



Planning Inspectorate

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To: All Interested Parties and Category 3 Parties

Our Ref: EN020026

Date: 23 February 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

Planning Act 2008 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – rule 13

Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission for an order granting development consent for the Sea Link project

Notification of hearings

The examination timetable at annex A of the [ExA's rule 8\(3\) letter 5 December 2025](#) included reserved dates for hearings.

We are now writing to advise you that the following hearings will be held under sections 91, 92 and 93 of the Planning Act 2008. The hearings will be blended events, with participants attending either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Hearing	Date	Start time	Location
Open floor hearing 3 (OFH3)	Tuesday 24 March 2026	Registration and seating available from: 9:00am Virtual registration process from: 9:30am Event start: 10.00am	All hearings will be blended events at: South Gallery Rooms 20-22 Excel London 1 Western Gateway Royal Victoria Dock London E16 1XL and By virtual means using Microsoft Teams OR at one of the satellite venues hosted by the applicant: Suffolk:

			<p>Deben Suite Ufford Park Yarmouth Road Melton Woodbridge IP12 1QW</p> <p>Kent:</p> <p>Unit 18 (1st Floor), Innovation House, Innovation Way, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, CT13 9FF</p> <p>Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered</p>
Compulsory acquisition hearing 2 (CAH2)	Wednesday 25 March 2026 (morning)	<p>Registration and seating available from: 9:00am</p> <p>Virtual registration process from: 9:30am</p> <p>Event start: 10.00am</p>	<p>All hearings will be blended events at:</p> <p>South Gallery Rooms 20-22 Excel London 1 Western Gateway Royal Victoria Dock London E16 1XL</p> <p>and</p> <p>By virtual means using Microsoft Teams OR at one of the satellite venues hosted by the applicant:</p> <p>Suffolk:</p> <p>Deben Suite Ufford Park Yarmouth Road Melton Woodbridge IP12 1QW</p> <p>Kent:</p> <p>Unit 18 (1st Floor), Innovation House, Innovation Way,</p>

			<p>Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, CT13 9FF</p> <p>Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered</p>
<p>Issue specific hearing 3 (ISH3)</p> <p>On environmental matters, including but not limited to water environment, traffic and transport, socio-economics and tourism, cumulative effects, marine physical environment, ecology and biodiversity, ornithology and noise and vibration.</p>	<p>Wednesday 25 March 2026 (from 2pm)</p> <p>and</p> <p>Thursday 26 March 2026 (from 10am)</p> <p>and</p> <p>Friday 27 March 2026 (from 10am)</p>	<p>Registration and seating available from: 1:30pm</p> <p>Virtual registration process from: 1:30pm</p> <p>Event start: 2.00pm</p> <p>Hearing resumes on Thursday and Friday: 10am (registration from 09:30am)</p>	<p>All hearings will be blended events at:</p> <p>South Gallery Rooms 20-22 Excel London 1 Western Gateway Royal Victoria Dock London E16 1XL</p> <p>and</p> <p>By virtual means using Microsoft Teams OR at one of the satellite venues hosted by the applicant:</p> <p>Suffolk:</p> <p>Deben Suite Ufford Park Yarmouth Road Melton Woodbridge IP12 1QW</p> <p>Kent:</p> <p>Unit 18 (1st Floor), Innovation House, Innovation Way, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, CT13 9FF</p> <p>Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered</p>
<p>NOTE: If any of the above hearings are no longer required then notification will be published as soon as practicable on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website, providing reasonable notice to interested parties of the decision to cancel.</p>			

Participation, conduct and management of hearings

People who have land or rights affected by compulsory acquisition or temporary possession are affected persons (AP) and have a right to be heard at a **compulsory acquisition hearing** (CAH). If you are an AP wishing to speak about your land or rights then a CAH will be the best forum to raise any such issues.

Open floor hearings (OFH) are hearings where interested parties (IP) who are individuals, groups and organisations have the opportunity to raise any matters that they consider are important and relevant to the consideration of the application. Submissions should be based on your previous representations made in writing. The ExA has read all of these, and representations made at the OFHs do not need to repeat these, but should provide further detail, explanation or evidence to help inform the ExA. To allow everyone to have a fair opportunity to be heard, time limits will be strictly applied. **The ExA will hear from all parties who have already indicated they wish to be heard by registering at deadlines 3 and 4A (please confirm your attendance by completing [the event participation form](#))**. If you have not already registered to speak, there is no guarantee that there will be an opportunity for you to be heard at this hearing. However, if time permits on the day, the ExA will use its discretion to invite oral submissions from any individuals who have not pre-registered to speak. Priority will be given to those who are IPs and have not already been heard at previous OFHs.

Issue specific hearings (ISH) are held at the discretion of the ExA to consider matters that it considers to be important and relevant to the effective and robust examination of the application. Consequently, the business of the hearing will be limited to the matters identified in the agenda or otherwise raised by the ExA. Active participation is at the invitation and discretion of the ExA. Oral submissions must address the matters and questions identified on the hearing agenda or raised by the ExA at the hearing. Oral submissions on other subject matters or from persons who have not been invited to speak by the ExA may only be heard at the discretion of the ExA, who may decide that such matters are not heard in the interests of relevance, efficiency or fairness.

Please refer to The Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say](#) for more information about the purpose of open floor, issue specific and compulsory acquisition hearings.

Attendees

We would find it helpful if the following parties could attend:

Compulsory acquisition hearing 2:

- The applicant.
- Suffolk Country Council.
- Kent County Council.
- East Suffolk Council.
- Thanet District Council.
- Kent Wildlife Trust
- Statutory undertakers with outstanding concerns regarding protective provisions.

- Affected persons who requested to be heard and any other affected persons with outstanding objections to the acquisition of their land.

