25

teams or ask to speak at the appropriate time. Can I also remind people that the chat function on teams will not work? So please do not try to use this to ask any questions or post any comments. As far as I'm aware, there are no requests. No requests have been made for any special measures or arrangements to enable participation in the meeting, such as the need to take a break for medical reasons or have having to leave the event at a certain time. If anyone does need to take a break or extra support later on, then please contact the please Let the Case team know this event is being live streamed and recorded back in our letter on the 19th of September, which we will refer to as the rule six letter.

00:04:01:27 - 00:04:32:20

It explained that because we retain and publish the digital recordings, they form part of the public record, which is subject to the General Data Protection regulations. GDPR applies. The Planning Inspectorate publishes and retains recordings for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision on the Development Consent Order. So if you participate in this meeting, it's important that you understand that you will be recorded and that you consent to the retention and publication of the digital recording.

00:04:33:09 - 00:05:04:16

We will only ever ask for information to be placed on the public record. That is important and relevant to the planning decision, to avoid the need to edit the digital recordings. What we would ask is that you try to keep try your best not to add information to the public record that you would normally wish to be kept private or confidential, such as address details, financial circumstances or details of medical conditions. If you feel the need to refer to something that is private or confidential.

00:05:04:18 - 00:05:16:26

Could you please discuss this with the case team first, or to explore whether this can be submitted in writing and redacted? Does anybody have any questions with regards to this matter?

00:05:20:20 - 00:05:50:15

Okay. Can't see any hands raised, so I'll move on. Um, for those people watching the live stream, uh, when we adjourn proceedings this morning, uh, we will have to stop the live stream to give us clear recording files as a result. At that point, at the point at which we start the meeting and the live stream, you will need to refresh your browser page. We will remind you of this again should we need to adjourn. Are there any comments or questions regarding any of these points that I have made, either in the room or online?

00:05:54:02 - 00:05:58:07

Hey, can I ask the applicant to display the agenda, please?

00:06:00:26 - 00:06:01:27

For this morning.

00:06:03:15 - 00:06:18:00

So we will start today with item 20, uh, cumulative effects. Um, and I can remind you that we will be covering design, uh, in the draft DCO section, which is item 21.

00:06:21:06 - 00:06:27:10

Thank you. I'll now hand over to Mr. Regan for the next item on the agenda.

00:06:29:22 - 00:07:05:09

Good morning again. So we're now moving on to item 20 Cumulative effects. As you'll all be aware, we've been exploring matters relating to specific topic based cumulative effects already within those topic discussions you've heard this week. These have included transport issues, public rights of way, noise and landscape and visual. Therefore, the primary purpose of this session is to deal with overarching cumulative considerations. I will also be giving parties opportunity to contribute on this item with relevant issues if time is permitting.

00:07:08:27 - 00:07:31:25

Firstly, we note that new information has been released with respect to line link. Please can we just check with the applicant that they intend to update relevancy link cumulative and in combination assessments based upon that new information. This includes the Environmental Statement, Habitat regulations, Marine Conservation Zone and Water Framework Directive assessments.

00:07:32:22 - 00:07:39:13

Syra Sheikh for the applicant. Thank you. So I'm going to ask Mr. Pilkington to deal with that matter.

00:07:39:16 - 00:07:40:07

Thank you.

00:07:41:23 - 00:08:08:26

Nigel Pilkington for the applicant. Absolutely. We are currently digesting the information that that's been published at the at the um, at the public consultation for Lion Link. And um, we've asked all of our topic leads to to trawl through the information provided to see if there's an update that can be made to there into project cumulative effects assessment. And that includes um, in combination effects for habitat regulation assessment.

00:08:09:04 - 00:08:17:22

Thank you. And in terms of timescales, do you know when you are likely to be able to be submitting those updates into the examination?

00:08:18:18 - 00:08:29:23

Given the volume of information that we need to work through. It wouldn't be deadline for. Um, and obviously everyone's been preparing for hearings and what have you. So, um, I would say deadline five.

00:08:29:25 - 00:08:39:18

Okay. Could I ask you that you just submit a note at deadline four, which confirms your specific timescales, and if you are indeed able to submit everything at deadline five.

00:08:39:21 - 00:08:41:23

Nigel Pilkington for the applicant. Absolutely.

00:08:41:25 - 00:08:58:07

Yeah. Thank you very much. Um, on the same point, can I also check that you are now able to produce cumulative visualizations for the relevant representations of representative viewpoints showing the line Link converter station based upon that latest information.

00:09:02:18 - 00:09:14:06

On behalf of the applicant, I can confirm that we're going to be preparing cumulative visualizations, which includes link and line link, and we hope to be in a position to provide those at deadline four.

00:09:14:23 - 00:09:15:27

Thank you very much.

00:09:16:03 - 00:09:16:21

So can I just.

00:09:16:24 - 00:09:25:19

Clarify one point in relation to visualizations, please? Yes, I want to check with those. Visualizations include the expansion of the substation of Risdon.

00:09:29:18 - 00:09:36:07

Bruce Morrison for the applicant. The cumulative visualizations will be showing us specifically for line link and see link.

00:09:41:00 - 00:09:47:11

That seemed to be a no. Is that right? You're not going to do a community visualization for the expansion of the substation at Reston. Is that what I understood?

00:09:47:19 - 00:10:06:17

Can I just maybe assist here? So I think this is a point that in the line links statutory consultation documentation, they are saying they would require an expansion of the substation at Preston with additional bays. So I think that's probably what Mr. Martin is referring to.

00:10:09:05 - 00:10:22:10

Thank you Alley Leader for the applicant. So we will be showing within the visualisations the full sea Link project, as will be consented in our DCO and the whole lion link project as is consented in their DCO.

00:10:29:01 - 00:10:35:05

But just to confirm, you mean the additional bays on the substation as well? Is that right?

00:10:40:27 - 00:10:51:09

A change on behalf of the applicant. We'll need to take that away and just see what information is available in terms of visualizations that they all have done to add to our existing visualizations.

00:10:51:15 - 00:10:52:09

Thank you.

00:10:54:26 - 00:11:13:12

Thank you very much. Um, please, could I now invite the involvement of Senate District Council, please? Um, and specifically, I'd like to explore their position as set out at deadline three. Can I just check that Senate are in attendance, please?

00:11:15:07 - 00:11:17:15

Good morning, Helen Johnson, Senate. District council.

00:11:17:28 - 00:11:40:28

Good morning. Hi. Um, so in your response to first written questions and specifically question one ce intra two, Senator counsel took issue with the applicant's approach regarding significance and mitigation to cumulative effects. Are you able, just for the benefit of everyone, to briefly explain your concerns, please. Thank you.

00:11:41:26 - 00:12:06:05

Again. Thank you. Um, so it was with regards to the Inter project effects, we've been working with the applicant on the lists associated with this and our positions outlined, as you stated in the SOG. So the applicant has confirmed that they will update the assessment during the course of the examination, likely through a technical note and taking into account the developments that have come forward, because I think we've got some issues and what's been included, what's been excluded. And so we look forward to receipt of the document for review.

00:12:10:29 - 00:12:27:15

Okay. Thank you. And I think there was also an issue that you raised with regards to the applicant's approach, defining significance within the environmental statement with regards to their ability to be able to establish or not negligible, moderate or major adverse effects.

00:12:29:00 - 00:12:35:19

Yes, I think we we have a difference of opinion on that. I think that that's as far as that one goes unfortunately.

00:12:36:11 - 00:12:37:15

Okay. Thank you.

00:12:37:17 - 00:12:38:13

Thank you.

00:12:38:18 - 00:13:05:20

So two two matters. If I can ask the applicant to come back on. One is the first point raised with regards to the inclusion of the appropriate committed developments. Uh, and the second point there was the the ability, uh, that you have or not to be able to establish negligible, moderate or major adverse effects as per its response to first written questions, please. Thank you.

00:13:07:10 - 00:13:41:16

Nigel Pilkington, for the for the applicant. Uh, we're currently in the process, as well as the consideration of the line link information, which you've already touched on. We're in the process of, um, casting the net again for cumulative, um, projects within 20km, which is our study area. Um, and that information is being gathered at the moment, including any information that's actually available in terms of scoping reports, um, it appears environmental statements. Uh, one thing I would say is that a number of the developments, albeit that we're aware that they are coming forward.

