Submission ID: SF9BB35CF

There has already been enough damage caused by the Nemo Link to the protected Pegwell Bay which has had far reaching and lasting effects, this Sea Link project will only compound this .
I volunteer with the North East Kent Marine Protected Area (NEKMPA) as a Coastal Warden and educate local people, children in particular, about the irreplaceable and protected chalk reefs in Thanet. There are strict controls which prevent driving over or destroying these important chalk reefs. It hardly sets a good example when a huge corporation rides roughshod, literally, over these protected reefs.
The Thanet Coast MCZ was designated on 21 November 2013 under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.
The Thanet coast has the second largest unbroken stretch of chalk reef in the UK, which offers up a large area of intertidal and subtidal habitats, including chalk caves that are home to unique algal species. The Thanet coastline is also covered by several international designations: Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), and the national Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
Natural England and KWT are concerned about the impact of hovercraft, and other motorised vehicles on the seal at Pegwell Bay and I share this concern. The noise, movement and vibrations will all have a detrimental effect on the resident seal colony. The same concerns apply to our over-wintering bird population. If the project does go ahead then there must be close monitoring of any potential disturbance throughout the year and no work at all at Pegwell during November to February to protect the migratory overwintering bird population.
I am also involved with local tourism as a Visitor Ambassador and volunteer at a local Visitor Information Centre. I have grave concerns about the impact of working hours at weekends; the volume and size of plant vehicles using our main arterial routes into Thanet; and the noise, dust and general disturbance for our valued visitors. Over the period of 5 years this is expected to take, this project could have a devastating effect on our visitor numbers. National Grid seem to indicate that Thanet’s tourism industry won’t be impacted but their traffic survey was carried out in January, the quietest month of the year. They need to carry out traffic surveys in August to get a true picture of how their project will impact on tourism.
Please add my comments to your deliberations.