



**Submission to Planning Inspectorate
Deadline 7
Summary of Outstanding Issues
On behalf of Marlesford Parish Council**

Regarding

**National Grid Electricity Transmission
DCO Application
For
The Sea Link Project (EN020026)**

**[REDACTED]
Chairman
Marlesford Parish Council**

**[REDACTED]
Parish Clerk
[REDACTED]**

29th April 2026

1. Introduction

Marlesford Parish Council (MPC) has made submissions at various stages of the Examination (RR-3527, REP2-093, REP4-138 and REP4A-004). In all our submissions we have tried to highlight the adverse and cumulative impacts that will affect Marlesford as a result of the Applicant's proposals, and we have tried to draw the ExA's attention to the further impacts that will result from additional projects such as National Grid's LionLink interconnector and any future solar farm installations.

We fear that, so far, our real concerns for the welfare of the residents of this village do not appear to have been taken into account in the Draft Development Consent Order (DCO) (REP6-004 3.1 (I) Draft Development Consent Order (Clean)). We would remind the ExA that this village remains a community severed by the A12 which will be used for much of the Applicant's construction materials traffic. Twenty three Marlesford properties are within 20 meters of the A12 carriageway, and they already suffer the effects of noise and vibration. And we will be subject to the additional traffic generated by the Applicant, without the benefit of the village being bypassed – as has been the case for Stratford St Andrew and Farnham as part of the Sizewell C (SZC) mitigation works. Some mitigation is being provided in Marlesford by SZC and Scottish Power Renewables (SPR), but in our opinion, it does not go far enough to provide appropriate mitigation for the impacts of the Applicant's scheme and future schemes. We have a real fear that developments will be considered piecemeal and in isolation and will therefore not cross the "needs threshold", although cumulatively, they will undoubtedly create issues for our residents.

We accept that the Deed of Obligation (DOO) has not yet been drafted, and we hope that through that instrument and the DCO, mitigation obligations will be placed on the Applicant (whether for the Sea Link project alone, or in combination with LionLink). We want to reiterate in these closing stages of the Examination, our priorities for mitigation for Marlesford to ensure that they are included in the Sea Link project legal documents. We note that the Applicant in REP3-064 Table 13.1 (Document 9.36: Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 2) states in relation to specific Marlesford issues that "Nonetheless, and as identified within Application Document 9.35.1 Applicant's Comments on Local Impact Report from Suffolk County Council [REP2-026], the Applicant will consider requests to include additional commitments within Application Document 7.5.1.1 (B) Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan – Suffolk [CR1-041] where appropriate". MPC welcomes the Applicant's willingness to consider additional mitigation, but we urge the ExA to press further to ensure inclusion of the following items:

2. Marlesford to Southern Park and Ride Footpath

MPC has previously highlighted the dangerous state of the footway from Marlesford Road, Marlesford to the Southern Park and Ride, particularly where it runs adjacent to the A12 carriageway. This makes its use dangerous, and we have had reports of parents with children in buggies being sucked towards the carriageway as HGVs pass.

The Parish Council's proposal is to divert the existing Marlesford Footpath 8 (FP8) which currently crosses a field and is not suitable for those wishing to walk into Wickham Market to use the facilities. The replacement for FP8 would run parallel with the A12 but importantly, it would be separated from the carriageway by an existing hedgeline.

This new footpath will more easily connect with the footways through the village that will be delivered as part of the SZC/SPR A12 mitigation works. MPC believes that such an improvement to the footpath infrastructure between Marlesford and Wickham Market will support the policies of both SCC and East Suffolk Council (ESC) which are designed to encourage active and sustainable travel.

In REP6-109 Table 13.1 (Document 9.134: Applicant's Comments on Other Submissions Received at Deadline 4 and Deadline 5) the Applicant comments "The junctions referred to are some 9km distance from the south western edge of the Order Limits. It is not expected that HGVs will turn to or from the junctions mentioned, rather they would just continue north-south along the A12. Therefore, whilst the concerns raised are acknowledged, no mitigation is expected to be required as a result of the Proposed Project given the above. It is also understood that these concerns will be resolved by a new footpath that will be delivered as part of the SZC/SPR A12 mitigation works."

Specifically in relation to the statement that the footpath concerns will be resolved by SZC/SPR A12 mitigation works, this is not true. The SZC/SPR works are only through the village and do not extend beyond Marlesford Road to the Southern Park and Ride. We contend that the Applicant is adding to the cumulative impact of HGV movements which affects users of the existing A12 footway.

Mitigation

We are asking that the Applicant makes a substantive financial contribution to the proposed new footpath.

We justify this on the basis of the comments set out above and particularly the fact that it would reduce fear and intimidation for pedestrians walking from Marlesford to Wickham Market and it would leave a lasting legacy from the energy project developments in this part of Suffolk.

