1 September 2026

Miatta Fahnbulleh
Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
Ministerial Correspondence Team
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
55 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HP

Dear Miatta Fahnbulleh

RE: Sea Link – EN20026
Minster Marshes: Concerns regarding works taking place before the final DCO decision

I am writing to you as a concerned resident of East Kent, regarding National Grid's proposed Sea Link project and the proposed converter station at Minster Marshes.

I understand that the Examination of the Sea Link Development Consent Order has now concluded and that the Examining Authority submitted its recommendation to you on 30 July 2026, with a decision expected by 30 October 2026. However, I am increasingly concerned about the extent of activity now taking place on and around the proposed converter-station site at Minster Marshes while that decision remains outstanding.

National Grid's own published information confirms that archaeological excavation works and ground investigation works are currently taking place at the site. Since the start of August National Grid workmen have been using heavy duty machinery to tear up huge swathes of the marsh and installed bridges over the channels for heavy diggers. This clearly indicates that the site is being prepared for construction to start once the decision is announced. The scale and nature of the current ongoing work raises the important question about how the Government is ensuring that the final decision remains completely open and is not become a foregone conclusion.

Thousands of people have spent time taking part in two poorly advertised consultations against the siting of this converter station on Minster Marshes Nature Reserve and cabling through Pegwell Bay, a triple SSSI Nature reserve, Ramsar site of International importance. This process has not been transparent, since without any explanation from National Grid, the industrialised Isle of Grain was ruled out, as an alternative site, at an early stage. Sir Roger Gale has raised the matter repeatedly in the House of Commons and, on 1 September 2026 he raised the issue of the current destructive work with the Prime Minister, who replied that he would look into the matter and respond to Sir Gale’s concern.

I would be grateful if you could provide clear answers to the following:

- Under what permissions, consents or statutory powers are these National Grid works being carried out on Minster Marshes?
- Are any of the current works dependent upon the eventual granting of the Sea Link Development Consent Order?
- Is National Grid currently undertaking land acquisition or compulsory acquisition activity in relation to land required for the proposed converter station?

What safeguards are in place to ensure that your decision remains entirely open and is not prejudiced by preparatory works, land acquisition activity or other actions undertaken by the applicant before the decision?

If development consent were ultimately refused, what would happen to the land, works and expenditure already undertaken by National Grid?

Can you confirm whether the Government has given National Grid any indication, formally or informally, of the likely outcome of the Sea Link DCO decision? I am asking for transparency about what is happening on the ground and reassurance that the statutory decision-making process is genuinely still open and that due process is being respected.

Minster Marshes is an important landscape and wildlife area, and many thousands of Kent residents remain deeply concerned about the potential environmental consequences of the proposed development. I would appreciate a substantive response to these questions rather than a general statement about the Sea Link project.

I would also be grateful if you could confirm that you have received this correspondence and that it has also been passed to the relevant officials dealing with the Sea Link Development Consent Order.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,

Maria Pacan
[redacted]

Supporter of Save Minster Marshes

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