

Susan Bridges

Registration Identification number [REDACTED], Sea Link Open Floor Hearing, 6 November 2025

I am a resident of Orford. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

I have known this gently contoured landscape for over 40 years. It include Sizewell and Felixstowe docks with culture, ecology, heritage, communities and economies working together side by side.

Last year I welcomed the new Government's manifesto which included "*Better ways to get our electricity and heating to save the environment*", "*We will be leaders in saving the environment at home and in the world.*" And the increased budget for wind farm Contracts for Difference to over £1.5 billion. Had Government support of this scale been available when the Bawdsey to Bramford cable route was consented, and then questionably downgraded, the converter stations proposed at Wood Farm and all SPR's East Anglian wind farm electricity would be at Bramford. NGET's would not have a connection at Friston and this Sea Link DCO would not be here. More's the pity.

Sea Link threatens Friston, Saxmundham and Sternfield's rural environment and the setting of the Suffolk & Essex Coasts & Heaths ANOB National Landscape. They need full statutory protection from the harm Sea Link will cause. The protections include NGET's statutory duties under Section 38 and Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act, 1989, NGET's Visual Impact Provision reports and Section 85 of the enhanced Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000, and the relevant NSIP protections to stop permanent harm to their rural environment.

Sea Link is a two-way cable to Kent, pooling electricity in Suffolk where it is not needed. As construction has not started for a proposed connection at Friston, the electricity for Sea Link could be converted and stored offshore or go to other brownfield or industrialised sites in Norfolk, Essex or Kent, in line with NGET's obligation to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical network.

Furthermore, areas identified in Zone(s) of Theoretical Visibility include individual impacts of high importance south of the Alde and Ore which still have not been assessed in the DCO documents. Until they are, NGET cannot assert: "*No part of Sea Link either during construction or operation would directly affect the Suffolk & Essex Coasts and Heaths ANOB National Landscape.*"

- I would also like to draw the ExA's attention to some serious and misleading omissions. NGET does not seem to be following its guidance as outlined in their *Open Letter Update on the Connection and Infrastructure Options Note (CION) Process* dated 14th November 2018, see pages 7 and 9 of Appendix B: The CION Template.

<https://www.neso.energy/document/132046/download>

- Regarding page 7. Bullet point 3 states "*Onshore converter station to be located near to MITS substation*". Sea Link should onshore to a converter station located near to a MITS substation. In the Sea Link Application form (Volume 1, Document 1.2, v. A, March 2025) Sea Link is not onshoring to a converter station located near to a MITS substation because the proposed substation at Friston has not been constructed at sea or on land. Sea Link's nearest onshore converter station near a MITS substation is at Bramford.

- Regarding page 9 of Appendix B, The CION Template, Sea Link should have considered two further options. Assuming the options must be to onshore to converter stations near MITS substations, what were the other two options in this section of the Sea Link CION process?

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- Options Selection and Design Evolution (Volume 8, Document 8.2, v. A, March 2025) doesn't reference the CION process and on page 26 it states *"Nine converter site Areas (A-I) ... being a number of potential network connections points in the Sizewell area"* when only one onshore converter station must be located near to a MITS substation for Sea Link. Why wasn't NGET following the COIN process?
- The question of where Sea Link joins the network is further complicated by the Applicant's unintelligible response in AP5 *"Update on Friston substation and justification for the continuing inclusion of scenario 2 in the examination"* (Vol.9, Doc. 9.72.1, v. A, November 2025). Where Sea Link landfalls in this DCO needs to be clarified in accordance with the CION process.
- As the CION process is an optioneering process to identify the overall economic and efficient connection options and it provides a clear, transparent, repeatable and non-discriminatory process to ensure all relevant developers are treated in a consistent manner, why does NGET keep pages 7 and 9 confidential? Please can the ExA use their powers to share this information publicly?