



# IPA & JR SMITH

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The Examining Authority's written questions and requests for information (ExQ2)

EN020026-002779-Sealink ExQ2.pdf [REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026

This project is on land formed from alluvial deposits within the Wantsum Valley after the Ice Age when the English Channel opened up through the land bridge joining Thanet to France. The reduced flow of water through the Wantsum Channel allowed it to silt up over time and form what looks like solid land. This then looks like an ideal site on a desk top study, nice and flat with few obstructions.

There are problems with this, the crust looks very solid, but it is only about 1m thick, on top of the blancmange subsoil that has very limited strength and quickly moves sideways allowing any heavy objects to sink a long way, as we have found when a contractor's D7 Caterpillar got stuck one evening, the driver went back to get help, next morning he had difficulty finding his machine as there was only a few inches of it left above ground. This reaction is best demonstrated with a kid's squeazy ball in hand and just squeeze and it bulges out between the fingers.

During the construction of the Richborough power station they ran into the sinkage problem and had to resort to piling up to 75m to reach solid chalk at the bottom of the Wantsum Channel.

This project involves much haulage of heavy loads that will cause sinkage and a deep pan, below any matting or other protection, which will disrupt the natural drainage leading to waterlogging. Farming this land requires a lot of skill – if it is moved when it is too moist it will smear and easily forms a watertight barrier. If this barrier forms below the surface as a pan it will be out of the reach of weather, subject to waterlogging and crops will not grow well.

Reconditioning this soil may take a lifetime. I Have farmed in the Wantsum Valley since I returned from 3 years study at the RAC in 1954.

Yours faithfully

I P A Smith

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