



The Great Grid Upgrade

Sea Link

Sea Link

Volume 6: Environmental Statement

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Part 1 Introduction
Chapter 1
Introduction

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview of the Proposed Project

- 1.1.1 The Sea Link Project (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Project') is an application for development consent by National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (hereafter referred to as National Grid) to reinforce the transmission network in the South East of England and East Anglia.

National Grid

- 1.1.2 National Grid owns, builds and maintains the electricity transmission network in England and Wales. Under the Electricity Act 1989, National Grid holds a transmission licence under which it is required to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated, and economic electricity transmission system.
- 1.1.3 National Grid is also required, under Section 38 of the Electricity Act 1989, to comply with the provisions of Schedule 9 of the Act. Schedule 9 requires licence holders, in the formulation of proposals to transmit electricity, to:

Schedule 9(1)(a) "...have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest;" and

Schedule 9(1)(b) "...do what [it] reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects."

The Proposed Project

- 1.1.4 The Proposed Project involves the reinforcement of the electricity transmission system in the South East of England and East Anglia. This would be achieved by reinforcing the network with a predominantly High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) Link between the proposed Friston Substation¹ in the Sizewell area of Suffolk and the existing Richborough to Canterbury 400 kV overhead line close to Richborough in Kent. This reinforcement would be approximately 138 km long, comprising of a principally offshore HVDC link.
- 1.1.5 The Proposed Project would comprise of the following elements:

The Suffolk Onshore Scheme

- A connection from the existing transmission network via Friston Substation, including the substation itself. Friston Substation already has development consent as part of

¹ The name 'Friston Substation' is used throughout the Proposed Project's DCO Application solely as a geographic term to identify the site of the substation at Friston. The use of the term is not intended to establish a permanent name for this substation. National Grid has committed to engage with the local community over a permanent name for this substation, and will continue this process in parallel to the DCO Application.

other third-party projects. If Friston Substation has already been constructed under another consent, only a connection into the substation would be constructed as part of the Proposed Project.

- A high voltage alternating current (HVAC) underground cable of approximately 1.9 km in length between the proposed Friston Substation and a proposed converter station (below).
- A 2 GW high voltage direct current (HVDC) converter station (including permanent access from the B1121 and a new bridge over the River Fromus) up to 26 m high plus external equipment (such as lightning protection, safety rails for maintenance works, ventilation equipment, aerials, similar small scale operational plant, or other roof treatment) near Saxmundham.
- A HVDC underground cable connection of approximately 10 km in length between the proposed converter station near Saxmundham, and a transition joint bay (TJB) approximately 900 m inshore from a landfall point (below) where the cable transitions from onshore to offshore technology.
- A landfall on the Suffolk coast (between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness).

The Offshore Scheme

- Approximately 122 km of subsea HVDC cable, running between the Suffolk landfall location (between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness), and the Kent landfall location at Pegwell Bay.

The Kent Onshore Scheme

- A landfall point on the Kent coast at Pegwell Bay.
- A TJB approximately 800 m inshore to transition from offshore HVDC cable to onshore HVDC cable, before continuing underground for approximately 1.7 km to a new converter station (below).
- A 2 GW HVDC converter station (including a new permanent access off the A256), up to 28 m high plus external equipment (such as lightning protection, safety rails for maintenance works, ventilation equipment, aerials, and similar small scale operational plant), near Minster. A new substation would be located immediately adjacent.
- Removal of approximately 2.2 km of existing HVAC overhead line, and installation of two sections of new HVAC overhead line, together totalling approximately 3.5 km, each connecting from the substation near Minster and the existing Richborough to Canterbury overhead line.

1.1.6 The Proposed Project also includes modifications to sections of existing overhead lines in Suffolk (only if Friston Substation is not built pursuant to another consent) and Kent, diversions of third-party assets, and land drainage from the construction and operational footprint. It also includes opportunities for environmental mitigation and compensation. The construction phase will involve various temporary construction activities including overhead line diversions, use of temporary towers or masts, working areas for construction equipment and machinery, site offices, parking spaces, storage, accesses, bellmouths, and haul roads, as well as watercourse crossings and the diversion of public rights of way (PROWs) and other ancillary operations.

