

Nautilus Interconnector Consultation Response

Representations from Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council

Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council (LTC) understands that this is National Grid Ventures' (NGV) first public consultation on its plans for a Nautilus Interconnector and that it is solely reliant, in its current form, on the NGET substation at Friston (for EA1N) gaining consent. LTC welcomes the fact that NGV has listened to local people and made some changes to initial plans as a result. However, although this development has made the change to a multi-purpose interconnector, it nevertheless comes as additional to three major developments - Scottish Power Renewables (SPR) EA1N and EA2 and Sizewell C. We already have outstanding concerns about the impact of these projects on the local area and on Leiston in particular. Another project only compounds these. This is a rural area without the necessary infrastructure for all these projects. We are about 80 miles from the nearest motorway, our 'A' roads are not all dual carriageway and many roads are narrow lanes.

Our response is therefore based on the consent for SPR happening. It is understood that the cable would come onshore along the Sizewell/Thorpeness coastline and then be taken underground to a converter station which should be within 5km of Friston. The potential search sites for this converter station are the most worrying aspect of this project. A **building 24m high covering 12 acres** in size (220m x 220m) is a power station being built in the countryside! (The house in the clouds is only 21m tall and the pylons around us are approximately 35m tall for comparison.

It is understood that, after the complete disruption caused by laying any cable, the countryside would return to normal over the cable route with no structures imposed on the landscape. The routes to the potential search sites however leave a lot to be desired. NGV state that they are co-ordinating and are in touch with the other energy projects in the pipeline but do not appear to have studied Sizewell C (SZC) plans in their marked route to the north of Leiston. This not only desecrates the Sandlings (reptile relocation), but it goes through the EDF Aldhurst Farm habitation area and appears to converge on the new junction of Lovers Lane and the Green Rail Route. The Council cannot imagine EDF consenting to a haul road and construction site in the middle of their works. The other route to CSA4 and CSA5 is equally flawed and, due to the tight constraints of the route through Aldringham, would cause the most enormous disruption, inconvenience and loss of amenity. This therefore leaves the current route favoured by SPR which would therefore be the most sensible although it would still be resisted by this Council in partnership with our neighbouring parishes.

The CSA's themselves are, as stated, the most worrying aspect of this project. Despite assurances that noise levels would be made "tolerable" it cannot be imagined how a power converter station of the size proposed could be silent and would therefore be heard for great distances across the flat Suffolk countryside. This is unacceptable.

Whichever site is chosen would produce a building that could be seen for miles in a rural landscape and would destroy the agricultural landscape irreparably. There are no industrial sites to the west and south of Leiston and, over many years, there has been consensus and sense used to constrain the industrial buildings to the Sizewell Power Station site. The furore and disdain for the NGET at Friston is based on this and the proposed converter stations are, quite frankly, unimaginable in comparison.

Taking the above as our complete and unequivocal opposition to these plans the following comments on the CSA sites are for consultation purposes only.

CSA1 would dwarf Snape Church and be seen for miles across Friston moor. CSA2 is in one of the highest and most exposed parts of the landscape in this area and a station here just could not be imagined. CSA3 is again in an incredibly exposed landscape but may not be viable due to the cable route. CSA5 would mean virtually building a power station in the backyards of the properties on the edges of Leiston and Knodishall. CSA5 is of particular concern with regard to the size, positioning and potential noise as it is the closest to major habitation and the prevailing wind would carry noise

into Leiston. CSA4 is still too close to Knodishall and would suffer, like them all, from being an ugly eyesore visible from great distances.

We consider that National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO) has been very poor in its assessment and allocation of grid connection for NGV's project and would call on our MP to investigate this and at least get other options examined. This connection appears to have been offered as the cheapest option and that is the only positive criteria that has been ticked. The project will devastate this area and negate all the mitigation that is currently being pursued with EDF should that be consented.

Further Concerns

- Cumulative effect of all the energy projects in this special area: SZC, SPR, Nautilus and maybe more
- Increased traffic on road network all around, consequent air pollution, noise, congestion, diversions and increased journey times
- Affect of the above impacts on residents' health
- Further development in AONB
- Burying cables in the eroding cliff
- Proximity of planned converter stations to residential area (CSA2) Leiston/Saxmundham Road which is already subject to flooding. CSA4 is sited on a tiny lane also subject to flooding. The other two are in rural locations on narrow lanes and increase the loss of green fields.
- As can be seen from your maps, if all the planned energy developments go ahead, Leiston will be surrounded by them and the impact on travel in and out of Leiston could be severe.
- Community cohesion may suffer under the impact of the massive changes to the area that are planned

On some of the specific questions asked in the consultation

We do not agree with the premise that it is essential to locate this project or others within the AONB, therefore cannot express a preference for clusters. Whilst a cluster around Leiston might minimise damage to villages and green spaces elsewhere (a good thing), it would potentially maximise adverse impacts for our community and environment.

As far as landfall options are concerned, a major consideration should be coastal erosion and fragile cliffs on the heritage coast.

The Town Council thanks NGV for keeping us informed on the project and hope that you will maintain very close contact with LTC to ensure we are aware of the developing situation as the energy projects in this area alter/gain consent.