00:13:41:18 - 00:14:00:16

Have, um, little or no information for us to work with for any meaningful cumulative assessment to be undertaken. However, where there is information will absolutely be considering that. And we'll provide a technical note to supplement the original Inter project cumulative effects assessment.

00:14:02:09 - 00:14:04:13

Sorry, the second point.

00:14:04:20 - 00:14:33:01

The second point was uh, basically your current position with regards to District Council's response to first written question one C into two, whereby they, uh, thought that it might actually be possible for you to go further than you have within your cumulative effects assessment with regards to establishing the kind of significance of any, um, significant effects in terms of negligible, moderate or major adverse.

00:14:33:16 - 00:15:05:22

Thank Pilkington for the applicant. Um, although we we stand by the principle that we set out in our response to Action Point eight last time, and which we've voiced at issue specific hearing one. We have undertaken an exercise in the interim period which involved a workshop with the. The topic leads that contribute to the into the intra project cumulative effects assessment. Um, we've considered uh individual properties.

00:15:05:25 - 00:15:41:22

Um now usually in each project cumulative effects assessment, we don't look at private interests. That's not the purpose of EIA to really look at the public interest. Um, but we have looked at, um, individual properties and given consider within 300m, which is really dictated by the, um, by some of the key impacts that that may contribute. Um, that assessment has been undertaken I say assessment. It's a workshop followed by Consideration through geographical information systems.

00:15:41:24 - 00:16:14:05

And what we've identified, what we have identified is that we we haven't identified, sorry, um, any individual residential property that we consider, uh, would experience a even a significant, um, uh, cumulative, uh, intra project, cumulative impact. That exercise that we've undertaken, we would say that does in no way replace the entire project cumulative effects assessment that we undertook, which was considering sort of broader areas and public and public interests.

00:16:15:03 - 00:16:34:23

What we can infer from it, though, is that if we are going to see these significant effects that we considered were potentially going to have the potential to arise, and they were more likely to be at the moderate end of significant rather than the major end of significant.

00:16:37:07 - 00:17:09:19

Just two questions I have on what you've just said there then. So if it's not the case, if I'm understanding what you've just told me, that all of the if you're considering all of the residential properties are within that 300 meter catchment has individual receptors effectively, and none of those following the findings of your workshop have, um, moderate or major significant effects, then what are what are the receptors that your current findings are based upon, whereby they could be potentially higher?

00:17:13:05 - 00:18:02:21

Pilkington for the applicant, we're really looking at a sort of community level effect. So as I say, that's that's the level that we're looking at, albeit we look at um, we've looked at the individual properties. That's not what we consider in EIA. I mean, it's possible that at that community level it will be capped by the the highest of the inch project cumulative effects we've identified on individual residents. Um, but you know, because as we start to build up to a community level, um, it becomes, uh, it's an amalgamation of of those individual effects they don't add to add together those individual residential effects because the receptors are not, um, are not, you know, they're not the same receptor at each property.

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Um, but as a precaution, I think we would as I say, we would stand by our, um, our reported inch project cumulative effects as saying it's possible there could be significant effects, albeit at this stage we haven't identified any. And what I would say is that that, you know, as we've explained before, um, you know, there's a number of, um, there's a number of professional judgments being brought together in, in assessing into project cumulative effects. So I think I don't think it would be right at this stage to say there's no potential for significant cumulative effects on any residential property.

00:18:39:06 - 00:18:42:01

We don't think there will be. Um,

00:18:43:21 - 00:18:57:09

but we I don't feel that the, the cumulative effect assessment is, you know, in itself is necessarily robust enough for us to rule it out at this stage based on the combination of professional judgments.

00:18:58:06 - 00:19:31:02

Okay. So on the basis that you haven't as of yet, um, and you have been able to quantify the significance of those significant effects. And you have also just acknowledged that there is perhaps some question marks over the robustness of the assessments. Do you agree, then, that the Secretary of State should take the view that those cumulative effects could or should be taken as major significant effects in the absence of any further quantification? Thank you.

00:19:33:09 - 00:20:13:12

Nigel Pilkington for the applicant. I think the Secretary of State should, should take them as significant into project cumulative effects. Um, um, as I say, I would stand by our original position, which is we don't typically identify gradations of significance because of the uncertainty and the, the bringing together of professional and professional judgments. Um, you know, there is no individual professional who is a specialist in intra project cumulative effects. And therefore, um, we would say that reporting of a significant a potential for a significant cumulative effect is what the Secretary of State needs and indeed has made, um,

00:20:15:00 - 00:20:19:17

you know, numerous decisions on the basis of, on previous dsos.

00:20:22:23 - 00:20:29:20

And those significant effects could be major significant effects done in terms of significance.

00:20:39:09 - 00:20:40:29

Pilkington for the applicant.

00:20:42:17 - 00:20:48:26

We wouldn't describe them as as major. We would describe them as significant effects. Um,

00:20:50:12 - 00:21:13:29

the work that we've done indicates that if we were to ascribe a level of significance, um, which we wouldn't, but if we were to, it would be more likely to be moderate. But I can understand from your position that if we're not, um, setting out that it's definitely moderate, then, um, significant can mean moderate or major.

00:21:16:05 - 00:21:20:17

So they could be major adverse significant effects cumulatively.

00:21:28:08 - 00:21:30:20

I think this leader's got something to bring in.

00:21:30:22 - 00:21:31:14

Thank you.

00:21:34:01 - 00:22:09:08

For the applicant. I mean, I think to clarify here, what we're not saying is that we don't have a robust assessment. What were you acknowledging here is that there is not clear guidance on how you add together a minor landscape effect and a minor effect on probably right away or, or different views from different properties within a community. And what we're doing here is taking all of those professional judgments from all of the different disciplines and trying to come to a view on what that means in terms of significance.

00:22:09:10 - 00:22:35:15

And that is difficult. Um, and it's it's not quite clear how you do that. And different projects take different approaches. So then trying to ascribe a a major or moderate in the same way you do for an individual topic, it's it just genuinely isn't quite clear how how you do that. And we. We feel that the approach we've taken is robust in that context.

00:22:35:28 - 00:23:24:07

Yeah, I understand entirely that it isn't a straightforward process, but I suppose the most simplistic mind what I'm trying to get to is if you have a topic based negligible adverse effect and a topic based moderate adverse effect, and then you consider those cumulatively, um, you haven't taken a step further as to try and quantify that other than saying it's significant. Um, very simplistically, if you take a significant effect which is negligible and one which is moderate, presumably if you consider it in a mathematical formula kind of manner, there is potential for it to be greater than the sum of its parts, and therefore it could presumably be a major significant adverse effect, could it not?

00:23:25:29 - 00:23:50:06

It it only later for the applicant. It is absolutely possible, but it really depends on the nature of those effects. And so there is a an element of professional judgment here. But I think let's take your we take your point entirely, and we'll take it away to look at whether or not we can ascribe a bit more certainty for you on, on what the magnitude of effects is.

00:23:51:28 - 00:23:53:28

I think that will be helpful. Thank you.

00:23:56:00 - 00:24:01:17

Um, I can see a hand up in the Suffolk club at this stage if they'd like to come in. Thank you.

00:24:02:22 - 00:24:03:12

Hello. Charlotte.

00:24:03:14 - 00:24:39:23

Fox, Pentland Stanfield Parish Council. Um, living in, um, an area that is so impacted by construction at the moment and will only get worse. It's quite galling to have that lived experience being turned into a mathematical equation and a number. Um, and I would suggest that as in quantifying, uh,

mental health and wellbeing, it's incredibly difficult to quantify and it cannot be reduced to a simple equation.

00:24:39:25 - 00:24:51:17

I'm not saying it's simple. I'm saying a mathematical equation. I know that's what you have to do with planning, but, um, as a person experiencing this, it is very, very difficult to watch this.

00:24:53:08 - 00:24:54:29

Understood. Thank you.