- 1.1.7 None of the components of the Proposed Project fell within the definition of a 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project' (NSIP) defined under Part 3 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). In consultation with the relevant Local Planning Authorities (LPA) in Suffolk and Kent, National Grid sought direction on 4 March 2022 under Section 35 of the PA2008 from the Secretary of State (SoS) for the Proposed Project to be treated as a development for which development consent under the PA2008 is required.
- 1.1.8 On 31 March 2022 a Section 35 direction was granted by the SoS on the grounds that:
- 1.1.9 *"The proposed Project is of national significance, taking into account that it is a large-scale linear electricity transmission reinforcement project of approximately 130km in length and that it has a two Gigawatt capacity to transmit electricity.*
- 1.1.10 *The proposed Project will play an important role in enabling an energy system that meets the UK's commitment to reduce carbon emissions and the Government's objectives to create a secure, reliable and affordable energy supply for consumers.*
- 1.1.11 *By progressing the development through the Planning Act 2008 development consent process, it would provide the certainty of a single, unified consenting process and fixed timescales."*
- 1.1.12 Since the Section 35 Direction is now granted, National Grid intends to apply for the granting of an order for development consent under Section 37 of the PA2008 to the Planning Inspectorate. The application will provide details of the proposed development and will be accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES).

Geographical Context

- 1.1.13 The Order Limits are illustrated on **Application Document 2.5.1 Work Plans – Suffolk, Application Document 2.5.2 Work Plans – Kent, and Application Document 2.5.3 Work Plans – Offshore**. All onshore parts of the Proposed Project would be located within England and offshore parts of the Proposed Project would be located within the English Territorial Waters. For ease of presentation within this Environmental Statement (ES), the Proposed Project has been split into three geographical parts: the Suffolk Onshore Scheme; the Kent Onshore Scheme; and the Offshore Scheme.

Suffolk Onshore Scheme

- 1.1.14 The Suffolk Onshore Scheme is illustrated on **Application Document 2.5.1 Work Plans – Suffolk** and is located within the administrative boundary of Suffolk County Council (SCC) and the East Suffolk Council (ESC) local planning authority areas.
- 1.1.15 The Suffolk Onshore Scheme is in an area that is predominantly rural. The settlements of Aldeburgh, Thorpeness, Knodishall Common, Friston, Sternfield and Saxmundham are located close to the Order Limits. The Sizewell Nuclear Site is located approximately 2.5 km to the northeast of the Order Limits and there are two existing 400 kV overhead lines that cross the Order Limits that connect the existing Sizewell substation to Bramford substation.

Kent Onshore Scheme

- 1.1.16 The Kent Onshore Scheme is illustrated on **Application Document 2.5.2 Work Plans – Kent** and is located within the administrative boundary of Kent County Council (KCC),

Thanet District Council (TDC) and Dover District Council (DDC) local planning authority areas.

- 1.1.17 The Kent Onshore Scheme is in an area which is mostly semi-rural in nature, although land use in the areas closest to the coast include golf courses and areas of nature conservation. The settlement of Cliffs End is located 300 m to the north of the Order Limits and the settlement of Minster approximately 100 m from the Order Limits to the north. Richborough Energy Park and a wastewater treatment works are located approximately 460 m and 100 m respectively southeast of the Order Limits. The existing Richborough to Canterbury 400 kV overhead line crosses through the far western extent of the Order Limits.

Offshore Scheme

- 1.1.18 The Offshore Scheme is illustrated on **Application Document 2.5.3 Work Plans – Offshore**. It is located wholly within English Territorial Waters, and it lies within the East Inshore and South East Inshore Marine Plan Areas (Marine Management Organisation, 2014). The Order Limits cross the Suffolk Coastal Waters, East Anglian Shipping Waters, Eastern English Channel Approaches and the Goodwin Sands and North Dover Strait Marine Character Areas (MCA).
- 1.1.19 The Offshore Scheme is located to the west of London Array Offshore Wind Farm and to the east of Thanet, Greater Gabbard and Galloper Offshore Wind Farms. Parts of the Outer Thames Estuary and Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Ramsar and SPAs are located within the Order Limits as well as parts of the Southern North Sea and the Sandwich Bay Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). Parts of the Leiston Aldeburgh and Sandwich Bay to Hacklinge Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are located within the Order Limits.

