

Lionlink Drop In Session 15 March 2025 - Feedback from Walberswick Parish Council

Dear Lionlink - I am the Councillor on the Walberswick Parish Council who has been delegated to take the lead on our interactions with Lionlink. As such, I am writing to you on behalf of Walberswick Parish Council with regard to the Drop-In Session that LL held in Walberswick on 15 March.

Overall, the very large number of Walberswick residents who attended the Drop-In left feeling no better informed than when we arrived. There were scant additional details to provide justification for the shocking choice of Walberswick with the exception that Southwold might have been an even worse decision. The staff gave conflicting answers to the same questions on subjects as important as the length of time that work would be taking place, on the number of workers and lorries on site, and on the impact on the natural environment. Overall, the interaction reinforced the perception that NGV had chosen Walberswick strictly for its own convenience without having done a proper assessment and with scant regard for the community and natural environment that your proposed project is threatening.

There is one example that I would like to highlight as it was particularly grievous in misinforming the residents of Walberswick. As the Parish Council, and hundreds of others have pointed out in our written responses, the landing site in Walberswick is not "south of the village" per your literature, but rather in the very heart of the village, surrounded on three sides by homes (less than 5 metres from the field's boundary according to your own literature), and on the fourth by a SSSI, a camping site and the beautiful Walberswick beach. The footpaths at the proposed landing site are heavily used by residents and visitors — in excess of 50,000 walkers annually. Therefore many of us asked the Lionlink staff whether NGV had any experience in drilling the landing site in the centre of a village, so close to homes, in a natural environment and contiguous with protected environmental sites. We were told yes - Cambois.

Having looked at Cambois, we are shocked that NGV should think that this is equivalent to Walberswick. The two locations could not be more different. Surely, you will know that Cambois is a post-industrial location, with landing and substation close together and located within an extensive industrialised energy site. It could not be more different than our rural village with an economy based around its unspoiled natural environment and eco-tourism. Surely you can see that Walberswick is completely greenfield with the highest levels of environmental protection and your proposed landing site so central that nearly every home and business is between five and 500 metres of where you plan to land your cable and dig your trenches? And that after landing in Walberswick, you will still have a 14km run to your proposed substation? To many of us, it feels that your responses on this subject were disingenuous.

I would request that NGV show a greater respect for and candour with the communities that are expected to bear the brunt of your proposed development. Perhaps it would help if you would establish a direct link to the Parish Council with a responsible and knowledgeable member of the Lionlink team with whom I could exchange information and direct questions. You have my contact details below and I would very much appreciate receiving a response and also steps on your side to establish an ongoing communications channel with a knowledgeable staff member of the proposed Lionlink project.

Sincerely,
Cllr Josie Bassinette
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