00:24:59:09 - 00:25:01:25

Is there a hand for me? Suffolk council. Thank you.

00:25:05:05 - 00:25:57:13

Uh, yes, sir. Mark Smith for East Suffolk Council. I think where we are left on this as it stands, is that the applicant accepts there may be cumulative effects. The logical corollary of that is that those effects could be major or moderate. We are looking at environmental assessment, a regime that was born as European legislation and in which it is appropriate to apply a precautionary approach that is particularly relevant here in this location, where, as we all know, there are multiple nationally significant infrastructure projects consented and being constructed.

00:25:57:23 - 00:26:26:02

So whether or not the applicant feels able to further particularized the level of significant harm and does not prevent the Secretary of State from attributing significant weight to cumulative impacts, and given the situation on the ground, given the precautionary approach that would be appropriate in this case. Thank you.

00:26:27:13 - 00:26:32:14

Thank you. Would the applicant like to comment on what he said? Sorry I apologize, I was.

00:26:32:19 - 00:27:05:13

Michael Bedford, Suffolk County Council, before Mr. Westmoreland Smith had made that intervention. I was going to make effectively the same point about the precautionary principle would provide you with the answer to that level of uncertainty, uh, that, uh, both of the applicants, um, experts have referred to. And we don't see why that could not be applied to provide a magnitude to the degree of significance that you have then found from your intra project cumulative effects.

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Thank you.

00:27:06:22 - 00:27:10:24

Thank you. The applicant would like to comment on what those councils have raised.

00:27:10:26 - 00:27:46:27

Thank you. Thank you sir. I'm just going to make a brief comment and pass it to Mr. Pilkington. I think so the point here is that we we need to go away and look at the implications of that assessment.

And when you look at them in the light that you just described, when you have a negligible and then a moderate adverse effect and how that joins together. I think the important point is it's not necessarily, um, producing a compound, um, impact. It's necessary to look at how they do, in fact interact together. So it's not possible just to say that you compound them together and you elevate the impact as a result of that.

00:27:46:29 - 00:28:16:03

I don't think it's quite right to say the answer is the precautionary principle, because the precautionary principle itself should be based on some evidential basis, not just that one goes up a level, because that seems to be, um, a sensible thing to do. Um, so I think my first point would be we need to look at whether or not you can look at it in that compound way or not. Um, I don't think you can, but we'll come back with something more detailed as Miss Leader explained. Um, further to that, I think Mr., um, Pilkington is going to comment.

00:28:16:05 - 00:28:17:00

Thank you.

00:28:17:17 - 00:28:34:18

Nigel Pilkington, for the applicant. I just wanted to make it clear that we we absolutely would never take a mathematical approach to adding, um, uh, separate effects together. Um, it is a it is a judgment that's reached between, uh, a team of professionals. Um, okay.

00:28:34:20 - 00:28:45:00

Thank you. Yeah. But I suppose where I'm coming from is no such judgment has been made to seek to quantify that significance. And I think that's the gap where we need some help with. Really? Thank you.

00:28:47:22 - 00:28:49:04

Says yes. Thank you.

00:28:50:18 - 00:29:40:27

Thank you sir. James Burton, on behalf of Suffolk Energy Action Solutions. Um, panel, as I'm sure you know that I do have to step in just to correct something that my learned friend Miss Shaikh QC said the the the whole point of the precautionary principle is, is it steps in when there is an absence of evidence. And I'm afraid there is an absence of evidence here. And you well know it. And it's not just, of course, as we've been hearing, the failure to really properly think about what you do when you put different topic areas together, we've already covered in the course of these last couple of days, really serious deficiencies in individual topic areas when we we won't reflect on the tourism we heard yesterday and where they are with transport and so on and so forth.

00:29:40:29 - 00:30:25:03

But the whole point of precaution, a precautionary approach which runs all the way through the European legislation and the case law in which we base ourselves here, is that where there's an absence of evidence, we take a precautionary approach to it. We don't we don't look to evidence. Um, and as I think my learning friend said, that there has to be an evidential basis for a precautionary approach, it's to fill the gap. And that's why it is appropriate to lean, not just lean, but to to to take a

major, significant, um, finding forward when you don't have the evidence that you clearly need, as you don't, in this case, across so many areas.

00:30:25:05 - 00:30:25:28

Thank you.

00:30:27:00 - 00:30:27:21

Thank you.

00:30:29:22 - 00:30:31:04

Mr. Mackey.

00:30:34:09 - 00:30:38:04

Mr. Mackey, sorry you've turned your microphone off. Thank you. Sir.

00:30:38:06 - 00:30:39:17

The good news is that I.

00:30:39:19 - 00:31:10:17

Promise this will be my last intervention this morning. Uh. It dips. I'm going to combine this with the next sub item on the agenda, so I don't waste the panel's time. The difficulty expressed by Doctor Fox is that those who currently live in the area see the whole question of accumulation as being self-evident from everything they do and see in their everyday lives.

00:31:11:06 - 00:31:43:03

The it's against that background that we trust that you will refuse this application. But it would be daft to assume that our hopes are fulfilled. As I stumbled along saying yesterday, the law, the government policy publicly endorsed by the applicant is that communities are to be rewarded for hosting new transmission structure.

00:31:44:03 - 00:32:04:03

National grid have vast profits. Good luck to them. They have very good people. As you've seen and heard. But in our submission, the submission of all Red Town Council also is that there needs to be a real and substantial shift of the corporate mind.

00:32:07:20 - 00:32:33:26

All the town council and I'm sure the surrounding Communities all have numerous causes. Crying out for help. Which National Grid should, in our submission, is legally obliged to meet in some respects in the unlikely event of National Grid, not even now, at the last hour.

00:32:35:25 - 00:32:49:27

Accepting these legal and moral obligations, we respectfully ask you to do what you can to ensure in your decision that that those obligations are met. So thank you.

00:32:50:13 - 00:32:58:14

Thank you for that. Can I come to the Suffolk Club, please, before inviting the applicant to comment on what the last few speakers have said? Thank you.

00:33:03:25 - 00:33:31:12

Thank you sir. Good morning, panel, ladies and gentlemen. Um, you are in a difficult position because we believe we are in an unprecedented point of cumulative impact in this small geographic area. Um, significant? The word significant appears in many places throughout the applicant's own testimony in terms of harm, as you've identified, and

00:33:32:28 - 00:33:48:21

I believe that it should rate on the higher end of significant major because of the setting. And this is the thing that hasn't yet been mentioned. I'm sure perhaps you are going to go on to it. When you looked at Suffolk more specifically.

00:33:48:29 - 00:33:54:18

Sorry to interject. Sorry, just for the purposes of the recording, could you just introduce yourself and continue? Thank you.

00:33:55:21 - 00:34:33:19

Mariam Fellows, Aldeburgh resident. Um. So significant. Yes, major. Yes, because it's within the Spa, Ramsar triple SSI national Escapes. So significant harm in a rural area is categorized more than significant harm in an urban area. Um, and in terms of the industrialization of the national landscapes, it would set a very difficult precedent. Um, if that was not considered to its full weight, it is the combination of things currently that we're facing here.

00:34:33:21 - 00:35:08:24

And it is also the fact that there are receptors close to the converter stations. Residential properties close to the cable runs close to the close to the substation. And there's those that would travel walking or traveling cars past and within the area. So it is the fact of being surrounded by everything visual, traffic, noise, light. So how you add those all up together, if there is no way to rule out that it is major.

00:35:08:26 - 00:35:15:20

Then one has to say that it is precautionary, that it is going to be major. Thank you.

00:35:16:10 - 00:35:21:00

Thank you for that. And actually, before I come to the applicant, Mr. Marley, I think you had your hand up. Thank you.

00:35:21:02 - 00:36:00:17

Yes. Thank you. Michael Armani for Kristen parish council. Um, we heard Mr. Pilkington for the applicant refers to the fact that they are casting their net again in terms of cumulative projects that should be assessed cumulatively. We heard yesterday that the that the applicant is meeting regularly with Helios Energy Park, and we know the arguments here about lack of information and not going to there's no point rehearsing this here having gone through, but there is clearly more and more information coming through about Helios. Mr. Mary from Suffolk County Council mentioned it in

context of traffic, and I think there are some assumptions in relation to impacts which Helios would cause.

