

Cllr Rebecca Wing
Central Harbour Ramsgate
Thanet Green Party 11 th April 2026

This document seeks to detail concerns and objections as well as raising serious questions that need to be answered re the National Grids proposal as part of their Kent Sea Link plans, including the plans, not initially submitted to expand the use of and CPO of the old Hoverport site at Cliffsend.

As a Councillor and resident of Ramsgate who enjoys and benefits from the wide variety of open spaces in Thanet, one of which as a dog owner, is the use of the Hoverport, I would like to submit the following concerns:

1. Environmental Concerns: There appears to be little if any attempt by the NG to understand the unique flora and fauna at the old Hoverport, ecological surveys seem to be lacking and would have identified what is there, in what numbers and how it links to the wider ecology of the area. There is little effort to acknowledge the importance of the site given it has now been rewilding for the last 30 plus years and its significance now as a biodiverse habitat located within a designated RAMSAR site, National Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

2. Risk of Pollution: The makeup of the Hoverport is a mixture of concrete, making up the old landing site for hovercraft, scrubland and saltmarsh. There has been no assessment of how what is planned will impact all these distinct areas. I am especially concerned about the extensive concrete area which was built on the sands of Pegwell Bay near Cliffsend, using reclaimed land formed from 300,000 tons of spoil from the now closed Chislet Colliery. This was used to build up the chalk bedrock, to create a terminal and apron. Coal mine spoil is well evidenced as a significant potential pollutant and environmental hazard, consisting of waste rock, shale and coal rejects generated during mining, which can cause long-term pollution to air, soil, and water through leaching, spontaneous combustion, and erosion. My concern is that the extensive use of this site by the NG will disturb the already fragile cement surface and in so doing will pollute the environment. The NG have not addressed this very real concern at all and it is hard to see how what they propose will not speed up the damage to the already fragile cement surface. Indeed, there are wider concerns that if the CPO and DCO are approved fresh water would be at risk of contamination due to the extensive earthworks, drilling and need for massive amounts of gravel to be introduced that are not native to the unique nature of Minster Marshes. Southern Water data states that 80% of Thanet's water comes from ground source from the chalk Aquifer and River Stour and so the risk is very real, with public confidence at an all-time low regarding water companies and the EA capacity to monitor and enforce, we are extremely worried. We are also horrified that it appears the NG are planning to deposit plastics and synthetics at sea, providing little/no detail and assessment of impact in relation to this.

3. Loss of Local Amenity & Impact on Neighbours: NG documentation indicates that the impact to loss of this amenity for the many people that use the hoverport has been assessed as 'insignificant'.

They state that much of the hoverport will still be accessible but it is hard to see how a narrow strip by the cliffs next to their construction site would offer the peace, tranquillity and right to explore the whole site and the flora and fauna that presently exists. Birdsong will be replaced by the noise and pollution of heavy machinery and much of the site will be destroyed and inaccessible. The loss of local amenity and impact on neighbours is hardly 'insignificant' and the NG have made no attempt to engage with users or locals to assess the present use and value of the site as an extremely important and highly valued amenity or the impact on the health and well-being of those that use it, including myself, should this part of their DCO application be approved.

4. Assessed Need and Transparency: This site has been a late addition to the main DCO and involves an extremely wide area of Pegwell Bay as well as a proposed CPO of the old Hoverport site. It is not clear why they need to CPO the old Hoverport site which would mean a total loss of amenity and ongoing negative impact on the biodiversity of the site and Pegwell Bay, forever. Given the lack of detail here it would seem that the NG have simply decided to try and take the site, with little evidence to justify their decision making or indeed why they need it. The only justification seems to be to avoid negative impact at another location, indeed, they make little or no attempt to investigate negative impacts at this site and present a comparison, which would justify their need for this site.

In summing up, the NG appears to have done little to assess the real value and importance of the site in relation to biodiversity, amenity and its significance within the wider environmental network of the area, of which significant parts are high value biodiversity.

