

31st October 2020



On behalf of David & Sylvia Thorp – Beach View Holiday Park

East Anglia One North IP 20024928

East Anglia Two IP 20024929

Dear Mr Smith & Examining panel,

Beach View Holiday Park is a prominent tourism business located between Thorpeness & Sizewell, we provide holiday accommodation & facilities including, motorhome and caravan pitches, self-catering in camping pods, apartments and luxury lodges. We already have experience of offshore wind developments with Galloper & Greater Gabbard cables both of which landed and connected within just one mile of our holiday park. During these pressing times, we are sad to admit that we do not have the time or resources to delve deeply into these proposals, we are trying to run a business within a global pandemic, whilst also faced with the massively impactful Sizewell C DCO proposals locally. To say we feel besieged and overwhelmed is an understatement.

With this in mind we lend our support to and fully endorse the hard work, contributions and submissions of action groups SASES, SEAS & SOS who have been working tirelessly to hold Scottish Power and National Grid to account. Exposing inadequacies, failures and cover ups that really deserve public enquiry.

Whilst we appreciate great possibilities for more offshore wind energy generated off the Suffolk Coast, we cannot stand by and accept the ill-conceived and uncoordinated way offshore energy is being brought onshore to connect wind farms & interconnectors to the grid. The actions of National Grid beggar's belief, directing one project after another to connect along this coast, providing connection offers that ignore the protected landscape of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB over and over again.

Scottish Power's EA1N & EA2 DCO applications are the latest ill-conceived proposals that illustrate how unsustainable onshore development has become to connect offshore wind farms. At the same time, we are learning that there is better technology and connection solutions that could be implemented now with much less damaging consequences. The 'BEIS Offshore Network Review' & [National Grid ESOs 'Offshore Coordination Project'](#) are finally looking the issues and possible solutions. However, the ['Suffolk Energy Symposium'](#) back in 2011 highlighted many issues we see today. Both developers involved with these DCO's were present at the 2011 Symposium: David Walker from SPR & Richard Smith and David Mercer from National Grid contributed to extolling the urgent need for planning, coordination, and investment in the future of the network, yet nothing was done for almost a decade, no action to prepare for a renewable future.

EA1N & EA2 Sets a precedence for a NG Strategic Connection Point

The OFHs have uncovered that the onshore development as set out in these DCOs will create a connection point on a greenfield site at Friston, National Grid's Trojan Horse. It is increasingly clear that this connection point would be a **strategic connection point** that National Grid intends to exploit over and over again for many more damaging projects over many years.

What do these DCOs mean for Grove Wood, Friston, how much more could be coming?

How many projects have National Grid have already provided connection offers to at Grove Wood, Friston?

An email sent on 9/3/2020 to The Planning Inspectorate from Alicia Dawson - Contract Consents Officer for National Grid Ventures states:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN010077/EN010077-001723-National%20Grid%20Ventures.pdf>

"...NGV are seeking to ensure the substation is future proofed for other future developments, namely the proposed Nautilus and Eurolink Interconnector projects."

This is a clear indication that National Grid will be using the Grove Wood site for their subsidiaries projects as well as other projects that may have already been offered connections via Friston.

Tourism & Socio Economic

These DCOs involve shockingly poor assessment of EA1N & EA2s impact on Tourism and Socio-economic impact. The information used in the DCO is based on a poor implementation of outdated and inappropriate academic research papers with a clear focus on quantity rather than quality of work. It is striking but not at all surprising that SPR failed to put people on the ground to gain a proper understanding of communities, tourism facilities and businesses in the locality. SPRs over-reliance of desk-based assessments continues to fail us with use of TripAdvisor data to form the overarching background research on local tourism businesses and how they might be impacted on by these proposals.

For our own business TripAdvisor does not provide an accurate overview of what we do, it is even less of a suitable resource for small independent accommodation often not on TripAdvisor or are listed in conjunction with other accommodation facilities under parent/management company.

