

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [South East Anglia Link](#)  
**Subject:** SEA LINK DCO, AONB/National Landscape sensitive land.  
**Date:** 22 July 2025 08:54:44  
**Attachments:** [REDACTED]

---

[REDACTED]

SEA LINK DCO, AONB/National Landscape sensitive land.

22/07/2025

Dear Southeast Anglia Planning Inspectorate,

Prior to the submission of the Sea Link DCO application the public received a Sea Link leaflet from National Grid entitled, *The Great Grid Update, Community Update Feb 2025*, which contained the section heading, 'Will Sea Link damage the environment?'

This section informs the public that:

***'Where our proposals are located in sensitive areas such as the Leiston/Aldeburgh Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and RSPB North Warren, the cable would be deep below ground to avoid disturbing the environment. Cables in these areas would be installed using a trenchless construction method that would not disturb the ground above'***

I further received confirmation from National Grid of its commitment to respect designated, sensitive land such as 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty' (AONB) by using 'trenchless' techniques for its cable in these areas:

***"Our proposals do not include open trenching construction methods in the SSSI or the AONB/National Landscape."*** National Grid email to me on 27 Mar, 11:17.

I reported to yourselves, the Planning Inspectorate, on the 08 July 2025 19:18, however, that there was no mention of this commitment to protection of the AONB in the lodged DCO documents, specifically in the Environmental statement, Part 1- Introduction, Chapter 4, Description of the proposed Project. Pages 26-76.

You advised me on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025 that I should contact National Grid to 'confirm where this information could be found'. I received a response from National Grid 21/7/25, 16:12, which includes the following:

***"...I have noted that in a previous email a member of the team made reference to how 'our proposals do not include open trenching construction methods in the [...] AONB/National Landscape.' This statement was made in error and I apologise for the confusion caused..."***

Response to me from NGRID 21/7/25, 16:12.

There certainly is 'confusion caused' by the contradiction in National Grid's stated aims and its intentions in the use of environmentally destructive open trenching construction methods across sensitive land.

National Grid has made clear its responsibility, capacity and capability to protect sensitive land. It has not, however, made clear to the public the limitations of its definition of sensitive land.

I submit that this 'confusion' represents sufficient cause to reject the DCO application for Sea Link by National Grid at an early stage.

Regards  
Nick Scarr

NGRID's public statement in: *The Great Grid Update, Community Update Feb 2025*, screenshot shown below.

# Community Update

February 2025



**As the UK moves to cleaner, more affordable sources of energy such as offshore wind, our infrastructure needs to be upgraded to connect this power to homes, businesses and public services.**

Through The Great Grid Upgrade, National Grid is carrying out the largest overhaul of the electricity grid in generations. As part of this upgrade, we are developing plans for Sea Link, a proposed 138 km connection between Suffolk and Kent.

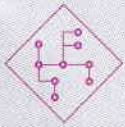
Around 122 km of Sea Link's cables would be out at sea. Where it is planned to come onshore between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness in Suffolk, the cables would be installed underground without impacting the beach. From there, underground cables would connect to a converter station at Saxmundham,

before continuing underground to a substation near Friston, which has planning consent as part of Scottish Power Renewables' separate wind farm projects. The electricity would then flow into the Grid to be transported to where it is needed across East Anglia and the rest of the country.

Local communities in Suffolk and Kent have provided helpful feedback on our proposals for Sea Link across several stages of consultation held over the past few years. In this update, we are providing answers to some of the most common questions about Sea Link.



# Key facts



**Sea Link would strengthen the electricity network's ability to carry power from electricity generators to where it is needed.**

Sea Link is not a wind farm and is not an interconnector which transports power between countries.



**122 km – or 88% – of the Sea Link cables would be offshore, coming onshore deep underground in Suffolk.**

No new pylons would be built in Suffolk as part of Sea Link.



**12 km – or 9% – of the cable is onshore and underground in Suffolk**, with the remaining 3% of cabling in Kent.



**Aldeburgh beach and North Warren RSPB reserve would not be dug up to build Sea Link.**

Trenchless construction, which would not disturb the land surface, is proposed to install cables deep underground in this area.

## Benefits

### 2 million homes

could be powered through the energy carried by Sea Link.

### Boosting energy security

by helping reduce our dependence on imported gas.

### Lowering energy bills

by connecting the Grid to more affordable forms of electricity generation.

## Your questions answered



### 1 Why can't it go to Bradwell or the Isle of Grain?

The high voltage electricity grid is a network across Britain. Some parts of it need to be upgraded so we can continue to benefit from a reliable flow of electricity. The Sizewell area requires grid reinforcement – that is why Sea Link is proposed here.

A connection at Bradwell or the Isle of Grain would be too far south of where Sea Link needs to be. Connecting at either of these locations would require more new infrastructure to meet the need for the upgrade.



### 2 Why aren't you using brownfield sites?

At the start of the project, we considered different locations, including brownfield sites in Suffolk, where Sea Link could come ashore. There were no brownfield sites large enough for the infrastructure required as part of Sea Link, such as the converter station, or near enough to where we need to connect.



