



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 afternoon 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 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, Nancy Thomas and Simon Warder. The ExA was accompanied by Claire Megginson and Louise Harraway from the case team.

The USI was undertaken by car and on foot. Weather conditions were dry and sunny with a temperature circa 26 degrees centigrade. Weather conditions were suitable to appreciate long range views. The USI commenced at approximately 12:00 and finished at approximately 14:35. 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 afternoon of Thursday 26 June 2025

The ExA commenced the USI from Saxmundham by car and travelled eastwards on Church Hill B1119. The ExA viewed the proposed converter station site from viewpoints VP21, VP4 and the vicinity of VP3. The ExA then continued by car southwards onto Grove Road to the location of viewpoint VP7 looking across farmland to the site of the proposed substation near Friston and cable crossing point. The ExA continued southwards by car to Friston. We observed the removable flood barrier at Friston village hall doorway. The ExA then visited the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Friston and observed the view from viewpoint VP23 towards the proposed substation. The ExA then walked northwards on footpath E-260/0170/0 to observe the proposed location of the construction compounds and substation. We noted that some topsoil stripping and site clearance works had taken place to the east of the footpath. The ExA crossed under existing pylons and overhead lines to view the proposed access from the west and the proposed route of the underground cable between Friston substation and the proposed converter station. The ExA then observed the views southwards towards the proposed Friston substation from dwellings at Moor Farm and viewpoint VP6.

The ExA then travelled by car to Snape Warren and walked along the Suffolk Coast path to viewpoint VP18. We observed views northwards towards the proposed substation and converter station.

The ExA then travelled to Snape Maltings and observed the location of existing car parks.

The ExA travelled northwards on Sternfield Road to Red Lane and noted views towards the proposed converter station from viewpoint VP19. The ExA continued north through Saxmundham to Clay Hills and observed the view from viewpoint VP15 towards the proposed converter station. The ExA then travelled east and observed the views from viewpoints VP16 and VP17 towards the proposed converter station and substation. The ExA then travelled into Leiston and then southwards along the B1069, noting construction works south of Knodishall Common and the junction with the A1094.

The route is shown below.



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