00:36:00:25 - 00:36:25:24

I believe the location of the Helios Energy Park is now known. So certainly you would know about the direction of AC cable routes. We know there will be a further expansion of the of the substation, although it's in reality a hub for multiple projects. So I my concern is that we shouldn't just dismiss Helios Energy Park in this assessment because there is some information, albeit incomplete. Thank you.

00:36:26:17 - 00:36:39:05

Thank you. I'll come back to the applicant. Now, I know there's a fair bit to digest there, which no doubt you'll be responding fully to in writing, but can I invite you, please, just to comment on anything in particular that you're able to now? Thank you.

00:36:39:16 - 00:36:50:03

Thank you sir. Sorry for the applicant. I'm going to ask Mr. Pilkington to deal with those points. But as you say, we've, uh, we will come back to you in writing, particularly on that point about how you addressed these impacts together.

00:36:52:05 - 00:37:23:21

Nigel Pilkington for the applicant. I just wanted to clarify, um, a couple of things. I think there's some confusion here between the Inter project cumulative effects and the in track, what we were talking about in terms of bringing together professional judgments. That's the intra project cumulative effect. The entire project cumulative effects have absolutely been assessed, um, and by those topic leads using quantified information, um, and some of those the there was a question about the tourism impacts, what I would say there.

00:37:24:00 - 00:38:06:03

And that's not a factor that contributes to the intra project cumulative effects assessment that we that we've done. But in and of itself it is numerical. It has got quantification there. So I just wanted to make clear what we were, what we're talking about here. Um, so uh, the other thing I'd like to say it's linked to that really, it's, it is about the fact that we're not lacking evidence. Um, and we have a robust process. Um, but it's the request for quantification. Uh, that is the challenge I've liked here that our subsequent analysis, our workshop and our continuing work is Indicating that it's more likely to be moderate.

00:38:06:10 - 00:38:46:10

I'll put something in writing. Obviously a deadline for to to explain that that is our position. But we think, um, that what the Secretary of State needs to know is that it's it's significant. Uh, one final point on that is I do think we need to, um, to, to, to remember that what we're looking at is, is, is environmental impact, uh, what my specialism is environmental impact. I do think we need to, um, to differentiate between, um, harm and environmental impact here because it's, it's not a, what we've not assessed is levels of, of harm.

00:38:47:17 - 00:39:27:11

Um, there's a couple of other aspects. Sorry. Well, there's one main aspect, really. Um, there was a discussion about Helios and knowing where it is. I personally don't know where it is, but, uh, but but. And certainly the Helios website still says they don't have any plans to give us so. And we, you know, albeit we may be in meetings with them. We can't release information about that project that it hasn't released itself. Um, I think hopefully everyone would understand that, um, and knowing the direction of AC cable routes is not enough to undertake any form of meaningful assessment.

00:39:27:13 - 00:39:55:05

We'd need traffic figures, we need access routes. We need all of that information to to undertake, um, cumulative impact assessment. And my understanding is that that was highlighted in the findings of the judicial review into, uh, E1 North and A2, um, where it was made clear that there was insufficient information about Nautilus and your link. I think it probably was at the time for them to be meaningfully considered. We are in that same position.

00:39:57:03 - 00:40:17:14

Thank you. Well, I think you can see there's obviously a number of parties who are concerned about. We've just been discussing. So I think we'll all look forward to seeing what you submit. And, um, it really give something for all of the parties to comment on further and hopefully we can move this discussion on. Um, I can see another hand up in the Suffolk club, please. Thank you.

00:40:20:02 - 00:40:21:01

Thank you sir.

00:40:22:21 - 00:40:53:08

Um, I think there's a bit of confusion because we can't tell you how many people. I think there's myself very briefly. And then there's a councillor, Robin Sanders. Too much to my right. So Marianne Fellows, um, Aldeburgh resident. Um, this is worrying because if it takes until deadline five, which would be 10th of March to get this information, um, and this proceedings have to close on 17th May and it will not allow yourselves very much time, let alone interject.

00:40:53:10 - 00:40:59:05

Um, could I just check with the applicant? Is it not your intention to submit this piece of work at deadline for it?

00:40:59:07 - 00:41:03:19

Was the visuals on four and they said everything else on five. Sir, I believe.

00:41:06:29 - 00:41:25:03

My recollection was it was updated. Environmental assessments and cumulative assessments to relating to line link at deadline five. And it was an updated note with regards to your consideration of the significance of entry project cumulative effects at deadline four.

00:41:25:05 - 00:42:01:09

So deadline four is you're absolutely right in both of those. But what we are providing at deadline for as well is those additional visualisations of line and link with the proposed elements. So what you're getting with line link cumulative effect is in two stages. Um, I mean with regards to it being late in the

process for us to be considering the detail from Lion Link, which has only really just been released, I don't think that that's that that's a failure on our behalf. That's just the natural, you know, we now have the information We are now giving it due consideration at pace.

00:42:01:11 - 00:42:03:16

Thank you. I'll come back to Miss Fellowes. Thank you.

00:42:04:25 - 00:42:35:24

Thank you for that clarification. Um, sir, I would I wonder whether there might be an opportunity for. Even if the information is not allowed into the public domain so that the applicant and the parties, because obviously, National Grid Ventures is part of the overall suite with National Grid. Energy transmission could not be shared with yourselves to inform some of the early, um, examinations and certainly opacity, which is fine. It's difficult.

00:42:35:26 - 00:42:51:25

But with regard to the visualizations, I mean, these have been published in pamphlets and given to community members three weeks ago. It seems very it is a disappointment that they could not be provided to the examining authority at the same time. Thank you.

00:42:54:03 - 00:42:57:18

Thank you. Is there anyone else in the Suffolk club who wishes to comment.

00:43:01:15 - 00:43:35:19

Councillor Robin Saunders and representing both. East Suffolk Community Energy Partnership and Woodbridge Town Council. We've discussed a variety of different cumulative impacts. And briefly, it's been mentioned by one particular town over about the impact that it's having on them. But however, a Suffolk is made of a number of market towns, and the market towns are utterly dependent upon their entire land in surviving. That hinterland is served by a lot of minor roads and by one artery, not one artery.

00:43:35:21 - 00:43:41:27

When it gets blocked, which is going to be more and more used as each of these projects are developed and are continuing to occur,

00:43:43:23 - 00:44:18:21

results in problems because it is a single track road and any incident, however, causes disruption and massive impact upon the local road network. The market towns are a fragile economy of shops. We have managed here to maintain them as centres for shopping and social interaction, as well as centres for other basic activities such as pharmacies and doctors. We have considerable concerns that this as you add yet more schemes.

00:44:18:23 - 00:44:53:02

We are getting to the point, particularly with the A12 now having to be improved at the same time as this scheme, that we're at a point where tipping point may occur and these market towns will be seriously impacted and we could lose the facilities that exist in these towns and the interaction that

occurs between the populace there and the immediate hinterland. That will be a relatively irreversible change. It will take years to recover. When you lose shops, they do not come back rapidly.

00:44:53:05 - 00:45:04:11

Businesses fail and then you have a downward decline. We've seen it everywhere. It does occur. And with a business such as, say like.

00:45:05:05 - 00:45:22:20

Sorry, could I just stop you there? I think a lot of this is things that we've already heard and seen in writing. So I just if it's possible, I'd rather just stick to the agenda. And if there's anything that you feel that you want to submit that you haven't already submitted, please do submit that in writing and we'll give it due consideration.

00:45:22:22 - 00:45:23:08

I will do.

00:45:23:17 - 00:45:24:21

Thank you very much.

00:45:27:08 - 00:45:39:15

Um, I'd just like to move on to a slightly different question now, if I'm able. Um, sorry. There is is there another comment from Suffolk? Thank you.

00:45:39:18 - 00:45:40:13

Yes. Um.

00:45:40:21 - 00:45:41:23

Charlotte Fox, Pendle and.

00:45:41:25 - 00:45:45:29

Stanfield parish Council. Uh, I just wondered if I could show you a couple of images.