1.2 Terminology

- 1.2.1 As noted above National Grid is submitting an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Proposed Project.
- 1.2.2 A DCO grants the beneficiary of the DCO permission to construct, operate, maintain and decommission the authorised development. In addition, a DCO may apply, modify or exclude an existing statutory provision where it relates to the authorised development. As such, the DCO will also include legislative provisions in relation to; highway works; public rights of way (PRoW); Traffic Regulation Orders; discharging water; dealing with human remains; tree works (including those protected by a Tree Preservation Order and important hedgerows); the compulsory acquisition of land; the temporary use of land and any additional legislative provisions, as required.
- 1.2.3 This application identifies the Order Limits, which include the working areas to install the Proposed Project. The Order Limits are shown on **Application Document 2.5.1 Work Plans – Suffolk, Application Document 2.5.2 Work Plans – Kent, and Application Document 2.5.3 Work Plans – Offshore**. The Order Limits replace the Scoping Boundary that was used when setting out the scope of the environmental assessment in the Scoping Report (National Grid, 2022). The topic specific study areas (e.g. landscape and visual) are described in each of the topic chapters based on the Order Limits. Other terminology used to describe the Proposed Project is set out in **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project**.

1.3 The Need for the Proposed Project

- 1.3.1 The Proposed Project is needed because the existing electricity transmission network does not have enough capacity to reliably and securely transport all the new energy expected to be connected to the network in the future, while working to the required standards.
- 1.3.2 The way electricity is generated in the UK is changing rapidly, with the country transitioning to more secure, cheaper, and cleaner forms of energy such as new offshore windfarms. This is a result of the UK Government's commitment to net zero by 2050 and the delivery of up to 50 GW of offshore wind energy by 2030.
- 1.3.3 The energy industry is key to this transition, from developing renewable energy generation, to upgrading the existing electricity transmission network, enabling other sectors to decarbonise, and enabling communities across the country to benefit from clean energy.
- 1.3.4 As part of this, the electricity transmission network is undergoing its largest overhaul in generations, with more than five times the amount of transmission infrastructure built in the last 30 years in the UK needed to be delivered in the next seven years. National Grid has a key part to play in this work, which is known as The Great Grid Upgrade. The Proposed Project is one of the projects being delivered to make sure the network is ready for the anticipated increase in supply and demand of electricity.
- 1.3.5 The existing transmission network infrastructure in East Anglia and the southeast of England was not originally designed to accommodate the large volumes of generation capacity that is planned to connect to the network in these areas. The network in and between East Anglia and the southeast of England therefore needs reinforcing for four main reasons:
- the existing transmission network was not designed to transport electricity from where it is increasingly being generated (largely offshore);
 - the growth in offshore wind, interconnectors and nuclear power means that more electricity will be generated in the years ahead than the current network is able to reliably transport;
 - as a country, electricity demand is forecast to at least double by 2050, increasing the amount of energy needed to be transported to homes and businesses; and
 - upgrading the existing network as it is today (such as through replacing cables to carry more power) will not be enough to meet the increasing need for electricity whilst operating to required standards.
- 1.3.6 The Proposed Project is just one of several electricity network reinforcements that are needed to ensure the electricity transmission network is fit for the future.
- 1.3.7 Further detail of the need that the Proposed Project is addressing can be found in **Application Document 7.2 Strategic Options Back Check Report**.

1.4 The Need for an Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.4.1 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for certain developments (termed 'EIA development') under the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations'). Some NSIP or project requiring development consent require EIA (the EIA Regulations define these under Schedule 1),

while others only require EIA if they are likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of their nature, size or location (the EIA Regulations define these under Schedule 2). An EIA development is required to be accompanied by an ES to comply with the Planning Act 2008, the EIA Regulations and the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (the ‘APFP Regulations’).

