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From: Alan Bullard [REDACTED]

Sent: 24 January 2022 18:43

To: Secretary Of State (Kwasi Kwarteng) <Secretary.State@beis.gov.uk>

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Subject: Letter to the Secretary of State regarding Scottish Power's application for EA1N and EA2 (EN 010077/8)

Project Reference Numbers: EN 010077 and 010078

IP Numbers: 20023188 and 20023189

Dear Secretary of State,

EA1N and EA2 proposals from SPR and the cumulative impact

I have written before on this matter, and also made several representations to PINS during the course of the enquiry, but I trust that, as the decision has been delayed, you will consider this final letter. The flood risk from the proposed substation site to the village of Friston has been well documented, of course, and is clearly visible on the ground, but if I may I'd just like to look at this proposal from a different angle.

As a Friston resident, I have followed the development of this proposal over the last four years, and observed how what was initially an application for two substations and associated cabling and landfall site from one organisation (SPR) with National Grid firmly in the background, has now turned into a proposal for what could become a 'hub' involving a number of energy projects, sited just a few hundred yards from a 12th century church and a beautiful village, on the site of good quality farming land, causing damage to the water table, and blocking a mediaeval trackway. And this seems to have happened 'by stealth' with very little assessment of the cumulative impact on the area and no sense of overall planning.

To illustrate this, I would like to take you for a walk along part of one national long-distance footpath.

The 'Sandlings Walk' is an LDP set within the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB. As we hopefully move on from the issues caused by the Covid pandemic, and the many mental health issues that lockdown has raised, the importance of open-air recreation, walking and cycling, has become even more important to the health of the nation. The Sandlings Walk is a 60-mile path from Ipswich to Southwold, passing through the coastal landscape, nature reserves, working farms, characterful villages, and even an international concert hall! It is popular, and walkers and cyclists can often be seen making use of it.

But these proposals would change the character of the central part of that walk for good.

From that concert hall, Snape Maltings, the Sandlings Walk going north soon takes us to the area just north of Snape Church and west of Friston – a possible site for a 12-acre Nautilus converter station, plus associated cable corridor which, for a time, would cut off the villages of Friston and Knodishall from the south, while the cabling for SPR, if consented, would cut them off from the north.

The Sandlings Walk continues past Friston Hall on a route designated to be the Nautilus connecting cable to the NG substation, if consented. Then as the walk comes into Friston the proposed two SPR substations and the NG substation would overwhelm the landscape and change it for ever, as is made very clear from the submitted plans.

The Sandlings Walk then follows the route of an ancient unmade-up track from Friston Church Road to

Knodishall (Coldfair Green). The SPR plans show this track as a 'haul road' during the lengthy construction phase, which means it would be metalled to allow for heavy lorries, and would probably never return to its peaceful character.

After that the Sandlings Walk turns south towards North Warren nature reserve. While the proposed cable corridors go north of the reserve, the effect on the wildlife that North Warren harbours would be seriously damaged by the construction works for the cable corridors(s) which would bisect the River Hundred causing severe damage to wildlife, as has been shown by many IPs and organisations.

Then the route continues past the west end of Thorpeness Mere and soon into an area proposed to be the landfall for the SPR, and possibly the Nautilus, projects. Inland from the coastland are several isolated houses and businesses that are seriously threatened by noise, access, and possible poisoning of the water-table, and the fragile coastline itself, where cliff-falls regularly take place, is the proposed site for the actual landfall.

The Walk continues along the coast, past Sizewell A and B, and the proposed site for Sizewell C, and then turns left to go west across Kenton Hills to the Lover's Lane car park. This area, if Sizewell C is consented, is planned to be the site for access roads, haul roads, and a railway line, and the landscape of this part of the route would be seriously damaged.

Then the route follows the road to Eastbridge, still within the Sizewell C construction zone, and finally escapes to the unspoilt beauty of Dunwich Heath and on to Southwold.

I am aware that the current enquiry is about SPR and not about any of the other proposed projects – but surely, if a meaningful decision is to be made, these must be taken as a totality. I've just chosen one example, above, as to how these proposals will impact on the area – but equally I could have written the effect on residents' mental health, the damage to the tourism economy, and to wildlife. They will wreck the peace and tranquillity of this area for ever: the damage from noise, traffic, and associated issues to the lives and health of residents, and to the valuable tourism industry, will be absolutely immense, and certainly not compensated for by the very small amount of permanent employment that the projects would bring to the area.

It is clear that there have been inadequate environmental surveys and insufficient cumulative impact assessment for the large number of energy projects under discussion for the area.

I understand and welcome the need for green energy, of course, but surely this destruction is not what the Government wants for this currently unspoilt and protected rural area - the Suffolk Heritage Coast, the AONB and the Sandlings - when there are off-shore hubs or brownfield-site alternatives for projects such as EA1N, EA2 and Nautilus?

Please will you recommend a split decision on the EA1N and EA2 by consenting the off-shore turbines, but rejecting the onshore infrastructure in favour of full consideration of a 'Pathfinder' project or hub on a brownfield or industrialised site.

Thank you for your time.

Yours faithfully,

Alan Bullard