00:45:46:01 - 00:45:46:16

That.

00:45:46:18 - 00:46:07:05

Have been circulated. There's one on social media about our, um, road closures this weekend. And there's one from Sizewell C for the proposed diversion for when the A12 is closed in for a very short distance, um, at all. So I wonder if those images could be shown.

00:46:07:13 - 00:46:08:16

Okay. Thank you.

00:46:34:10 - 00:46:35:10

Uh, okay.

00:46:37:17 - 00:47:07:01

Uh, unfortunately, they can't be, um, be displayed. Um, but, um, one of the images shows, um, East Suffolk, uh, and it is like a child has taken a box of. No, Um, no entry road closure, no right turn. Uh, images and thrown them onto a map. And the, um, size will see, um, official diversion for a very short distance of the A12. Um, is approaching a hundred miles.

00:47:07:26 - 00:47:12:22

If there's anything that you do wish to submit, such as those images, please do.

00:47:12:24 - 00:47:13:16

Submit in.

00:47:13:18 - 00:47:14:03

Writing. Yeah.

00:47:14:15 - 00:47:15:26

Thank you. Thank you very much.

00:47:15:28 - 00:47:17:12

Consideration. Thank you.

00:47:20:01 - 00:47:22:16

I can see another hand up, uh, Mr. Chapman.

00:47:25:08 - 00:47:27:00

Thank you. Sir. Um, I'd like.

00:47:27:02 - 00:47:27:17

To.

00:47:27:19 - 00:47:28:04

Raise.

00:47:28:06 - 00:47:28:28

Two issues.

00:47:29:00 - 00:47:30:15

Um, if I may, if this is.

00:47:30:17 - 00:47:31:16

The right place.

00:47:31:21 - 00:48:13:15

Um, the first is the impact of construction traffic on the A2 twenty-ninths Thanet Way. Uh, for information at the A2, 29th Thanet Way is the primary strategic highway serving Thanet. Uh, in plain English, it's the main road in and out of the Isle of Thanet, and the A2 29 is already subject to significant structural and operational constraints, including long standing surface deformation caused by underlying landing clay, repeated failures requiring ongoing repairs, and an extended 50 mile an hour speed limit restriction for safety reasons.

00:48:13:19 - 00:48:38:18

Now these conditions demonstrate that the road is currently operating within limited resilience and is vulnerable to additional stress. The ceiling project is expected to generate substantial movements of heavy goods, vehicles, abnormal loads, construction plant and daily commuting by a large workforce. Introducing.

00:48:39:01 - 00:48:42:21

Could I just check it? Is this something which you've already submitted to us in writing?

00:48:43:11 - 00:48:50:10

Um. Uh, this this this particular issue isn't the second issue. Have done. Yes. Okay.

00:48:50:16 - 00:48:58:16

If I could just ask you to just to briefly cover what you haven't submitted in writing. Because everything we have in writing, we will give due consideration to anyway.

00:48:58:26 - 00:49:06:09

Okay. Well, this this this first issue is not covered in writing. Um, and and, um. So am I okay to continue? Yes.

00:49:06:11 - 00:49:10:09

If you could briefly summarize the issue and then submit it in writing. Thank you.

00:49:10:11 - 00:50:07:18

Okay. All right. Okay. So the issue is that introducing the level of construction traffic needed on this, uh, primary access into and out of the Isle of Thanet, um, uh, increases or heightens the risk of unplanned lane closures and have would have a direct network consequence for network reliability and the safe operation of the highway. My understanding is that the national policy requires cumulative impacts like this to be assessed, and the 8299 already carries a high baseline load and the additional ceiling construction traffic would create a significant cumulative burden on a road that is demonstrably fragile, and on this basis, it would appear to be a requirement for the applicant to provide a robust, evidence based transport assessment and identify credible mitigation measures or infrastructure reinforcement.

00:50:08:01 - 00:50:10:25

That's that's my main point, sir. Thank you.

00:50:11:12 - 00:50:19:27

Thank you very much. Um, two further hands, which I'll take at this moment. Um, councillor wing first, please.

00:50:20:15 - 00:50:21:06

Thank you. I'll.

00:50:21:08 - 00:50:21:23

I'll be.

00:50:21:25 - 00:50:22:10

I'll try and be.

00:50:22:12 - 00:50:22:27

As.

00:50:22:29 - 00:50:24:27

Brief as possible. Uh, it's Councillor Becky Wing.

00:50:24:29 - 00:50:56:04

I represent Saanich District Council and Ramsgate Town Council and Central Harbour, where the report is. I'd like to support Suffolk's, uh, a discussion around that. There doesn't seem to be any any addressing of community, cumulative impact of the ongoing developments in our area on the lived experience of locals now during construction and once the site is ongoing. However, I have also three main concerns about the facts.

00:50:56:06 - 00:51:30:13

Cumulative impact doesn't appear to have been addressed. First of all, in terms of pylons, and I have to say I found the comment from the applicant yesterday quite condescending. He said the pylons, you know, are further down in Minster. That's the point that there is a cumulative impact, we believe, although it's not clear, there's a 2.5km stretch of the River Stour, which is already affected by some pylons. There are 55 overhead cables at the moment. We believe that will increase to 82, although the documentation is not clear in.

00:51:30:22 - 00:52:03:03

Additionally, the pylons will be of two heights, which creates a further risk to migrating birds, which is very worrying for us. So we don't believe see link. And it was quite evident in that man's response yesterday. They have considered the cumulative impact of additional pylons on the existing pylons, which also belong to them. I'd like to also bring up fire risk. Nobody seems to have brought that up yet, and I believe a fire incident in a converter station is a pretty serious thing. We have a number of other developments in the area.

00:52:03:05 - 00:52:35:09

One of the largest best plants. Grid stability, solar plant, the Nemo link. Uh uh, a biomass development, all of which, uh, have inherent fire risks. Although, you know, the fire safety is at a high level. Recently we had a fire in a tower block. It's a tower block that's having cladding removed. It

required ten tenders to go to that tower block in in Ramsgate. And residents then received a text from Southern Water to say you have low or no water pressure.

00:52:35:11 - 00:53:06:06

I am really worried that the combined risk of these, uh, of these Are these developments in a relatively small area? It is is, is is putting us at danger of not having the water capacity to deal with a major incident? Never mind a couple of major incidents and we cannot say they will never happen. I'd also like to address the flooding issue. Uh, again, we have a large, large developments going in and around that area.

00:53:06:08 - 00:53:28:25

I believe, uh, Sealink are proposing to use attenuation tanks and Suds, although that's not clear. But the best plan. I will put this all, and I will evidence this. The best plant, the large best plant originally had in its outline plans. I sit on TDC planning the use of suds and then ruled them out as not appropriate because there is a high water table.

00:53:29:00 - 00:53:32:15

Sorry, I think we're straying into into other areas that, um.

00:53:32:17 - 00:54:06:01

It's the combined. I'm coming to my point. Please let me finish. I've sat here for four days. We have no Kent County Council to represent us, so it's really important that we get our point across. What I'm getting to is that I would like Sealink to actually look at the combined impact of how many other how many other developments on that site are discharging into the River Stour and the Minster Stream, and the combined risk of on site and off site flooding, they would not be able to use Suds.

00:54:06:03 - 00:54:42:03

The water table is too high. They will end up discharging into one of those two rivers. I'm particularly worried about Minster Village that already suffers, uh, flooding. Uh, I think there my points. Uh, I'd also I mean the the combined effect on the SSI and Peggy Bay given we have all these things in, in, in a, in an area is something I'd. I'm waiting. We're waiting for the document to come through. But thank thank you for the last four days. I'm sure we're all exhausted, but it's been really important for us to have a verbal input and I will be adding further documentation.

00:54:42:05 - 00:54:44:01

Thank you for your support and time.

00:54:44:04 - 00:54:59:09

Thank you for your comments, counselor. And yes, please do put everything in writing and the applicant will no doubt be responding to that along with everything they've heard today. Thank you. Um, I could see another hand. Is a counselor. Austin, please. Thank you.

