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South East Anglia Link

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Dear Madam

I write in response to your request for information.

I am a resident of the Suffolk Heritage Coast and AONB. This is my back yard, of course. It is also the backyard of a protected ecological environment for threatened species. It is also Britain's bread basket.

I have worked here for many years and also monitor the ecological impact of proposed and existing energy infrastructure projects here. This rare environment is an essential connectivity corridor for wildlife and links the coastal areas of Norfolk and Essex. It is hard to witness the destruction of this so-called protected ecology by projects wholly unsuited to this remote area.

As you are aware, Sizewell C and Scottish Power are already underway with their uncoordinated and wasteful energy projects.

The eroding and crumbling east coast is neither easily accessible nor stable, and with flood defences curtailed this can only worsen.

I would hope that energy for the cities should not come at the expense of our remaining countryside and agriculture, both essential for national food security. That seems to be the plan, however.

In terms of military security, concentrating so much national infrastructure within a few square miles so close to the sea is idiotic.

The government wants to reduce household energy costs, but you should judge a theory by its practice, and the plans for this area are not value for the taxpayers' money.

1. Sea Link, the proposed 2GW transmission project through East Suffolk, has been subject to a revised assessment of costs by Ofgem. At £3.2 billion, it comes in at 3 times the cost of that submitted to the DCO. The figure was challenged during the examination, but I have learnt from taking part in these public enquiries that they are not a court of law and evidence is not submitted under oath.

Sea Link's original circumstances have also changed. Sea Link was developed around an assumed 1,852MW export deficit at Friston, associated with the proposed Nautilus interconnector. But Nautilus was subsequently relocated away from Friston before the Sea Link application was submitted, reducing the apparent deficit to approximately 352MW.

Ofgem has also identified additional works elsewhere on the transmission network before Sea Link can operate compliantly at its intended 2GW capacity. The scope and location of these works have yet to be determined. In addition, Ofgem identified reinforcement between Richborough and Canterbury in Kent is excluded from NGET's current £3.2 billion Project Assessment submission.

What is, more realistically, the true need and total cost to consumers?

2 The NAO's concerns about consumer protection also require re-scrutiny of LionLink, National Grid Ventures' proposed commercial multipurpose interconnector affecting the Suffolk coast.

LionLink is not part of the 'Great Grid Upgrade'. Ofgem expects LionLink to operate predominantly as an export route from Great Britain to the Netherlands, *increasing* GB wholesale electricity prices compared with the position without LionLink.

Given the NAO's recommendations, I urge the Government to require an independent and transparent reassessment of the economic need and consumer case for LionLink against current 2026 evidence, rather than continuing to regard that case as established by the 2024 regulatory decision.

In addition to the overall case against LionLink, the latest proposed landfall site in Walberswick (G3) is wholly unsuitable, as it was with the previous proposed sites at G & G2. Homes sit directly adjacent on two sides of the landfall site, with nearly half of all village homes within 500 metres with dozens much closer. This means:

- Unacceptably high levels of noise, vibration and light pollution from construction work lasting for 2 years or more with severe impacts from 24/7 HDD drilling for weeks on end.

-Impacts on elderly residents, children and vulnerable people will still be severe, along with significant disruption to wildlife on the protected habitats which lie in close proximity.

-Severe traffic disruption and emergency evacuation risks. There is only one road into Walberswick, the B1387

- Significant impacts on recreational tourism, and consequent threats to the viability of local businesses and jobs.

Personally, I have used energy saving measures for about 8 years, installed at my own expense: solar power and a household storage battery, also running an electric vehicle.

I support offshore wind and the transition to Net Zero.

But Net Zero should not be achieved without establishing whether there are cheaper, better coordinated and less environmentally damaging alternatives.

Public support for transition to Net Zero can be won only when people can see that Government is *challenging* unnecessary expenditure, protecting consumers and ensuring that the infrastructure being built is genuinely needed.

1. Please, therefore,
- 2.
3. -assess the cheaper alternative proposed for Sea Link
4. -Commission an evidence-based assessment of LionLink's economic and consumer case
5. -Fully consider and test coordinated offshore solutions and better use of existing infrastructure

Thank you

Dr Gillian Horrocks

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