

[REDACTED]

Subject: Sea Link deadline 4 submission
Date: 10 February 2026 10:05:53

Dear planning inspectors

I will not repeat what I and others have said before but I would like to make 3 points arising out of the ISH at the end of January which I was able to attend in large part:

1. Failure to answer your questions. The applicant repeatedly said it would take a point away and respond by deadline 4. That was, in fact, its typical response and few of your questions were answered notwithstanding the very large team it marshalled for the hearing. The fact that at this late stage it apparently had no answers speaks volumes for the cavalier approach it appears to have adopted to this process. I would ask you to hold the applicant to its promise to respond to your questions and I hope that this will be tracked and monitored.
2. Need. SEAS has made a detailed case that there is no need for this project. This is supported from the Kent end. There is a far quicker, cheaper and less environmentally damaging alternative. As in so many other areas the applicant has not fully engaged with this or hitherto made any real response. It is demonstrable that the original justification for Sea Link has fallen away and the rationale such as it is lies on shifting sands. You indicated that after deadline 4 you would give renewed consideration to SEAS's request for an ISH on the question of need and I urge you to fix a hearing at which you can be addressed on need. I think that is important to place you in the best possible decision to make a recommendation to the Secretary of State and so that all interested parties and the applicant feel they have had a proper opportunity to make their case. Need is the prior question at the heart of this examination. If the applicant fails to satisfy you on need no other question arises.
3. Cumulative impact. I draw attention to the inadequacy of the applicant's consideration of the cumulative impact on the local community of the multiplicity of overlapping projects. This has been documented by SEAS with expert assistance and there is no need to repeat the many points made here. I also respectfully remind you of the clear signal given by the inspectors in the EA1N and EA2 examinations when they made what they described as a finely balanced recommendation. I gave you the reference in my written submission after the first hearing. Friston Council made the same point.

Yours sincerely
Anthony Fincham