- 1.4.2 EIA is the process of compiling, evaluating and presenting information about the likely significant effects, both adverse and beneficial, of a project. The assessment provides decision makers and statutory consultees with the environmental information they require to determine proposals. The early detection of potential significant adverse environmental effects enables appropriate mitigation measures (i.e. measures to avoid, reduce or offset significant adverse effects) to be identified and incorporated into the design of a project, or commitments to be made to environmentally sensitive construction methods and practices. The approach is iterative and involves close working between those undertaking the EIA and the engineering design.
- 1.4.3 None of the components which make up the Proposed Project are explicitly identified under Schedule 1 or 2 of the EIA Regulations. Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations sets out the selection criteria for determining if Schedule 2 development is likely to have significant effects and is thereby ‘EIA Development’.
- 1.4.4 Having considered the criteria in Schedule 3, National Grid has undertaken an EIA and produced an ES having given regard to the whole of Schedule 3 but specifically:
“Characteristics of development
1.- (1) The characteristics of development must be considered with particular regard to—
(a) the size and design of the whole development;
(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development;
and
Location of development
2.- (1) The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development, including:
(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, in particular:
(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
(ii) coastal zone and the marine environment;
(iv) nature reserves and parks;
(v) European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation; and
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.”

1.5 Scope of the Environmental Statement

- 1.5.1 A Scoping Report (**Application Document 6.14 Environmental Scoping Report 2022**) for the Proposed Project was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on the 24 October 2022. This set out the parameters of the Proposed Project, the proposed methodology for undertaking the environmental assessment and the proposed scope of

the EIA. It also identified the potentially significant environmental effects (as identified at that time) that would be assessed in more detail (i.e. scoped in), as well as those that were unlikely to be significant and could therefore be scoped out of the assessment.

- 1.5.2 The Planning Inspectorate provided a Scoping Opinion on behalf of the Secretary of State on 1 December 2022. This included a number of items that National Grid was to consider when producing the ES and the application for development consent. This Scoping Opinion has been taken into account in the preparation of the ES. Responses to generic overarching comments in the Scoping Opinion are provided in **Application Document 6.2.1.6 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 6 Scoping Opinion and EIA Consultation**. Responses to specific technical environmental assessment matters raised in the Scoping Opinion are provided in the relevant technical ES chapters (Part 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the ES).
- 1.5.3 A Preliminary Environmental Information Report was prepared by National Grid as part of the statutory pre-application consultation process required under sections 42 and 47 of the Planning Act 2008. The Preliminary Environmental Information Report was published in October 2023, enabling consultees and interested parties to develop an informed view of the environmental effects of the Proposed Project and provide comments on that basis. Additional Preliminary Environmental Information was published in July 2024 in support of the Targeted Consultation exercise that took place in the Summer 2024 following further technical and environmental assessments. Details of how the comments received during consultation have been considered on the Proposed Project and the ES can be found in the Consultation Report (**Application Document 5.1**).
- 1.5.4 This ES provides an assessment of the likely significant effects in accordance with the EIA Regulations 2017, which require an ES to discuss only those effects that are likely to be significant. Further details on the EIA process and methodology can be found in **Application Document 6.2.1.5 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 5 EIA Approach and Methodology**.

1.6 Structure of the ES and Supporting Documents

- 1.6.1 The ES sits within Volume 6 Environmental Information of the application for development consent. The structure of the ES is shown in Table 1.1. In addition to the EIA, the Proposed Project has been subject to assessment pursuant to other regulatory regimes, including the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the Habitats Regulations'). These additional assessments are also included within Volume 6 of the application and are listed in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Contents of Volume 6 Environmental Information

Application Document	Chapter	Content
Non-Technical Summary (NTS)		
6.1	Non-Technical Summary	Summarises in a non-technical language the contents of the ES including the considered alternatives, environmental baseline,