Issue specific hearing 3:

- The applicant
- Suffolk County Council
- Kent County Council
- East Suffolk Council
- Thanet District Council
- Dover District Council
- Suffolk Energy Action Solutions (SEAS)
- Kent Wildlife Trust
- The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Marine Management Organisation
- Any other public authority, body or organisation or an IP affected by the proposed development.

Registration and requests to participate in hearings

Please note: if you submitted a request to attend the hearings at deadline 3 or 4A, we will still require you to please complete the event participation form to inform us of which hearing you will be attending, and if you will be participation in-person or via Microsoft Teams.

Please register using the [event participation form](#) by 23:59pm Tuesday 10 March 2026 if you intend to participate in the hearings and provide all the information requested.

If you have any difficulty completing the form please contact the case team.

Please note that by attending the event either in person or online you are agreeing to be filmed for the purposes of the online live stream of the event and the recording of the event which will get published on the [project webpage](#). A limited number of seats will be available for observers who wish not to be filmed at the event. Please contact the case team to notify them if you prefer not to be filmed at the event. A transcript of the event will also be published on the [project webpage](#) after the event.

Any request to participate in a hearing should include the following information:

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top of any letter or email from The Planning Inspectorate).
- Email address (if available) and contact telephone number.
- Name and unique reference number of any person/organisation that you are representing (if applicable).
- Confirmation of whether you will participate virtually or in-person.
- Confirmation of the hearing(s) you wish to participate in.

- For compulsory acquisition hearings, the plot number(s) of the relevant land provided in the book of reference and the land plans.

Joining instructions for hearings will be issued by the case team no later than **5pm Monday 23 March 2026**. If you have not received your joining instructions by this time please contact the case team at the details at top of this letter.

Please contact the case team if you require any support or assistance to attend any hearing, either virtually or in person.

If you simply wish to observe any of the hearings then you can either:

1. Watch a livestream of the event - a link to the livestream will be made available on the project webpage shortly before the event is scheduled to begin; and/or
2. Watch the recording of the event which will be published on the project webpage shortly after the event has finished.

Alternatively, you can attend the physical event at the venue to observe the proceedings; however, to ensure there is adequate seating capacity at the venue we request that you register your attendance to observe only by **Tuesday 10 March 2026** using the [event participation form](#). Please note that it may not be possible to participate on the day if you have not registered your wish to speak by Tuesday 10 March.

Hearing agendas

The agendas and any detailed arrangements for the hearings will be published on the [project webpage](#) at least five working days before the hearings. However, the actual agenda on the day of each hearing may be subject to change at the ExA's discretion. For the OFH an agenda will be published confirming a speaking order for registered participants to make their oral submissions.

Satellite venues at Suffolk and Kent

As set out in its letters of 10 November 2025 (Rule 8 letter) [\[PD-013\]](#) and 28 November 2025 [\[PD-014\]](#), the ExA instructed the applicant to provide satellite venues for January hearings in order to provide a location for interested parties in the local areas to participate virtually.

The ExA has asked the applicant to provide this again for the hearings scheduled between Monday 23 and Friday 27 March 2026.

The applicant has provided details of satellite venues and interested parties can now register to participate or observe at either of these locations if they are not able to attend in-person at the Excel London or join virtually from home. The addresses for these locations are included in the table above.

If you will be attending either of the satellite venues, please note that these will be hosted by a third party (CVS International), and neither the applicant nor the Planning Inspectorate will be present in-person (although they will be present at the Excel London).

CVS International will be present throughout to assist interested parties in participating in the hearings. They will not be able to assist with any questions concerning the details of the Sea Link project, or the examination process.

For any queries concerning the proposed development, please contact the Sea Link team for the applicant: contact@sealink.nationalgrid.com

For any queries concerning the examination process, please contact the Planning Inspectorate Sea Link Case Team at the contact details provided at the top of this letter.

Procedure at hearings and post hearing submissions

The procedure to be followed at hearings is set out in The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010.

Participation in a hearing will be subject to the ExA's powers of control. It is for the ExA to determine how the hearing will be conducted, including the time allowed at the hearing for the making of a person's representations. The hearing will be managed in the interests of ensuring fair access to the hearing for all parties, and to ensure that the submissions of all invited persons are fully heard within the allotted time.

All hearings are recorded. The recordings and transcripts will be made available on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable following the hearing. The recordings allow any member of the public who is interested in the application and the examination to find out what has been discussed at a hearing. It is therefore important to note that anyone speaking at the hearing will need to introduce themselves, including any organisation or groups that they represent, **each time they speak** to ensure that someone listening to the recording after the hearing is clear who was speaking.

As the recordings are retained and published, they form a public record that can contain personal information to which the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies. Please refer to our ['Privacy Notice'](#) for further information. Participants must do their best to avoid making public any information which they would otherwise wish to be kept private and confidential. If there is a need to refer to such information, it should be in written form. Although this will also be published, personal and private content can be redacted or removed before it is made publicly available. Any person who is unclear on this point should ask the case team for guidance before they place personal and private information into the public domain. The Planning Inspectorate's practice is to publish the recordings and transcripts and retain them for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision on the development consent order (DCO). If you actively participate in the hearing, it is important that you understand that you will be recorded and that the recording and transcript will be made available in the public domain.

The evidence presented orally at hearings should be included in post hearing submissions and submitted at the relevant deadline in the [examination timetable](#).

Applicant's notification duties

The applicant is reminded of its duty to notify and publicise hearings under rule 13(6) and 13(7) of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the case team at southeastanqlialink@planninginspectorate.gov.uk, on 0303 444 5000, or at the postal address at the top of this letter.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Holmes

Sarah Holmes
Lead member of the panel of Examining Inspectors

This communication does not constitute legal advice.
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