3. Bell Lane (C241) Junction with A12 in Marlesford

We note in Suffolk County Council's (SCC) REP3 - 101 EN020026-002079-Suffolk County Council - Answers to ExQ1, that the Council recognises the difficulties for vehicles leaving this junction to join the A12, particularly those turning right onto the main road. MPC believes that the cumulative impact of energy project traffic will lead to driver delays and if it results in frustration, drivers may be tempted to take dangerous risks in order to join the A12 traffic flow – "gap jumping" in SCC's terminology.

In the quote in Point 2 (above) from REP6-109, the Applicant seems to believe that distance from the Order Limits lessens the impact of its HGV movements on the A12. This is not the case. The applicant is simply adding to the cumulative impact of HGV movements on the Marlesford stretch of the A12. We still maintain (as do SCC) that this will have an impact on Marlesford's A12 junctions and Bell Lane in particular, making it even more difficult for traffic to join the A12.

Mitigation

The Applicant should be under an obligation to (as far as is possible within the highways constraints) rebuild the Bell Lane junction with the A12 in Marlesford in order to deliver improved visibility.

There should also be a requirement to improve the road signage and road markings at the other Marlesford junctions with the A12 (including accesses to businesses) as well as other junctions along the A12 that will be affected by the Applicant's proposals.

4. Sound Insulation of Marlesford Properties Adjacent to the A12

Marlesford has 23 dwellings that are within 20m of the A12 carriageway (some are less than 10m away). As a Parish Council, we are very concerned for the mental health and wellbeing of our residents who live so close to such a heavily trafficked main road. There is a growing recognition that the cumulative impacts of all the current and future energy projects are starting to have a range of health effects on residents of this part of East Suffolk.

Mitigation

For properties within 20m of the A12 carriageway in Marlesford and Little Glemham, the Applicant should be required to fund the necessary insulation to the properties to ensure that noise (and the effects of vibration) are reduced to acceptable levels. In practical terms, for noise, this is likely to be in the form of good quality double glazing.

5. Cumulative Traffic Impacts

This area of East Suffolk experiences high volumes of seasonal holiday traffic. MPC has flagged this issue with the ExA on several occasions and has suggested that the Applicant be obligated to carry out peak holiday season traffic counts – we are not aware that the Applicant has agreed to this and reiterate that it should be done.

Mitigation

- i. The Applicant should be required to carry out its own peak holiday traffic counts in July and August.
- ii. MPC asks the ExA to require the Applicant's HGVs to carry a notice on the rear of the vehicle and in the windscreen to identify the project on which the vehicle is working.
- iii. On roads identified as being most susceptible to rat-running, the Applicant should (subject to agreement by the relevant communities) be required to fund signage and/or other measures to discourage use of unsuitable rural lanes by rat-running traffic, including funding for the introduction of "Quiet Lanes" and 20mph zones.
- iv. The Applicant should be under an obligation to limit the number of workers travelling to its construction sites. Appropriate use should be made of existing park and ride facilities and where possible access should be given to SZC facilities for the Applicant's workers.
- v. The Applicant should make appropriate contributions to the ongoing biannual traffic counts that are currently being funded by SZC as part of their DoO obligations.

6. Community Support

East Suffolk communities are already under pressure from the consented energy projects. The pressure manifests itself in parish councils having to take on unprecedented amounts of extra work. This work entails dealing with NSIP applications and working with developers on the associated works that the energy companies are delivering. And, as referred to above in Point

4, residents' health (both mental and physical) is being affected. The Applicant could go some way towards addressing these issues by:

- i. Making a contribution to the costs incurred by parish councils. It is suggested that the contributions should run for the whole of the length of the construction project and should be backdated to the start of the Applicant's non-statutory consultation by a lumpsum payment.
- ii. For the duration of the project, the Applicant should be required to pay into a Community Fund. MPC suggests that this fund, which would also take contributions from other subsequent energy projects (other than SZC which has its own stand-alone fund), should be administered by Suffolk Community Foundation who should agree with the Applicant the fund's objectives. Broadly these should be the enhancement and promotion of the wellbeing of affected communities.

7. Weak Structures

Whilst MPC is not suggesting that this is a mitigation issue, the Council is concerned that at § 2TT4 in REP5-204, SCC's Answers to Examining Authority Questions Round 2, there is no clear indication that the Applicant has carried out the required surveys on Marlesford Bridge to satisfy itself that it is capable of bearing any Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs) that may use the A12 through Marlesford. We ask the ExA to ensure that such surveys are carried out at the earliest opportunity in order to confirm that the Applicant's assumptions on its haulage routes are robust.

8. Conclusion

East Suffolk communities are feeling highly vulnerable to the impacts of multiple NSIPs. The area is bearing the brunt of the burden of a highly intensive construction phase for all these projects which is likely to run well beyond the lives of some of our older residents. In enduring these upheavals for the benefit of the rest of the country, it is not apparent to this Council what the local benefits (if any) will be.

Mitigation as set out above would, for this village, go some way towards ameliorating the adverse cumulative impacts and would in some cases leave positive legacies that would endure well beyond the completion of the NSIP projects.

oOo


Chair
Marlesford Parish Council

29th April 2026