Application Document	Chapter	Content
		assessment methodology, mitigation and environmental effects.
Volume 6 Part 1 – Introduction		
6.2.1.1	Chapter 1 Introduction	An introduction to the Proposed Project and the purpose and structure of this ES
6.2.1.2	Chapter 2 Regulatory and Planning Context	Sets out an overview of the legislation and policy relevant to the Proposed Project.
6.2.1.3	Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered	An outline of the main alternatives considered for the Proposed Project.
6.2.1.4	Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project	A description of the Proposed Project including permanent features and associated temporary works. It describes the general characteristics of the Proposed Project.
6.2.1.5	Chapter 5 EIA Approach and Methodology	A description of the overall EIA methodology that has been used within this ES including temporal durations, approach to mitigation and assessment scenarios.
6.2.1.6	Chapter 6 Scoping Opinion and EIA Consultation	Explains the consultation requirements and stakeholder engagement to date and sets out generic EIA comments raised in the Scoping Opinion and how these have been addressed in the ES.
Volume 6 Parts 2 Suffolk Onshore Scheme and Part 3 Kent Onshore Scheme		
6.2.2.1 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.1 (Kent)	Chapter 1 Landscape and Visual	<p>Each of these chapters provides the following for the specific topic:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction to the topic and assessment; 2. the regulatory and planning context specific to the topic area; 3. responses to the Scoping Opinion and summary of consultation undertaken; 4. the approach and methodology to the assessment; 5. the basis of assessment including assumptions around parameters and assessment scenarios; 6. a description of study area;
6.2.2.2 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.2 (Kent)	Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity	
6.2.2.3 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.3 (Kent)	Chapter 3 Cultural Heritage	
6.2.2.4 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.4 (Kent)	Chapter 4 Water Environment	
6.2.2.5 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.5 (Kent)	Chapter 5 Geology and Hydrogeology	
6.2.2.6 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.6 (Kent)	Chapter 6 Agriculture and Soils	
6.2.2.7 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.7 (Kent)	Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport	
6.2.2.8 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.8 (Kent)	Chapter 8 Air Quality	

Application Document	Chapter	Content
6.2.2.9 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.9 (Kent)	Chapter 9 Noise and Vibration	7. a description of the relevant baseline conditions;
6.2.2.10 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.10 (Kent)	Chapter 10 Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism	8. the proposed embedded and/or control and management measures;
6.2.2.11 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.11 (Kent)	Chapter 11 Health and Wellbeing	9. an assessment of impacts and likely significant effects;
		10. additional mitigation and enhancement measures;
		11. residual effects and conclusion; and
		12. sensitivity testing.
6.2.2.12 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.12 (Kent)	Chapter 12 Intra-project Cumulative Effects	An assessment of the potential for significant environmental effects from different EIA topics on the same receptor group (also known as intra-project cumulative impact assessment).
6.2.2.13 (Suffolk) and 6.2.3.13 (Kent)	Chapter 13 Inter-project Cumulative Effects	A assessment of the potential for significant cumulative environmental effects of the Proposed Project with other projects (also known as inter-project cumulative impact assessment).
Volume 6 Part 4 Offshore Scheme		
6.2.4.1	Chapter 1 Physical Environment	Each of these chapters provides the following for the specific topic:
6.2.4.2	Chapter 2 Benthic Ecology	1. Introduction to the topic and assessment;
6.2.4.3	Chapter 3 Fish and Shellfish Ecology	2. the regulatory and planning context specific to the topic area;
6.2.4.4	Chapter 4 Marine Mammals	3. responses to the Scoping Opinion and summary of consultation undertaken;
6.2.4.5	Chapter 5 Ornithology	4. the approach and methodology to the assessment;
6.2.4.6	Chapter 6 Marine Archaeology	5. the basis of assessment including assumptions around parameters;
6.2.4.7	Chapter 7 Shipping and Navigation	6. a description of the study area;
6.2.4.8	Chapter 8 Commercial Fisheries	7. a description of the relevant baseline conditions;
6.2.4.9	Chapter 9 Other Sea Users	8. the proposed embedded and/or control and management measures;