00:54:59:14 - 00:55:29:22

Hello? Yes. That's me. I represent Ramsgate town team. We're a voluntary group working in in Ramsgate for the benefit of residents and and the economy. Um, I wanted to pick up on, uh, Mr. Chapman's comments on the A29 nine, which is, he points out, is an extremely vulnerable road. Uh,

we have a tunnel, uh, on that road. We also have a tunnel leading to Ramsgate Port, which is where we are expecting that much of the aggregate will be going through. Both of those tunnels have been closed for considerable periods.

00:55:29:24 - 00:56:08:13

One because of an accident and resulting fire. And one, uh, just for maintenance works because there was so much that needed to be done. As Mr. Chapman pointed out. The A29 is in a very poor state but carries a great deal of traffic. We are expecting. Obviously, if these developments go ahead it will have to carry a great deal more. We also have the difficulty that there are, um, if the Ramsgate Port tunnel is closed, um, large heavy plant vehicles and aggregate movers will have to go through an extremely vulnerable area of Ramsgate where the road is held up somewhat precariously.

00:56:08:15 - 00:56:16:08

And we are really concerned about the impact of that on our road system, but also on our residents and our businesses. Thank you.

00:56:16:20 - 00:56:47:28

Thank you. Councillor. Um, if I could move on with some further questions at this stage, please. Um, East Suffolk Council, um, I've got a question for you, really, with regards to your, um, request for an additional commitment in the react. Um, and in particular, that was a request which you put forward to review possible mitigations for for those which the applicant has identified as no mitigation confirmed at this stage.

00:56:48:24 - 00:56:57:14

Um, can I firstly invite East Suffolk Council just to introduce that particular item? Thank you.

00:57:02:20 - 00:57:35:24

Mark Westman Smith for East Suffolk Council. Yes. That was an issue we raised in our response to one seeing, uh, two of the first, uh, written, uh, questions. Um, and in that context, um, this was a point where we generally accepted the applicant's assertion, um, that it is difficult to identify.

00:57:36:14 - 00:58:13:25

Mitigation for minor individual works in advance of main contractor and contracts. And so in light of that, what we sought is a further commitment in the Reac. And in order to encourage a more proactive and less reactive approach to addressing injury, project cumulative effects, so that once the greater level of detail obtained from main works contractors has been identified.

00:58:13:27 - 00:58:43:13

There is just then a commitment to review what specific mitigation measures are practicable and to put those in place, rather than saying, now it's a bit difficult and we want, um, that commitment in the reac and when the further information is available for the situation to be reviewed, it's simply that point.

00:58:45:11 - 00:58:56:11

Thank you. Can I come to the applicant just to seek their view on what a Suffolk Council are seeking with regards to the inclusion of that additional commitment? Thank you.

00:58:58:00 - 00:59:43:14

Nigel Pilkington for the applicant. Um, could we take that one away? It's something that I think warrants some further consideration. Um, we have identified some other mitigation measures, um, in the interim. Um, which touch on may maybe touch on that slightly, um, including, um, the fact that our transport coordinator would, I think, probably naturally coordinate with the transport coordinators for the other projects. Um, that I understand that that's already happening between Sizewell C and E1 and the SPR project, and we would seek to, to collaborate with and with those teams.

00:59:43:20 - 00:59:58:04

Um, obviously in terms of agreeing the wording of that, we would we can't um, you know, we need to take that further with, um, with those organisations and probably through the statement of Common Ground. Um, but we will give consideration.

01:00:00:04 - 01:00:05:15

I think the, the commitment actually related to intra project's effects.

01:00:07:20 - 01:00:21:28

So, um, I don't necessarily think that there was a need to engage with any other parties. I think, um, if you could take it away and just review what East Suffolk Council is saying in their response to first written questions.

01:00:23:16 - 01:00:46:06

As you poke into of the applicant. Certainly we will do. But I think it is worth remembering that some of the contributing factors to the intra project Cumulative effect. Ah. Um. You know, they are in traffic and transport and they are they are visual. So I think hopefully anything that we can do to lessen those effects, um, um, will contribute to the interest. But I take I take your point.

01:00:46:08 - 01:01:15:29

Yeah. I suppose as an action point, please, for deadline for if you could just look at what East Suffolk have, uh, requested with regards to that, um, requirement, please. That will be helpful. Um, if you could set up your position with regards to whether you agree or disagree, um, and if it is the position that you agree, um, if you could please draft a possible react commitment as well, which would cover that within your deadline for submission, that would be helpful. Thank you.

01:01:16:01 - 01:01:21:06

Sorry. Yeah, I can confirm we'll take away those points and come back with our response.

01:01:21:15 - 01:02:00:27

So so can I Michael Bedford for Suffolk County Council. Can I just. Yes. Um, expand slightly on this point because as you will know, we also responded to um, one c intra two in terms of the first written questions and raised similar points to the matters that have been, um, uh, already outlined by East Suffolk Council, but in particular in our comments, we drew attention to what we saw as the deficiencies of some of the existing reac commitments, which we list in that answer.

01:02:00:29 - 01:02:21:25

So I don't go through that now. Um, as to, uh, their shortcomings for addressing these issues. So if the applicant is taking away, uh, the concern with a view to coming back, it would be helpful if they can address those specific concerns that we've raised in that response as well. Thank you, sir.

01:02:21:27 - 01:02:23:19

I think I've got that point. Thank you.

01:02:29:21 - 01:02:38:03

So I can see a hand up. Counselor Austin, is is that a leftover from your previous comments, or is there something new that you'd like to raise? Thank you.

01:02:38:05 - 01:02:40:01

Sorry, it's a leftover apologies.

01:02:40:08 - 01:02:41:10

Thank you very much.

01:02:44:26 - 01:02:45:12

Um,

01:02:47:06 - 01:03:27:07

I had a question to pose to Kent County Council at this stage, again with response with regards to responding to first written question one. See intro two. Um, so if we could have this as an action point, please. Um, I just note that Kent County Council's response to that question related entirely to traffic. Um, and I suppose I'd be very interested from hearing from Kent County Council if there are, that if their concerns relate entirely to traffic or if there are any other concerns relating to other mitigations of other environmental effects.

01:03:27:09 - 01:03:34:20

So if we could take that as an action point and hopefully Kent County Council will be able to respond to that at the next deadline.

01:03:38:19 - 01:03:58:02

I think I've covered everything that I needed to within this first session, but before I move on, can I just check if there are any other parties, either in the room or online, who wish to make any final or closing comments before we move on? Um, I can see C's in the room. Thank you.

01:03:58:19 - 01:04:08:25

Thank you very much, Sir James Burton, on behalf of Seas. Um, can I just clarify, sir, are you bringing the item 20 cumulative effects to an end, then?

01:04:10:20 - 01:04:11:21

That was my intention.

01:04:11:23 - 01:04:45:22

Yeah, right. Okay, well, I do have a few things that, um, I haven't managed to tick off, so I'd like to address them now. So it does strike us. And the discussion that we've had today. Um, has been very helpful in this regard. What a excruciatingly difficult position you find yourselves in as a panel. Of course. Um, this is it's meant to be a front loaded process. And, um, and we should have come, of course, to the start of the examination with, um, all of the proper cumulative assessment work already done.

01:04:46:00 - 01:05:24:10

Um, we know we haven't got it yet. We know that we haven't got it because we've been through individual topic areas where it's obvious we haven't got it. We're only just starting on the transport, modelling your own particular specialism. Um, we we heard some remarkable evidence yesterday about tourism. We heard from Mr. Thornley Taylor that even really basic things, like what happens when you put Transformers next to each other, haven't been done properly. And of course, if we don't have the topic areas right within themselves, cumulatively, we're not going to have the correct end position standing back overall.

01:05:24:12 - 01:06:00:01

And, um. We've heard it said, and it's right to say we are in an unprecedented situation, that this is a it's a it's a fragile, beautiful rural landscape. Land and its people are facing something that no one else in the country has faced before. And this these are all reasons that make it jolly, jolly difficult for you. Of course, I really would encourage you to, um, constantly put yourself in the shoes of the people who have to live experientially through this.

