

Iain Brown Aldeburgh Resident, Open Floor Hearings 1, Wednesday 7  
October 2020

Good evening, my name is Iain Brown, I am a concerned Aldeburgh resident and thank you for this opportunity to speak on this platform.

The tranquil beauty of the Suffolk Coast is what attracted us to live here in the first place. The wonderful blend of social and cultural amenities allied with the access to unspoilt Coastline and Countryside was irresistible to us.

Now, unfortunately, like many other residents of East Suffolk, we are seemingly fighting a rear-guard action against this treasured Heritage Coast now being redesignated as..... the Energy Coast. And with that designation, all the problems and issues that entails.

One of the most impressive developments of this entire process has been the decisive actions and commitment of the many campaign groups, such as SASSES, Save our Sandlings, SEAS and others. Also, the laudable advocacy of many of the Parish and Council members who have actively and diligently worked to analyse copious amounts of Information and Data to help interpret, inform and counter the SPR proposals on the Communities behalf.

Add to this the valid concerns and protestations of many Individual respondents condemning not only the proposed siting of construction works,

but also the density and opaque nature of the DCO process, and you can gauge the depth of feeling and trepidation that is felt by East Coast residents.

Much has already been said about the concerns and fears for the AONB of the impact of, not only proposed plans for EA1N and EA2, ..... But also the cumulative effect of the other 6 Energy projects that may yet follow. To sanction such industrialisation in this rural, protected landscape is tantamount to environmental vandalism on a grand scale, in a region that is so rich in history, and so important ecologically.

And the ramifications of this ecocide will not just be localised....it will not be limited to Thorpeness, Aldringham, Sizewell and Friston. If these proposals are allowed to progress as described, the environment and infra-structure of the entire region will be adversely affected for decades to come. Communities will be blighted, by intrusive construction, excessive traffic and pollution.....and established businesses and livelihoods will be lost. Any short-term benefits of employment will not offset the long-term damage to the communities it is intended to serve.

We all favour alternatives to fossil fuels, to fight climate change, commit to green policies, renewable energy and protect the environment. However, it is paradoxical to obliterate this special Coastal environment to do so, in what is evidently, an ill-conceived and hasty rush toward planning approval.

It appears that naked commerce and dogma is running roughshod over the will and views of the local communities, denying common-sense and the

fragility of the environment that will be most adversely affected by the SPR Projects. I am also astounded that this DCO process has not been deferred until we all know the result of the BEIS review.

Alternatives to the proposed Friston Substation and the Thorpeness Cable landfall have been highlighted by a number of the local campaign groups and this evening's respondents.

There are clear alternatives to East Coast landfall which should obviously be directed through Brownfield sites. And it appears wilful and counter-productive to ignore the prospect of establishing a Modular Offshore Grid (MOG) that could deliver the electricity required in a more secure and efficient manner..... Why have these alternatives been overlooked? Is it purely down to economic and cost factors? Surely, they must be given due consideration?

And why has the National Grid Ventures not been more active in co-ordinating the growing multitude of energy projects throughout this long process?

Perhaps, the Prime Minister's announcement of £160M to invest in Wind Farms will allow a portion of that funding to be allocated to those Communities affected and enable them to afford the Legal expertise to help combat the depth of resources that the Applicant Companies have so readily to hand.

Finally, 50 years ago, the great folk singer Joni Mitchell, sang about the rampant commercialisation and industrialisation of the ecology of the

American West Coast. In “Big Yellow Taxi”, her lyrics are chillingly prophetic and resonate with us today.....

“Don’t it always seem to go.....That you don’t know what you’ve got ‘till it's gone. They took paradise.....and put up a Parking Lot.”