

FAO The Rt Hon Miatta Fahnbulleh MP, Secretary of State for Energy Security and net Zero

Dear Secretary of State,

SEA LINK, LIONLINK AND VALUE FOR MONEY FOR CONSUMERS

We are writing following your letter of 28 August requesting further information from several parties in relation to the Sea Link DCO. Although we are not listed recipients, we do live in the targeted areas and feel strongly that there is a better way to go green than the current proposals which are about to devastate a place of beauty and sanctuary for wildlife and people.

We want to highlight **two recent and significant reports from Ofgem and the National Audit Office**, which raise serious questions about the **cost, deliverability and value for money** of Sea Link and, more widely, the effectiveness of the current regulatory approach in protecting consumers.

We applaud your commitment to reducing household energy costs. With billions of pounds being invested in energy infrastructure, it is essential that projects are necessary, proportionate and provide genuine value for money for consumers. We note the recent **National Audit Office (NAO) report, Value for Money – Upgrading the Electricity Transmission Network, dated 11/09/26**. The NAO highlights weaknesses in the existing system which need to be addressed if the Great Grid Upgrade is to provide value for money, including the need for stronger oversight, transparent monitoring and sufficient regulatory capability to scrutinise costs.

Importantly, the NAO recommends that Ofgem assess the effectiveness of its regulatory approach in protecting consumers while supporting rapid delivery of network upgrades.

These concerns are particularly relevant to **Sea Link**. Ofgem has now assessed Sea Link at approximately £3.2 billion.

It is beyond belief that a project of this scale was examined without decision-makers and affected communities being given a realistic assessment of its likely cost.

Suffolk Energy Action Solutions (**SEAS**) identified an alternative based on upgrading and reconductoring existing pylon corridors, estimated to cost under £300 million, potentially saving consumers approaching £3 billion. The NAO's concerns about consumer protection must also prompt renewed scrutiny of LionLink, National Grid

Ventures' proposed commercial multipurpose interconnector affecting the Suffolk coast. LionLink is not part of the Great Grid Upgrade. Ofgem expects LionLink to operate predominantly as an export route from Great Britain to the Netherlands, increasing GB wholesale electricity prices compared with the position without LionLink.

LionLink would add yet even more destruction into the mix. Sizewell C has meant the loss of thousands of trees and wildlife habitat, increased vehicular usage, diversions which are inconvenient and costly to the environment and the drivers etc and adding more projects, without considering their devastating impact, cannot be right, especially when there are cheaper and more effective alternatives.

Given the NAO's recommendations, we urge the Government to require an independent and transparent reassessment of the economic need and consumer case for LionLink against current 2026 evidence, rather than continuing to regard that case as established by the 2024 regulatory decision.

We support offshore wind and the transition to Net Zero. However, achieving Net Zero should not mean accepting unnecessary expenditure or successive major infrastructure projects without establishing whether there are cheaper, better coordinated and less environmentally damaging alternatives. The energy transition needs public support. That support will be much stronger if people can see that Government is challenging unnecessary expenditure, protecting consumers and ensuring that the infrastructure being built is genuinely needed. Before consumers and communities are committed to these projects we ask the Government to ensure that:

- Sea Link's cheaper alternative is properly and independently assessed;
- LionLink's economic and consumer case is reassessed using current evidence; and
- coordinated offshore solutions and better use of existing infrastructure are fully considered.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Mark & Lynne Ward,

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