Application Document	Chapter	Content
		<p>9. an assessment of impacts and likely significant effects;</p> <p>10. additional mitigation and enhancement measures;</p> <p>11. residual effects and conclusion; and</p> <p>12. transboundary effects.</p>
6.2.4.10	Chapter 10 Intra-project Cumulative Effects	An offshore intra-project cumulative impact assessment.
6.2.4.11	Chapter 11 Inter-project Cumulative Effects	An offshore inter-project cumulative impact assessment.
Volume 6 Part 5 Project Wide Effects		
6.2.5.1	Chapter 1 Climate Change	An assessment of the Proposed Project on climate change.
6.2.5.2	Chapter 2 Project-wide (Combined) Effects of the Proposed Project	This chapter sets out how the project-wide (combined) effects of the Proposed Project across the onshore/offshore interface.
6.2.5.3	Chapter 3 Summary of Likely Significant Effects	This chapter summarises the likely significant effects that are anticipated from the Proposed Project as identified within the ES, the proposed additional mitigation and the likely residual effects following the implementation of the additional mitigation.
Volume 6 Appendices (6.3)		Provides the appendices which support the above technical chapters.
Volume 6 Figures (6.4)		Provides the figures which support the above technical chapters.
Volume 6 Standalone Documents		
6.5	Electric and Magnetic Field Compliance Report	Sets out the electric and magnetic field parameters for the Proposed Project.
6.6	Habitat Regulations Assessment Report	This sets out the Habitat Regulations Screening Assessment for the Proposed Project.
6.7	Statement of Statutory Nuisance	Considers the potential for a statutory nuisance and it is informed by the findings of the environmental assessment reported within the Environmental Statement.

Application Document	Chapter	Content
6.8	Flood Risk Assessment	This sets out the assessment of the risk of flooding and identification of mitigation measures.
6.9	Water Framework Directive Assessment	This sets out the Water Framework Directive Screening Assessment for the Proposed Project.
6.10	Arboricultural Impact Assessment	This sets out the site-specific effect of planned development on the existing tree stock.
6.11	Marine Conservation Zone Assessment	This sets out the Marine Conservation Zone Assessment for the Proposed Project.
6.12	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report	Outlines National Grids approach to Net Gain.
6.13	Marine Plan Policy Assessment	This set out the marine plan policies relevant to the Proposed Project and how they have been considered.
6.14	Environmental Scoping Report 2022	This sets out what needs to be assessed in the EIA to help define how to approach the assessment and what information may be needed to identify the likely significant effects from the development.
6.15	Scoping Opinion 2022	This outlines the response from the Planning Inspectorate to the Scoping Report submitted for the Proposed Project.

1.6.2 Table 1.2 lists other relevant documents referenced within the ES, that have been included in the application for development consent.

Table 1.2 Other relevant documents

Application Document	Chapter	Content
Volume 7: Other Relevant Documents		
7.1	Planning Statement	Identifies the context and need for a proposed development and includes an assessment of how the proposed development accords with relevant national, regional and local planning policies.
7.3	Design Development Report	Overview of the design rationale and evolution for the Proposed Project and back check review of key design decisions.

Application Document	Chapter	Content
7.5.1.1 (Suffolk) and 7.5.1.2 (Kent)	Outline Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan	Set out proposals for the management of construction traffic on the local highway network in the vicinity of the Proposed Project during the construction period in order to limit any potential disruptions and implications on the overall transport network.
7.5.2	Outline Offshore Construction Environment Management Plan	Sets out the overarching principles and detailed measures to minimise as far as reasonably practicable and mitigate the effects of the construction activities associated with the Proposed Project on the marine environment.
7.5.3	Outline Onshore Construction Environment Management Plan	Sets out the overarching principles and detailed measures to minimise as far as reasonably practicable and mitigate the effects of the construction activities associated with the Proposed Project on the surrounding terrestrial environment.
7.5.3.1	CEMP Appendix A Outline Code of Construction Practice	Sets out the standard good practice measures that will be undertaken during construction of the Proposed Project.
7.5.3.2	CEMP Appendix B Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC)	Provides a record of all environmental commitments and measures assumed within the ES.
7.5.4.1 (Suffolk) and 7.5.4.2 (Kent)	Outline Onshore Overarching Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)	Provides a summary of the known and potential terrestrial archaeological resource that may be impacted by the Proposed Project along with methodologies, procedures and individual mitigation measures recommended to protect these assets from significant environmental effects.
7.5.5	Outline Offshore Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)	Provides summary of the known and potential marine archaeological resource that may be impacted by the Proposed Project along with methodologies, procedures and individual mitigation measures recommended to protect these assets from significant environmental effects.
7.5.6.1 (Suffolk) and 7.5.6.2 (Kent)	Outline Air Quality Management Plan	Details how the Proposed Project will implement measures to control and limit emissions to the atmosphere.

