



The Planning Inspectorate

The Planning Act 2008

Application for Development Consent for the Sea Link Project

Case Ref: EN020026

The Examining Authority's Note of an Unaccompanied Site Inspection

Background

The Examining Authority (ExA) undertook an unaccompanied site inspection (USI) to support the examination of an application for development consent for the proposed Sea Link Project (the application) on the morning of Thursday 26 June 2025.

The ExA carried out its USI from publicly accessible land (roads, footpaths and bridleways).

The USI was undertaken to view the location of the proposed development including the proposed landfall areas and proposed locations of substations, convertor stations and construction compounds, and to observe the existing character, appearance and environment of the surrounding area and adjoining land uses.

Particulars of the Unaccompanied Site Inspection

The USI was undertaken by: Sarah Holmes, Richard Hunt, Steven Rennie, Nancy Thomas and Simon Warder. The ExA was accompanied by Claire Megginson, Louise Harraway from the case team and Richard King from the environmental services team.

The USI was undertaken on foot. Weather conditions were dry and sunny with a temperature circa 18 degrees centigrade. Weather conditions were suitable to appreciate long range views. The USI commenced at approximately 09:30 and finished at approximately 11.30. A list of the locations visited is attached at Annex A.



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Annex A: List of locations visited on the Unaccompanied Site Inspection on the morning of Thursday 26 June 2025

The ExA commenced the USI from Aldeburgh and travelled by car along the A1094 and A12 to Farnham, observing the road conditions and junction. The ExA then travelled northwards on the A12 to the junction with B1121 and passed over Benhall Rail Bridge. The ExA travelled northwards by car to Saxmundham and observed the residential and other development fronting onto the road in Benhall and Saxmundham. The ExA observed the location of the proposed access and bridge over the River Fromus and the relationship with Hurts Hall. The ExA observed the views from viewpoint VP2 of the proposed bridge, construction compound (S01) and the position of the proposed converter station.

The ExA travelled on foot from Saxmundham centre up Church Hill B1119 and past St John's Church. The ExA observed road conditions, topography and existing tree cover. The ExA noted the dwellings at Manor Gardens.

The ExA viewed the proposed converter station site from viewpoint VP1. The ExA then continued along footpath E-460/023(0) past Wood Farm, noting the approximate locations of veteran trees in adjacent woodland including in Bloomfield's Covert. The ExA observed the proposed construction compound locations (S02 and S03) and the proposed drainage area. We also observed arable crops, topography and views across the site. The ExA walked eastwards along footpath E-491/006/0 and then southwards along footpath E-491/005/0 noting a block of woodland to west and hedges and trees on field boundaries to the west of Hill Farm. We observed heavy goods vehicles using the access from Hill Farm.

The ExA walked north eastwards along bridleway E-491/010/0 past viewpoint VP5. We observed the view from the bridleway towards the proposed location of the converter station. The ExA walked northwards on the bridleway past Redhouse Farm until it connected with footpath E-491/006/0 and then headed east on the footpath until it connected with footpath E-260/018/0 on Fristonmoor Lane, noting the proposed cable route and works areas. The ExA then walked southwards on Fristonmoor Lane past residential properties at Moor Farm to footpath E-260/017/0 to the location of viewpoint VP6. The ExA observed viewpoints VP6a and VP6b. The ExA then walked back to Church Hill and Saxmundham along footpaths E-260/017/0, E-260/018/0, E-491/006/0 and E-491/010/0 viewing the proposed locations of construction compounds S04 and S05 en route.

The route is shown below.



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