

Great Glemham Parish Council

Relevant Representation as Interested Party

Regarding: National Grid Electricity Transmission DCO Application for the Sea Link Project (EN020026)

Submission to the Planning Inspectorate

1. Introduction

Great Glemham Parish Council (GGPC) supports national efforts to achieve net zero and recognises the importance of new energy infrastructure. However, we object to the current form of the Sea Link application due to the limited assessment of cumulative impacts from multiple, overlapping projects already affecting our parish and surrounding areas.

2. Cumulative Impact and Strategic Coordination

GGPC is concerned by the insufficient strategic coordination across projects including Sea Link, Sizewell C (SZC), Scottish Power Renewables (SPR), and a growing number of solar and grid developments. The combined disruption from these schemes has not been adequately addressed.

Residents are being asked to bear a disproportionate burden—in terms of construction disturbance, traffic, landscape degradation, and loss of amenity—without evidence that the cumulative effects have been fully assessed or that benefits will be meaningfully returned to our communities.

We believe this means that both the cumulative impact has not been properly considered, and the potential benefits of collective strategies for management and mitigation have not been realised.

3. Strategic Justification and Alternatives

While GGPC recognises the national importance of improved transmission capacity, we remain to be convinced that Sea Link, in its current form and siting, represents the most strategic or proportionate solution.

- The project will not generate electricity itself, but instead transfer power already landed at Friston back offshore towards Kent, raising questions as to whether a more direct offshore transmission solution would better serve national and local interests.

- Emerging integrated offshore grid proposals and higher-capacity technologies may provide less intrusive ways of meeting the same objectives.
- Brownfield alternatives and sites closer to centres of demand deserve fuller examination to avoid unnecessary encroachment into rural landscapes and communities.

In addition, some brownfield alternatives were discounted earlier in the site selection process on grounds of access constraints. Since then, major new infrastructure associated with Sizewell C — such as the Leiston relief road and the Sizewell Link Road — has materially altered local transport capacity. These changes may make certain previously excluded sites, including former airfields and brownfield land, more viable for consideration now than when the initial assessments were carried out.

We therefore ask the Examining Authority to satisfy itself that these new circumstances have been properly taken into account, and that the choice of Saxmundham/Sternfield continues to represent the most appropriate and proportionate siting option.

4. Traffic, Secondary Roads, and Quiet Lanes

As in previous submissions, our main concern relates to access to the A12 and turning onto the road from the Marlesford junction.

While Great Glemham lies just off the A12, we are already experiencing growing traffic pressure on secondary rural roads, many of which are narrow, unclassified, and not designed for diverted or rat-running vehicles. The closure of the A12 during incidents is of continued concern, with rerouting directing traffic through the village if the section between Stratford St Andrew and Marlesford is impacted.

Two of our parish roads are formally designated Quiet Lanes:

- **Workhouse Lane** has seen increasing use as a rat-run by vehicles avoiding congestion on the A12, despite its designation and unsuitability for through traffic.
- **Chapel Lane**, running through the village centre, reflects the quiet, pedestrian-friendly character of Great Glemham and must be protected from increased use by construction vehicles or diverted traffic.

The Sea Link proposals risk compounding these issues. The application does not adequately recognise how minor roads will respond to increased regional HGV and light-vehicle traffic, especially when cumulative effects from Sea Link, SZC, and SPR are taken into account.

We urge that this issue be given special attention, and that a clear traffic management and mitigation strategy is developed in consultation with affected parishes. Without intervention, secondary road traffic could significantly degrade

quality of life, create safety risks for walkers and cyclists, and erode the intent of the Quiet Lanes designation.

4. Community Engagement and Mitigation

If the DCO is granted, mitigation must be community-informed and locally delivered. We request that:

- Neighbouring councils are actively involved in planning any traffic calming or road use restrictions;
 - Resources are allocated to implement rat-run deterrents, such as signage, physical measures, or Quiet Lane reinforcements;
 - Legacy benefits such as footpath enhancements, traffic monitoring, and local resilience funds are extended to communities like Great Glemham, not only those immediately adjacent to project infrastructure;
 - An All-Energy Projects Forum is established to coordinate impacts and mitigation across SZC, SPR, Sea Link, and other future schemes.
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5. Conclusion

Great Glemham is a small, rural parish. While we do not face the disproportionate level of disruption of some of our neighbouring parishes, we are concerned about the cumulative impact of these projects on our parish and parishioners. Without robust cumulative analysis and shared, strategic mitigation, these projects risk undermining local quality of life, community wellbeing, and trust.

In particular, we ask that Sea Link's strategic justification is carefully scrutinised to ensure that it is the right project, in the right place, and at the right time. Communities must not be subjected to avoidable impacts from infrastructure that might better be delivered offshore or on appropriately connected brownfield sites.

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