01:06:00:03 - 01:06:37:07

And and that's a word that's used, um, often, um, in planning, of course. And it's right that it's used in planning, because without an experiential approach, we miss things so that the person whose whatever business it is that relies on tourism finds itself really suffering because either Construction workers have taken all the space, as it were. So they're not spending or. Traffic is so bad that people aren't getting to them. Is the same person who then goes past the enormous bits of infrastructure and feels, frankly, very sad about it.

01:06:37:09 - 01:07:08:24

And when they're bunged up in traffic, they feel the same. Um, and it's, it's a great concern that the way the applicant has approached many things is to say, well, they don't overlap. There's no geographical overlap. They're not or they don't overlap temporally. And that's wrong because that's just not how people live their lives. And I come back to that point about the precautionary approach. It really does loom large here. You're dealing with something that no one's dealt with before.

01:07:09:00 - 01:07:42:22

You know, my policy and law that you've got to report to the Secretary of State in a way that allows the Secretary of State to take account of cumulative, long term and cumulative impacts and policy is clear. God has got to get those adverse impacts properly before the Secretary of State and assessed it. In circumstances where you lack the evidence, the correct approach has to be a precautionary one. It has to be to find major significant and harmful effects across the board.

01:07:42:28 - 01:08:00:02

And I do urge you to take that approach. Um, on the side, for the sake of all of those I represent, who, as I say, are looking at they're looking at really a generation of something that no one would wish on anyone. Thank you sir.

01:08:01:02 - 01:08:07:04

Thank you. Um, I can see another hand online there. Can I come to Miss Waller? Thank you.

01:08:09:04 - 01:08:49:06

Hi, Emma. Um, I just wanted to quickly say that, uh, I just fully support these comments that they've just made. Um, and I just wanted to quickly mention that the Planning Inspectorate advice note on Cumulative effects assessment is clear that future developments, which are reasonably likely to come forward, must be included within the cumulative impact assessment. So in this context, I want to draw the authority's attention to the National Energy System operators Holistic Network Design, which is a government commissioned programme identifying the offshore and onshore transmission network required by 2030.

01:08:49:13 - 01:09:24:15

So Sealink itself was identified within the H and D, demonstrating that projects within within it are intended to be delivered rather than just aspirational. So through the NDI follow up exercise, further projects were identified by Ofgem and accepted by NSO for inclusion in the HMD implementation plan for their beyond 2030 strategy. So this included a new offshore cable between Aberdeenshire and Richborough, using Pequot Bay as a landfall location.

01:09:24:22 - 01:10:07:27

If delivered, this would represent the third interconnector cable to come onshore at Pequot Bay, following Nemo Link and Sea Link Live. Granted, the HMD has been repeatedly relied upon by the applicant in their submissions, including statements that the link is critical to delivering the HMD alongside the other projects identified within it, highlighting that these projects are intended to be delivered as part of a coordinated national programme. National Policy Statement N5 further confirms that the HMD is intended to reduce impacts through coordination coordination, which can only occur if all reasonably foreseeable projects are assessed together.

01:10:08:15 - 01:10:38:22

Given that acknowledge ecological sensitivity of Pequot Bay and the legacy of previous cable landfalls, It's therefore really concerning that the Aberdeenshire to Richborough cable has not been included within the cumulative impact assessment, despite it being part of the coordinated HMD strategy. The Kent Wildlife Trust considers this project clearly meets the test of being a reasonably foreseeable project, and therefore should be included within the CIA.

01:10:41:08 - 01:10:43:14

Thank you very much. Um.

01:10:48:00 - 01:10:52:16

We just sat with the applicant. Whether the intention is to include that particular.

01:10:52:18 - 01:10:58:02

That particular project, if it is a project, I'm going to just ask Mr. Pilkington to deal with that.

01:11:00:07 - 01:11:15:01

On behalf of the applicant. Um, at the moment, there is no end gap plans. Um, for a further cable into Pebble Bay. We are aware of the project, which is in the Niso report, but they have not passed anything over at this time to develop.

01:11:15:26 - 01:11:21:02

Okay, well, no doubt you'll be responding to what you've just heard there in the next deadline. So, um. Thank you.

01:11:22:29 - 01:11:30:18

Um, I can see, I can see. Um, can I come to, uh, Counselor Wing, please? And I've got time for a couple of more comments.

01:11:30:20 - 01:12:01:12

Thank you. It's very nervous speaking, I'm afraid. Uh, but. And I miss something about one of the crucial things in the cumulative impact for us of what's going on in and around the rich society is the impact on small businesses, particularly our farmers. Uh, and we've already seen, uh, you know, public rights of way being shut without permission, lands being accessed without permission from ceiling surveyors. Uh, you know, it would be nice to think there was an immediate change in their attitude towards local people, which has been pretty poor, actually.

01:12:01:20 - 01:12:31:10

Uh, so, yeah, I'm glad you mentioned the impact on people, because we are feeling here and obviously in Suffolk, very hit upon at the moment, and Sealink doesn't seem to be doing anything to actually, uh, even look at the whole impact of what's going on in either area or indeed the impact on local people, communities, small businesses and farmers who, if there is an issue further down the future, will not have the means to challenge a big corporation like that, a big private company. Thank you.

01:12:31:20 - 01:12:37:08

Thank you. Councillor. Uh, we've got time for a few more. I'll come to, uh, Mr. Mahoney in the room first.

01:12:37:10 - 01:13:10:15

Yes. Thank you. Michael Mahoney for Friston parish council. My apologies. I thought that we'd be moving on to 20.2 on the agenda rather than finishing the whole item. Um, a key issue for our community and discussions are early discussions with line link, given the beginning of the statutory consultation. Is the desire that cumulative impacts are minimized and mitigated by line link using the same AC cable route from the Saxmundham site to Friston. Um in the E1 and E2 examinations.

01:13:10:21 - 01:13:45:00

Um cable ducts for both projects will be laid at the well. The cable will be laid, and ducts for the other projects will be laid at the same time. And we can see no reason based on guidance why that shouldn't be the approach here. So that rather than having two cable routes coming from Saxmundham to

Friston, we simply have one. And this will greatly reduce construction impacts and noise going forward. So you don't have, you know, sequential construction when you can only have construction one time. Um, I think um, obviously the applicant needs to comment on that.

01:13:45:06 - 01:14:15:28

I mean, that is the most desirable solution in terms of mitigating cumulative effects of that. But at the very least, it would seem to me that National Grid should make a commitment that they won't to use use a to use the word won't sterilise that route so that if Line link are perfectly able to use the same AC cable route in the future, so nothing will be done to prevent that by sealing. But ideally, there doesn't seem to be any reason why the cable and the docks with our project should not be laid at the same time.

01:14:16:00 - 01:14:19:01

Thank you. I'll let the applicant come back on that. Thank you.

01:14:20:09 - 01:14:22:18

Um, if I could just hand over to Mr. Buckley.

01:14:22:23 - 01:14:55:03

Uh, James Buckley, on behalf of the applicant. Um, I think we presented a few scenarios within our coordination document, which was, uh, submitted as part of the application around what could or couldn't happen. Um, with the route, we are talking with line link about that route. We cannot get compulsory acquisition powers for other people's equipment, and they are legally separate to business. And we cannot subsidize them as a, as a business. So we wouldn't be able to do it on their behalf unless there was a commercial agreement. But equally, we don't have that. We wouldn't be able to get the land powers to put those in.

01:14:55:05 - 01:15:08:18

So unless they were granted permission and had the land powers. That wouldn't happen. But we are talking to them about the route. We are talking to them about coordination and minimizing impacts of that AC cable route. But we haven't got to any agreement yet.

01:15:10:16 - 01:15:12:29

So could I just respond to that briefly?

01:15:13:01 - 01:15:13:16

Yeah.

01:15:13:18 - 01:15:50:16

I mean, there is no reason. I mean, in fact, the Scottish power projects have been brought forward by two separate companies. Um, and um, it is recognised that, um, you can acquire the land for such a project. I mean, there's a very interesting piece in the, in article 41 which deals with this very point, and I'm sure the learners council in this room are familiar with that. So there is no reason why it cannot be provided in the DCO. And I'm not talking about assurances about cooperation. There should be a provision in the DCO as there are as there is in the Scottish Power DCO, to enable ducks to be laid at the same time.