Application Document	Chapter	Content
7.5.7.1 (Suffolk) and 7.5.7.2 (Kent)	Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan	Sets out the framework for the planting, management and monitoring of landscaping and ecological mitigation and enhancement habitats.
7.5.8.1 (Suffolk) and 7.5.8.2 (Kent)	Outline Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan	Sets out the framework for the management of noise and vibration impacts and the potential site-specific measures and construction methodologies required to help avoid or reduce potential noise and vibration effects during construction.
7.5.9.1 (Suffolk) and 7.5.9.2 (Kent)	Outline Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Management Plan	Describes where PRoWs would be affected by the Proposed Project and how they would be managed to ensure they remain safe to use, and disruption to the users of the PRoW is minimised.
7.5.10.1 (Suffolk) and 7.5.10.2 (Kent)	Outline Soil Management Plan	Provides guidance in relation to soil handling, management and restoration throughout the Proposed Project.
7.5.11	Outline Marine Mammal Mitigation Plan	A document listing appropriate mitigation measures to minimise and mitigate the effects of offshore construction activities on marine mammals.
7.5.12	Outline Offshore Invasive Non-Native Species Management Plan	Sets out the measures that would be used to control and prevent the spread of invasive non-native species (INNS).
7.5.13	Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Strategy	Presents the overarching GHG management principles and foundational GHG management requirements to reduce and manage GHG emissions related to the Proposed Project.
7.6	Marine Archaeological Method Statements	Sets out the strategy and methodology for implementing the geoarchaeological works in support of the marine Ground Investigation (GI) works.
7.7	Marine Biosecurity Plan	Supports the Outline Marine INNS Management Plan (Application Document 7.5.12 Outline Invasive Non-Native Species Management Plan) by describing the potential risks of marine INNS introduction and spread associated with the Proposed Project and provides a framework for preventing this during the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases.

Application Document	Chapter	Content
7.8	Red Throated Diver Protocol	Provides a best practice protocol to minimise the disturbance to non-breeding red-throated diver during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Project.
7.9	Equalities Impact Assessment	Demonstrates how National Grid has paid due regard to the needs of protected characteristic groups in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).
7.10	Coordination Document	Presents an overview of the Proposed Project's coordination efforts to date with other projects in the area, including coordination in consenting, project development and construction.
7.11.1 (Suffolk) and 7.11.2 (Kent)	Design Approach Document (DAD)	Presents the site specific design approach and solution for above ground elements of the Proposed Project, including how site-specific design principles have been derived following analysis of each site's constraints and opportunities.
7.12.1 (Suffolk) and 7.12.2 (Kent)	Design Principles	Sets out key design principles that National Grid would be required to adhere to when developing the detailed design of the converter stations and substations.

1.7 Net Gain Commitments

- 1.7.1 National Grid has committed to 10% Net Gain in Environmental value including as a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) across all its construction projects.
 - 1.7.2 This commitment is underpinned by the delivery of quantifiable enhancements for biodiversity measured from a baseline using the statutory biodiversity metric calculation tool (Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs, 2024) with actions formalised and secured by long term management arrangements with external organisations and partners.
 - 1.7.3 Wider environmental benefits such as carbon capture and storage, air quality and recreation and associated financial values are also considered and quantified using valuation tools and emerging methodologies.
 - 1.7.4 These commitments ensure that National Grid can deliver long term environmental improvements as part of their works. The commitments align and make a positive contribution to regional and national strategies and facilitate collaboration and partnerships with local communities and stakeholders.
- Further information on this is presented in **Application Document 6.12 Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Report**.