Following involvement in the hearing as both a speaker and observer I would also like to raise the following concerns:

1. Water Management: In relation to the main convertor site on the Minster Marshes the NG plans to use a system of SUD's and attenuation tanks to manage water. This system was also initially approved for use by the nearby BESS plant who subsequently found that due to shallow ground water, they now discharge into the River Stour, a SUD's system was subsequently deemed not fit for purpose. Given the site the NG plans to use is a marsh and constantly waterlogged our fear is

that they too will abandon the use of SUD's and also seek to discharge into the River Stour and/or Minster Stream, increasing flood risk away from the site and as well as increasing potential contamination.

a. Question: Has the NG made any attempt to look at this issue in light of what the neighbouring BESS had to do and have they looked at the potential impact both on and off site of having to move to discharging water into the River Stour and/or Minster Stream in terms of flood risk, which the area is already prone to? In short, do they have any back up plans if a SUDs system fails to be 'fit for purpose'?

2. Fire Risk: With an increasing accumulation of new energy developments in and around the proposed site, many with their own inherent fire risk, there is real concern that if a major incident was to happen in more than one location, that the Fire Service would be unable to cope, available water might not be enough, or water pressure drop and that fire fighting runoff may well be contaminated. We had a recent incident at one of the high-rise tower blocks which resulted in a drop of water pressure for households, Southern Water issued an alert.

a. Question: Has there been any consideration by the NG concerning the potential impact and management or a major

incident, including fire in more than one location, including the proposed site?

b. Question: Has a major incident event been assessed by the appropriate authority, bringing together a multi-agency response to deal with it, in order to protect both people and the environment?

3. Delivery of Equipment and Gravel from the Port of Ramsgate: As you are possibly not aware there are a number of issues relating to the transport of equipment and gravel that centre around the tunnel which provides access to and from the Port of Ramsgate, avoiding the town centre, built up residential/retail areas and difficult and inappropriate roads and junctions. The tunnel has regular maintenance which is undertaken during the day when the tunnel is shut to all traffic. Recently, the tunnel was shut for an extended period following an accident. During these closure's all port traffic must use the alternative route along Military Road, which takes you past the harbour and retain businesses at the Military Arches. The road here is also a narrow mostly single vehicle width and is shared with pedestrians. There is also a tight 'hairpin' bend to access the B2054 to get out of town and another tight turn at the Churchill Tavern on this B road. This road is totally inappropriate for the proposed traffic and there appears to have been no attempt by the NG to assess this. More recently, following the incident in the tunnel, as Town and District Councillors we have been made aware of further health & safety issues which have resulted in the shelving of plans to upgrade the B2054 at the exit of Military Road and back into town. In addition, KCC have also placed further width restrictions on traffic passing through the tunnel and have informed Town and District councils that it requires a spend of 6 million pounds to upgrade it.

a. Question: Are the NG aware of these issues relating to the tunnel access for traffic to and from the Port of Ramsgate, have they assessed the present situation, the clear health & safety concerns which exist as well as what is an urgent need to upgrade the tunnel and the present restrictions placed on traffic as a result?

b. Question: Has the NG assessed the use of Military Road when the tunnel is shut and do they have any contingency plans if there is a prolonged shutting of the tunnel?

4. Cumulative Impact: The NG have made little, if any attempt to seriously consider the combined impact of the numerous other developments in and around their proposed site. These include, a water treatment plant, Nemo, the largest BESS plant in the country, Battery Storage Connector, Grid Stability plant, Biomass Plant, Solar Farms as well as a school and the Village of Minster.

a. Question; Are the NG going to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of how their proposal will interact with these other developments during both construction and delivery phases, including whether this combined impact will be further increased, for example, the combined impact of various developments discharging runoff into the River Stour and Minster Stream, light and noise pollution and visual impact for example?

Kind regards

Councillor Becky Wing

Central Harbour Ramsgate.