The real and necessary survey work was omitted SPR. So we would like to draw the examination team to consider the September 2019 survey by local Suffolk Coast DMO who carried out an independent survey in conjunction with BVA BDRC (award winning consumer insight consultancy) comprising of 113 local businesses and 1700 tourism visitors as an attempt to learn how these energy proposals and the proposals for EDF Sizewell C might affect tourism and visitor perception: [The Energy Coast – Implications, Impact & Opportunities for Tourism](#)

The survey found that during construction of EA1N, EA2 & Sizewell C will act as an overall visitor deterrent in almost one third of visitors surveyed

29% of visitors surveyed would be less likely or a lot less like to want to visit the Suffolk Coast.
72 % Said nature related reasons were their main motivations for visiting the Suffolk Coast historically with 84% respondents providing this motivation for visiting in the future.
57% of visitors holidaying visit the Suffolk Coast for a holiday (At least once every couple of years).
20% of visitors holidaying visit the Suffolk Coast for a holiday (At least twice a year).
75% of day visitors surveyed regularly visited the Suffolk Coast (At least once every couple of years).
16% of day visitors surveyed were highly frequent visitors (At least once every couple of months)

Of the Business Responses

58% of the local businesses surveyed expect annual turnover to decrease during the 9-12 year period of construction i.e. the years covering the development phase of Sizewell C and the SPR onshore infrastructure for the wind turbines.

86% of businesses surveyed consider the Energy Coast is a negative brand image.

85% of businesses expected their revenue to fall by at least 20% (with accommodation providers feeling most vulnerable).

23% of businesses (nearly a quarter) anticipated a reduction in revenue of more 50% per annum.

The DMO and survey partners believe the knock-on effects of energy proposals would result in a net reduction of at least £24million annual spend into the local economy but the survey states this could be as high as £40million lost annually in a worst-case scenario. It could be argued that the loss could be much larger if you factor in loss of spend in associated businesses like shops, bars, pubs cafes and restaurants and trades people, who also rely heavily on a popular and growing tourism market.

In conclusion the survey states:

“In a battle to win over the hearts and minds of potential visitors, significant investment will need to be made to ensure the Suffolk Coast brand is not dominated by energy and the region does not fall further behind the regional competition.”

“There is an underlying sentiment that businesses operating within the Suffolk Coast, and not its periphery will bear the brunt of the negative impacts generated by the developments.”

“Just over 60% of businesses predict that visitors are a little/lot less likely to return to the Suffolk Coast once the developments are completed.”

All in all we believe the survey helps to illustrate some of the impact of these proposals might have on local tourism businesses. We are concerned that SPR have failed to provide anything like this kind focused appraisal within DCO submissions on tourism. By failing to carry out their own effective surveying SPR show a lack understanding of the importance of tourism and its symbiotic relationship with the AONB and accessibility to nature: the natural Sandlings' heaths, the big sky's, the peacefulness and tranquillity, the coast and countryside. All essential to the sustainability of tourism and tourism businesses. It is our tourists and visitor....NOT Scottish Power & energy companies that support the local shops, cafes, pubs, restaurants, campsites, caravan parks, B&Bs, guest houses & hotels.

It is easy to say it is difficult to measure perception towards energy and construction or of the impact of outline proposals if you do not take the initiative to venture out and talk to people 'tourists' and 'visitors' in order to find out information. This sadly seems to be what has happened.

SPR have certainly not attempted to ask what they can do to help mitigate their construction proposals, they haven't sought out our concerns or needs as a tourism business, instead all we have witnessed is SPRs desire to secure the information they require, like who owns the beach/foreshore, who has access rights over this path or that road.

Issues of Cumulative Impact not acknowledged or addressed

It is clear that cumulative impact is fundamental to the acceptability of these developments, and these examinations must find out why essential details about the true scale of what could be coming has been withheld from the DCO applications?

And why Scottish Power & National Grid were unable to commit to providing a fair assessment of Cumulative Impact given what is in the public domain. We again would ask Examiners give weight to the work of SASES who provide essential background work we simply did not have the time or resources to match.

In summary an independent cumulative impact assessment is urgently required because the issues of multiple energy projects in construction together is simply not being taken seriously by energy companies. There is no question that energy projects will have numerous negative impacts on the lives and lively hoods of many local people and local businesses.

These DCO applications fail to understand and address the impact of proposals on the AONB, tourism, businesses and communities. We do not consider these DCO applications to be acceptable, rejection of these proposals could provide an opportunity for SPR & National Grid to rethink, an opportunity to come up better, less damaging proposals.

Submission by Nicholas Thorp

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