

**Response of Walberswick Parish Council to the Sealink DCO  
at Deadline 6 (13 April 2026)**

**IP Number:** [REDACTED]

I am responding on behalf of Walberswick Parish Council as the Councillor delegated to deal with NSIP projects in our area including Sealink. I attended online for the ISH hearings that took place on 24-26 March 2026. I did not make any oral representation given the request of the Panel to receive written input when possible.

I am writing in response to two key issues – alternative route to the Saxmundham converter station and cumulative impact -- as discussed during the March hearings.

**Converter Site: Better Access from the North**

Walberswick Parish Council would like to strongly support the submission of Suffolk County Council at Deadline 5 10 March 2026 (REP4-149 and REP5 -179 Appendix A) for the alternative access route to the Saxmundham Converter Station site. We support SEAS written representation at Deadline 5 that clearly rebuts NGET's ill-conceived and risk laden argument for the Benhall Railway Bridge/Fromus River bridge proposal.

As SCC, ESC, SEAS and all other IPs who spoke on this subject pointed out, the alternative route put forward by SCC makes an abundance of sense if NGET wants to put its converter station in Saxmundham. We believe that any responsible company would embrace SCC's proposed alternative as it so clearly provides a better, more sustainable and hugely less damaging access to the converter station site. The arguments put forward for this alternative route both in the written submission and at the hearings were an extraordinarily sensible and compelling compromise as it would make use of the disused Leiston airfield, would put traffic on the Sizewell Link Road whose purpose is precisely to take construction traffic off of local roads, would provide an access that could more easily be used by Lionlink if such a project were to go forward and would enormously decrease the impact on local residents and communities. It would negate the need for the risky and unproven work on the Benhall Railway Bridge which, as we and all other local councils and groups pointed out during earlier submissions, would cause not only very significant hardship on the local residents and would overpower local roads, but would disrupt the functioning of the Greater Anglia Rail passenger line as well as SZC's rail line. As we argued in previous submissions, it cannot be in the public interest for a project like SeaLink (that, at any rate, is unnecessary) to disrupt SZC which is the largest infrastructure project in the country and is tax-payer funded. Any disruption to SZC's construction timeline and supporting infrastructure such as the rail line must be avoided as it is so contrary to the national interest.


We find it inexplicable that NGET should dig in its heels and refuse to accept this compromise route. Its arguments simply don't hold up as the SZC Link Road will be accessible long before the SeaLink construction would begin. In terms of travel time, the experience of SZC construction has shown that despite forecasts, construction vehicle and worker traffic is just as likely to come from the north as the south meaning that there cannot be any appreciable difference in travel times or marginal costs for SeaLink in approaching the converter station from the north as from the south. Given how fraught with problems NGET's preferred route is, one can only conclude that in continuing to refuse this very sensible compromise, NGET is being less than candid about future plans for even more damaging infrastructure for the same area and is seeking to keep these plans hidden from the public and the Examining Authority as long as possible. We remain opposed to SeaLink particularly given the evidence that the

project fails to meet the Needs Case. However, if ExA is minded to support permission or the SoS is minded to permit development, it should ONLY be on the basis that the northern route proposed by SCC is used.

### **Cumulative Impact**

The Walberswick Parish Council would also like to align itself with the statements made by SCC, ESC, SEAS, Fiona Gilmore, Dr Charlotte Fox and the numerous other Parish Councils and Interested Parties who spoke at the March hearings about the cumulative impact of SeaLink and the inferiority of the analysis undertaken by NGET in understanding, accepting and mitigating these impacts. We find it particularly risible that NGET should attempt to argue that because its project is smaller than SZC, then there is a problem of attribution to SeaLink and that somehow that negates or lessens the project's impact. That is illogical. Cumulative means CUMULATIVE. There is no housing available for SeaLink's workforce given SZC's already voracious appetite, there are no local workers that can help SeaLink avoid having to bring in hundreds of temporary workers from outside the area, the roads are already overloaded with construction lorries, the surrounding communities are already suffering from the noise and disruption to their daily lives from ongoing projects. We note one truly ridiculous statement of NGET that implied that as communities would be unable to distinguish between the impact of SZC from that caused by SeaLink, then NGET could not be held to account for its additional impact! We are not sure how NGET uses the same reasoning for its continued insistence that it should be permitted to work 12 hours a day, 365 days a year given that the other NSIPs have at least marginally contained themselves by avoiding Sundays and bank holidays.

Simply put, SeaLink's contribution to cumulative impact is "the straw that broke the camel's back" and it should be rejected on that basis. However, if the project were allowed to go forward, then it must only be on the basis that NGET undertakes a more robust analysis and acceptance of cumulative impact, minimises this by using the northern route, by working fewer hours, by abiding by all ongoing agreements and undertaking work in a way that does not interfere with ongoing NSIPs and that gives appropriate and meaningful mitigation to affected communities and the environment. The current DCO application does none of this.

, 13 April 2026 on behalf of Walberswick Parish Council