Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

Department for Energy Security & Net Zero
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Mel Haselden

By email: [redacted]

Our ref: TOB2026/12532

29 September 2026

Dear [redacted],

Thank you for your further letter of 17 September to the Secretary of State and your letter of 4 September to the Prime Minister about the cumulative impact of nationally significant infrastructure projects on the Suffolk Heritage Coast. As I hope you will appreciate, the Prime Minister and Secretary of State receives significant volumes of correspondence on a daily basis, and, regrettably, is unable to respond to each one personally. Therefore, I have been asked to respond.

I was sorry to read of the concerns you have raised regarding the concentration of energy infrastructure proposals in Suffolk and the potential effects on local communities, landscapes, environmental designations and wildlife.

Because the planning process is a quasi-judicial one, the Government does not comment on the merits of live planning applications, which will be subject to rigorous, independent examinations by Examining Authorities who will provide Recommendation Reports after the close of the examination to inform final ministerial decisions on the applications. I am therefore afraid that I cannot comment on any proposed infrastructure projects to avoid prejudicing the decision-making process.

In reference to your concerns about cumulative impacts, projects are required to address cumulative impacts as part of their applications. During the examination stage, host and neighbouring local authorities are invited to submit a Local Impact Report, to make the Examining Authority aware of the potential impacts of the project based on local knowledge.

Members of the public can get involved in early consultations before an application has been submitted by contacting the applicant directly. Alternatively, members of the public or organisations can register to have their say with the Planning Inspectorate during the pre-examination stage. The applicant and anyone who has registered to have their say can get involved in the examination and submit comments at each deadline in the timetable. They can also attend hearings that may take place.

Public engagement and consultation will remain a key part of this process. The Government wants communities to continue to participate in the planning system and, as part of the examination process, have their say in decisions which may affect them.

The National Policy Statements set out that a planning application must satisfy us on a number of grounds before it can go ahead. These include how the developer is avoiding, mitigating and compensating for impacts on the natural environment, as well as how any

mitigation and compensation will be delivered. We are also looking into how energy projects provide community benefits locally. We have made clear that where communities host clean energy infrastructure, we will ensure they benefit from it and will be setting out our next steps on this in due course.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]
DESNZ CORRESPONDENCE UNIT