1.8 Transboundary Effects

- 1.8.1 There is a requirement under the EIA Regulations to consider transboundary effects i.e. those effects that could affect receptors within other European Economic Area (EEA) States. Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 12 (September 2024) provides further information on the requirements and sets out how the Secretary of State will meet his or her obligations in this regard.
- 1.8.2 A transboundary screening exercise was undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate in July 2023 on behalf of the Secretary of State for the purposes of Regulation 32 of the EIA Regulations (Planning Inspectorate, 2021b). The assessment concluded that the Proposed Project "*is likely to have a significant effect on the environment in an EEA State*". A notification letter was issued to the relevant EEA States in August 2023. Of these EEA States, only Belgium expressed an interest in being consulted on the DCO application once accepted by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 1.8.3 An assessment of transboundary effects has been included in this ES for the Offshore Scheme element of the Proposed Project (see chapters within ES Part 4 Offshore Scheme). Transboundary effects are also considered within **Application Document 6.6 Habitats Regulations Assessment Report**. This provides the information required for the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State to provide a copy of the DCO application and Environmental Statement to the consulted EEA States for the purposes of Regulation 32(4) of the EIA Regulations. No transboundary effects have been identified within the offshore assessment.

1.9 Coordination with third party projects

- 1.9.1 Feedback received during early discussions with LPA's as well as throughout pre-application stage identified the need to explore coordination with other energy infrastructure projects that are proposed in the same locality. The need to consider coordination among onshore and offshore electricity transmission infrastructure projects in order to minimise adverse impacts to the local environment and host communities, is also a requirement of NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-5.
- 1.9.2 The Proposed Project has been developed as a standalone project but has been designed, in as far as possible, in a coordinated way with other projects, including two potential National Grid Ventures (NGV) projects, namely LionLink and Nautilus.
- 1.9.3 In March 2024, NGV's LionLink project announced that it would be removing its potential landfall at Aldeburgh from its proposals. LionLink is still proposing to co-locate its converter station alongside the Proposed Project's Converter Station near Saxmundham.
- 1.9.4 In November 2024, Ofgem announced that it had approved the Initial Project Assessment (IPA)² for the LionLink and Nautilus electricity interconnectors. With the approval from Ofgem, both projects are confirmed for further development.
- 1.9.5 Following Ofgem approval, NGV's Nautilus project announced its decision to connect to the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) at the Isle of Grain, Kent rather than at Friston Substation in Suffolk. Irrespective of this decision, at the time of writing, Nautilus still have a Point of Connection (PoC) agreement in place to connect at Friston Substation. Therefore, although it is considered highly unlikely that Nautilus' PoC

² The IPA is a consultation process run by Ofgem to determine an interconnector project's suitability.

agreement at Friston Substation will be realised, consideration has been given, as far as practicable, to the potential combined effects of this project with the Proposed Project (see **Application Document 6.2.2.13 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 13 Suffolk Onshore Scheme Inter-project Cumulative Effects** for further detail).

- 1.9.6 The Proposed Project has been designed to allow space within the landscape for the future delivery of other projects including allowance within the proposed landscape planting and drainage proposals (see **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk**). National Grid will continue to consider further ways in which they could coordinate the construction activities associated with the Proposed Project with those of other projects and developers, including NGV's LionLink and Nautilus, EDF Energy's Sizewell C and Scottish Power Renewables' (SPR) East Anglia ONE North and East Anglia TWO offshore windfarms. Further detail is provided within **Application Document 7.10 Coordination Document**.

1.10 Competence

- 1.10.1 Regulation 14(4) of the EIA Regulations requires that an ES is prepared by 'competent experts' and that the ES is accompanied by a statement outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts.
- 1.10.2 This ES has been prepared and coordinated by environmental consultants who are competent members of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) EIA Quality Mark Scheme (Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2024). The Scheme allows organisations that lead the coordination of EIAs in the UK to make a commitment to excellence in their EIA activities and have this commitment independently reviewed.
- 1.10.3 A Statement of Competence (SoC) (**Application Document 6.3.1.1.A Appendix 1.1.A Statement of Competence**) is included within the ES, outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of the experts who have prepared the ES for the Proposed Project.

1.11 References

- Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs. (2024). *Biodiversity metric: calculate the biodiversity net gain of a project or development*. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-metric-calculate-the-biodiversity-net-gain-of-a-project-or-development>
- Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. (2024). *EIA Quality Mark Scheme*. Retrieved from <https://www.iema.net/corporate-programmes/eia-quality-mark>
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