01:15:50:18 - 01:15:58:26

Thank you, thank you. We'll no doubt that the applicant will be responding and writing fully to what you've just raised there. Um, can I go to the Suffolk Club, please?

01:16:00:10 - 01:16:40:02

Hello, my name is Trudy Duffield, and I'm a Stanfield resident. And it's interesting to hear this conversation about cumulative impact, because it's like an onion and there's many layers to it. And in this conversation, we're not talking about the impact it's having on people on us. And now I've heard you talk a lot about quantitative research methodology, but qualitative research is really important as well that where we're talking about environmental concerns, I want to come back and see my lovely fiesta into Saxmundham, but that's been taken away with us.

01:16:40:04 - 01:16:43:13

Our shops are going. I will finish now.

01:16:43:24 - 01:16:52:24

I think we've got your point and thank you for presenting that to us. Could I just ask that if there's anything else that you wish to submit, please do that in writing.

01:16:52:26 - 01:16:58:05

And I will certainly do it, because we're trying to capture our lives and how they've been

01:16:59:20 - 01:17:08:00

impacted, and we haven't been in their dialogue about if it's moderate or Significant. Thank you.

01:17:08:28 - 01:17:20:13

I think it's really key that we keep moving through the agenda so that we finish on time. I'm just going to take two final comments online, and then I'll come back to the applicant just to give any final comments before we break.

01:17:20:15 - 01:17:25:09

I hope before you come back to the applicant. So you will also give Suffolk County Council an opportunity all the time.

01:17:27:27 - 01:17:29:01

Mr. Chapman.

01:17:32:23 - 01:18:09:20

Thank you sir. Paul Chapman, chair of Clifton Parish Council. I just want to draw attention to something I don't think is being considered. And that's a cumulative impact in Cliff's end on a so-called sandwich road, which is the the the main road running through sandwich through Cliff's end. It's a relatively small road, but the proposal from National Grid is that there will be significant amounts of heavy traffic along that road from an operations and maintenance center at one end, and the access to and from the waterfront at Penguin Bay.

01:18:10:06 - 01:18:41:14

Um, the road itself is not engineered to accommodate prolonged, um, volumes of HGV movements, and there has been a recent sinkhole that emerged just a few months ago. And that underlines the underlying fragility of the the infrastructure, the subsurface infrastructure of the roads. Basically, the road's foundations are vulnerable already. Now, I cannot see any adequate assessment of the impact on this, um, by National Grid, which I would maintain.

01:18:41:16 - 01:18:51:25

It's necessary, as that's the proposal for National Grid to transport all its heavy machinery and equipment, etcetera, along Sandwich Road, Cliffs End.

01:18:51:27 - 01:19:03:12

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These seem to be, uh, common points to the to the things you were talking about before. So I think they'd be best if you could submit those all in writing so that the applicant can respond fully to them. Thank you.

01:19:03:14 - 01:19:08:00

Yes, certainly. Well, this is a separate road, a separate highway we're talking about.

01:19:08:05 - 01:19:16:07

Thank you very much. Um, I've got time for one more online comment. Uh, Geraldine Barker, please.

01:19:18:00 - 01:19:51:11

Good morning sir. I've listened to everything and I totally concur with all the comments. I would just, if I may like to write about Saxmundham. The Inter project affects on our small market town a horrendous. We've already heard visual traffic noise disturbance. I put I mean we're going to lose a lot of business. We will lose it because of the amount of traffic and the visual impact of how the perception of how the town has changed.

01:19:51:13 - 01:20:24:12

But I'd also like to just to actually put this in perspective, to the north, we will have Essex and Suffolk Water with their pipeline to the north, we will have potentially. These are both these two. Uh, we'll have line, link, uh, cables coming in to the east. We have sizable sea to the west. We have 800 houses plus, um, associated commercial area.

01:20:24:24 - 01:21:09:22

And to the south we have the Sea Link access road, uh, Friston substation and the Helios, um, solar Park in the center of Saxmundham. We will be having, um, Essex and Suffolk Water putting in their cables re their pipelines right the way through our Memorial field, potentially, um, Saxmundham under siege. And I really, really say that and I totally concur that the assessment of cumulative impact must be put at severe for our poor term.

01:21:09:24 - 01:21:11:27

Thank you very much for your time.

01:21:12:19 - 01:21:39:14

Thank you for those comments. Um, unfortunately, in the interest of getting through the agenda, we don't have time to take any more, uh, comments from the online attendees. We are interested in everything that you wish to say, so please do submit those in writing and they will get full consideration. I will take some final comments in the room, first from Suffolk County Council, and then I'll come to the applicant finally to comment on anything they've just heard. Thank you.

01:21:39:20 - 01:22:15:29

Thank you sir. Michael Bedford, Suffolk County Council in the interests of, uh, the timetable. So what I will say briefly on this agenda item, in terms of mitigation, we consider that there is a shortcoming in the degree of coordination by the applicant with those other projects. We consider that more needs to be done, particularly in relation to coordination on landscaping, especially in the vicinity of Friston. More on coordination in relation to converter stations and line link, and more in relation to Ale routes will provide in our written submissions the more detail on that.

01:22:16:01 - 01:22:25:07

But I just want to make the point coordination we think is not yet sufficient in order to meet the expectation, particularly of advice. Note 17. Thank you sir.

01:22:25:17 - 01:22:29:07

Thank you very much. And finally, the applicant. Thank you.

01:22:29:16 - 01:23:06:22

Thank you, Sarah Shaikh, for the applicant. So I'm just going to make one comment and then pass it to the team to see if they have points to add. Um, so just really in response to the points made by Cees and Kent Wildlife Trust, um, I'm sure it's self-evident, but I better say it since the points were made quite strongly. Um, certainly the application, um, that, um, the applicant has put in is robust, legally and policy compliant. That was accepted on those terms, and it's not considered or accepted that there's any inadequacy in the environmental impact assessment.

01:23:06:24 - 01:23:27:06

I think that's quite an important point to make. The evolution of issues and the moving along of the process is inherent in the examination, and it's expected, as part of the examination to respond to points that are raised by you, sir, your colleagues and others, obviously, who are participating. So that is a normal part of the process.

01:23:28:11 - 01:23:32:12

Thank you. Anyone else from the applicants team before we break?

01:23:33:09 - 01:24:05:23

Thank you. Sarah Alida, for the applicant. Um, it was just directly to respond to Mr. Mani's question around whether or not we have a commitment around inter project cumulative effects, and the answer to that is yes. So we have in our key design principles, we've got key design principles Co one um which states that in developing the detailed design opportunities for coordination between Sealink and the other co-located projects will be explored to identify actions that could reduce overall impact.

01:24:05:25 - 01:24:20:25

And yes, that is including cumulative impacts. That's what it's designed to do and make the most efficient use of resources and deliver a coordinated master plan. And so we do have that commitment that's tied in through requirement three.

01:24:22:08 - 01:24:28:00

So I can just check if anyone wants to comment more on the coordination points that were made. Mr. Buckley.

01:24:28:18 - 01:25:01:23

James Buckley, on behalf of the applicant, um, we are heavily in coordination with SBR in terms of the landscape master plan. Um, myself and I, they attended a number of their consultation events. Um, and we've been working closely with the Scottish Power team on the work that's going on around Friston. And we are in regular coordination meetings with Line Link, and we're aware of all of the work that is going on into their current, um, consultation. And we're working, looking beyond that into how we work together in all elements.

01:25:01:25 - 01:25:13:01

And as I say, we meet regularly with Sizewell and with Helios, and we've now added Suffolk, Suffolk and Essex Water to that group to continue coordination as their project develops.

01:25:19:18 - 01:25:20:22

Thank you very much.

01:25:21:13 - 01:25:50:21

Thank you very much. I think we've been going for almost an hour and a half now. Um, the time is now 1126. So can I suggest that we break to 1145? Um, and we'll. 1140 1140, we'll break till 1140, um, and recommence. And item 21, if you are attending online, please do refresh your browser so that the stream commences. See you all at 1140. Thank you.