[redacted]

17 August 2026

Rt Hon. Miatta Fahnbulleh
DESNZ, 55 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HP

Dear Ms. Fahnbulleh,

I read with interest a news story on the BBC last week, about National Grid re-routing a cable project, after requests from Harry Potter fans.

I find it - let's say 'interesting' again – that they are willing to do this as a PR exercise, for something which **exists only in people's minds**: a CGI representation of words on paper.

Minster Marshes and Pegwell Bay, the adjacent rich farmland and the people of Thanet and East Kent are not fictional. The rare habitat, the SSSI, the NNR, the Ramsar designation are not fictional. The red-listed wildlife, as well, as the commoner species, are not fictional. Yet they are all under threat from the SeaLink project.

The local people have been losing the few remaining green spaces in Thanet, to housing, at an alarming rate. (I grew up there and regularly visit family there.) The roads are much more clogged. The 'breathing spaces' between the towns – where they remain - are squeezed. The Nature Reserve and the whole ambience of the Pegwell area are a rare and precious sanctuary, for urban-dwelling humans to enjoy.

I am sure you are aware that science has proven the mental and physical benefits of contact with Nature, and of the correlating easing of pressure on the NHS. We *need* this space, far more than National Grid does – it *can* re-route. It might cost them a few more quid, yes, but they can afford it.

And what a lovely PR exercise that would be!

Yes we need 'green energy.' But energy projects this destructive are ***not 'green.'***

Kent Wildlife Trust - of which I am a member – posted the following on Facebook, which is clear and succinct:

"National Grid has re-routed a proposed £430m electricity cable to avoid the memorial to Dobby the house elf at Freshwater West, Pembrokeshire, after concerns were raised by Harry Potter fans.

While National Grid have been willing to find an alternative route to avoid the memorial of a much loved, but fictional character, they are still proposing to take Sea Link through internationally protected habitats of Pegwell Bay and the construction of a converter and substation at Minster Marshes.

Pegwell Bay and Minster Marshes are real, living ecosystems supporting thousands of species including Kent's largest seal colony. These habitats are an exceptional place for nature, protected by multiple national and international designations.

These habitats have already been damaged by National Grid's previous Nemo Link project. Despite the environmental protections in place, the construction of Nemo Link caused significant damage to saltmarsh at Pegwell Bay, with monitoring showing that the habitat had not recovered and that losses are continuing years after construction.

If National Grid can find an alternative route to avoid the memorial of a fictional character, why can't they find an alternative route for Sea Link to avoid irreplaceable, internationally protected habitats and wildlife?

Since the end of Sea Link's Examination which closed in May, the Examining Authority has now finalised their Recommendation Report and submitted it to the Secretary of State for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

We won't know what the Examining Authority has recommended until the Secretary of State publishes the decision. The final decision on Sea Link is expected by November 2026.

Protecting Dobby's grave might be a lovely thing to do for Harry Potter fans. But Pegwell Bay and Minster Marshes are not fictional. The wildlife that lives in these habitats are very real and they deserve to be saved too. "

[redacted]

Yours [redacted]

Mrs S. Hodgkins