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**To:** [South East Anglia Link](#)  
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**Subject:** Submission by Fiona Gilmore : Sea Link DCO Examination Deadline 4  
**Date:** 10 February 2026 23:46:06

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Dear Planning Inspectors

Thank you for reading our written submissions with particular attention to our outstanding concerns.

### 1. Threat to Tourism/ Hospitality Jobs and Local Economy

A number of concerns have been raised by Interested Parties throughout the DCO Hearings, but the Applicant has **yet to** respond on a range of outstanding questions.

Tracking those promised responses is critical as there remain so many unanswered questions. By way of example, the lack of current quantitative studies exploring visitors' attitudes to perceived and real "blight" to a unique tourism offer along the Heritage Coast is a deficiency that makes any quantitative estimate of the loss of visitors and loss of businesses and jobs very difficult to measure. The 2019 DMO study signals a decline of 17% visitors. We think this could be optimistic given the new information regarding the scale of at least seven energy projects.

We extrapolate from 17% decline a loss of around £500 million during 10-12 years of construction. How do National Grid along with EDF and ScottishPower together seek to compensate this loss of revenues from visitors? Some promotional literature advertising the region is absolutely no compensation. If the experience is no longer "tranquil" and "beautiful", no amount of advertising will bring our cherished visitors back.

Other North Sea countries prohibit major construction projects taking place during tourism seasonal peaks in tourism resorts. The Applicant's discourse continues to ignore the fact that they wish to construct one of the largest energy infrastructure hubs in Europe bang next to a premium tourism resort. From our conversations with developers in the Netherlands and Belgium, they find it hard to understand how this country can be contemplating the construction of such an energy hub in an area of outstanding beauty and so rich in biodiversity. They do not build their hubs in precious lowland wetland areas but very carefully choose hubs in industrial zones such as Zeebrugge and Rotterdam. The Heritage Coast is the wrong place for such a scale of hub. The noise of construction, the lights at night and the relentless flow of HGVs are going to deter tourists particularly at seasonal peaks.

## 2. Needs Case: request for a dedicated Hearing

I am surprised that the ExA does not see the need for a further Hearing to interrogate the Needs Case.

I hope that the ExA will reconsider this given the fact that it is cheaper, faster and far less damaging to communities and environments to opt for the upgrading of pylons and there is no actual need for Sea Link.

There are better offshore grid solutions which will come into play over the next ten years. The UK has been slow to grasp the opportunity for offshore converter platforms and blind to the opportunity to upgrade existing industrial hubs closer to London. A developer led culture has brought us to this parlous situation. It is absolutely critical that these ill-conceived plans are interrogated fully in a dedicated Hearing where the alternative cheaper, faster solutions are given a full airing. It is surely the duty of developers and officers to consider cheaper, faster solutions?

## 3. Coastal erosion: crumbling cliffs and eroding shorelines have not been fully assessed.

The alarmingly fast-changing geological landscape should be reassessed by objective specialists. This coast is not suitable for these infrastructure projects.

4. Mental health : I have friends living on the frontline who are struggling mentally with the intrusion of this industrial onslaught. Already for residents living next to the Friston SPR works, machine lights are destroying the dark skies and changing the tranquil countryside profoundly. 10 to 12 years of heavy industrialisation for these Friston residents and for Saxmundham residents in the near future along with the other impacted communities has not been examined in terms of the cumulative impact. I knew one of the men who committed suicide. I heard the story of the other man who despaired after being told by an agent that his cottage was valueless. Both men had put their life savings in to the purchase of their homes. Anxiety leads to depression and ill health and disease. It is shameful that these very real issues are treated by developers with seeming disdain. If other North Sea countries can consider social, economic and environmental issues holistically and respect their importance, why does the UK planning system relegate these concerns in favour of developers' short term profit targets?

The Winser Report ( July 2023) signalled the need to accelerate the planning process but emphasised the need for the application of holistic network design criteria at the outset of planning hub locations.

This is a tipping- point for coastal Suffolk.

The cumulative adverse impacts are too great a burden on a fragile coast and the communities will be broken by this onslaught. The evidence of despair and depression is there in the health and wellbeing reports presented by SEAS and ESC. It is beholden on the developers to acknowledge the adverse impacts and seek alternative solutions.

Best wishes

Fiona Gilmore

SEAS