### 3 Why don't you take power direct to London?

London accounts for 19% of energy demand at peak times, with 81% of electricity used across the rest of Great Britain. London is also a bottleneck in the electricity system (similar to the M25 at rush hour), meaning that we need more capacity that bypasses London so that power can be moved to homes and businesses across the UK. Sea Link would be part of that energy system moving power across Great Britain and is not exclusively taking power to London.



Example 1



Example 2



4

### Will Sea Link damage the environment?

Sea Link would help to connect homes and businesses to cleaner, greener, more affordable electricity. Decarbonising the electricity grid is vital for tackling climate change – the biggest threat to nature.

Where our proposals are located in sensitive areas such as the Leiston/Aldeburgh Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and RSPB North Warren, the cable would be deep below ground to avoid disturbing the environment. Cables in these areas would be installed using a trenchless construction method that would not disturb the ground above.

Some cables for the connection to the converter station and substation would be installed using open trenches. This would not take place within SSSI areas and once construction is complete, the land would be restored.

You can find two examples of construction and restoration works from previous National Grid Ventures projects above. The images are of previous underground cable construction sites.

5

### Will construction traffic negatively impact villages and tourism?

We are proposing temporary haul roads so that construction traffic avoids the local road network where possible. **The average number of Heavy Goods Vehicle movements per day at the peak of construction would be 79.**

To avoid HGVs going through the centre of Saxmundham to the converter station, we are proposing a bridge across the River Fromus.

We will also be working with other developers in the area, including Sizewell C, Scottish Power Renewables and National Grid Ventures, to coordinate our construction activity. We are committed to identifying ways we can reduce the overall impact of construction on local communities.

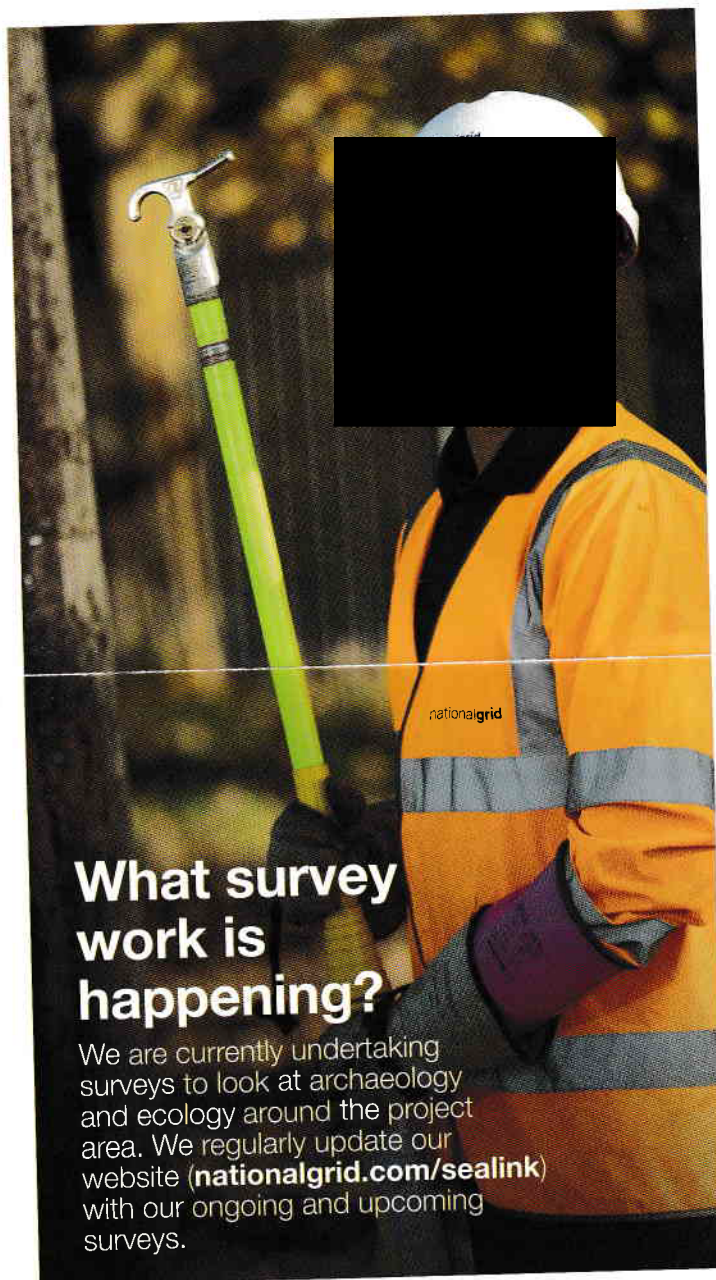


# Project timeline



## Next steps

We are planning to submit our application for development consent early this year. For now, we are continuing to carry out survey works, which will help us understand more about any potential impacts and how we can avoid, limit, or mitigate them.



## What survey work is happening?

We are currently undertaking surveys to look at archaeology and ecology around the project area. We regularly update our website ([nationalgrid.com/sealink](https://nationalgrid.com/sealink)) with our ongoing and upcoming surveys.

## Find out more

Scan the QR code or visit our website at [nationalgrid.com/sealink](https://nationalgrid.com/sealink) to find out more about our proposals.

You can contact us at:  
[contact@sealink.nationalgrid.com](mailto:contact@sealink.nationalgrid.com),  
or by calling 0808 134 9569.



**nationalgrid**