

Dear Secretary of State,

SEA LINK AND LIONLINK – COST, NEED AND IMPACT ON SUFFOLK

I am writing as a Walberswick resident to ask the Government to reconsider the cost, need and wider impacts of the proposed Sea Link and LionLink projects. I support renewable energy and the move towards Net Zero. However, major infrastructure must be necessary, properly assessed and provide value for money for consumers.

The recent National Audit Office report *Value for Money – Upgrading the Electricity Transmission Network*, alongside Ofgem's latest assessment of Sea Link, highlights the need for stronger oversight and greater scrutiny of network investment and costs.

Ofgem now estimates Sea Link will cost around **£3.2 billion**, compared with approximately **£1.1 billion** presented during the DCO examination. SEAS challenged that figure at the time and argued that the true cost could be closer to £3.2 billion.

This raises serious questions about whether decision-makers and consumers were given a realistic picture of the project's likely cost.

There are also significant changes to the circumstances in which Sea Link was originally proposed. The project was linked to an anticipated 1,852MW export requirement at Friston associated with Nautilus. Following the relocation of Nautilus, that figure fell to approximately 352MW.

In addition, Ofgem has identified unresolved harmonic issues which may require further work elsewhere on the network before Sea Link can operate at its planned 2GW capacity. Further reinforcement between Richborough and Canterbury is also outside NGET's current £3.2 billion assessment.

Given these developments, I believe the Government should establish whether the original case for Sea Link still stands and what the **full cost to consumers** would actually be.

An alternative involving the upgrading and reconductoring of existing pylon routes was put forward during the Examination, with an estimated cost of less than £300 million. Given the enormous difference in cost, this option deserves a proper independent assessment.

LIONLINK

I also have concerns about LionLink and whether it delivers sufficient benefit to UK consumers to justify its cost and impact on Suffolk. My understanding from information I have read is that UK consumers may not necessarily receive cheaper electricity from LionLink. Instead, a significant part of its purpose appears to be enabling electricity to be exported to Europe, with financial returns going to the project's shareholders. Ofgem has also indicated that LionLink could result in higher GB wholesale electricity prices than would otherwise be the case.

I therefore ask the Government to reconsider the economic and consumer case for LionLink using the latest available evidence, rather than relying solely on the position reached in 2024.

WALBERSWICK

I am particularly concerned about the proposed G3 landfall site, which I believe is wholly unsuitable. Homes are immediately adjacent, with almost half the village within 500 metres.

The impacts include:

- **Noise, vibration and light pollution** from two years or more of construction, including 24/7 HDD drilling. This has never been done in the centre of a village before.
- **Significant disruption** to residents, including elderly and vulnerable people and children, (particularly their mental health and wellbeing) not to mention the wildlife in our SSSI protected areas.
- **Impact on local heritage**, including the nearby Grade I listed St Andrew's Church concerned about the drilling affect on structure.
- **Severe traffic and emergency-access risks** on the B1387, the village's sole access road.
- **Serious harm to tourism and local businesses.**

As residents, we would face a prolonged and significant impact on our homes, community and the character of Walberswick.

I believe the Government has an opportunity to demonstrate that the drive towards Net Zero can be achieved while also protecting consumers, respecting local communities and making sure that alternatives are properly examined.

I therefore ask that the Government:

1. **Independently assess lower-cost alternatives to Sea Link;**

2. **Re-examine the current economic and consumer case for LionLink; and**
3. **Give proper consideration to coordinated offshore solutions and greater use of existing infrastructure.**

I hope these concerns will be taken into account when considering these projects and their implications for Suffolk and the wider UK.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Sandra Sutton

Resident of Walberswick

[Redacted signature]