

The Rt Hon Miatta Fahnbulleh MP, Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero,
c/o: Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery Team, DESNZ

Dear Secretary of State,

SEA LINK – YOUR EYES AND EARS ARE CLOSED

I am writing as a Suffolk resident following your letter of 28 August regarding the Sea Link DCO.

This is not simply a question of infrastructure.

For people living in Suffolk, Sea Link means major new onshore infrastructure, disruption to communities and a significant impact on our countryside and quality of life. Many residents feel that these consequences have not been given the weight they deserve.

I also believe there are now serious questions about the project's cost and need.

Ofgem has assessed Sea Link at approximately £3.2 billion, compared with the £1.1 billion cost presented during the DCO examination. SEAS challenged that figure at the time and estimated the cost at around £3.2 billion, but I cannot find any counter argument anywhere across media for this challenge, why is that?

More importantly, the circumstances behind the original need have changed. Sea Link was based on an assumed 1,852MW export deficit at Friston, associated with Nautilus. Nautilus was subsequently relocated, reducing the apparent deficit to approximately 352MW. So how can that be?

Ofgem has also identified unresolved harmonic issues and further network reinforcement requirements.

Everybody knows that there is a potentially much cheaper alternative. During the examination, Suffolk Energy Action Solutions (SEAS) proposed upgrading and reconductoring the existing pylon corridor through Suffolk and Kent, estimated to cost under £300 million.

That is potentially a saving of almost £3 billion, while making better use of infrastructure that already exists and potentially reducing environmental damage and disruption to Suffolk communities so why has this not been put under consideration?

As a grandparent I support Net Zero and recognise that Britain needs investment in its electricity network. But surely, we should ask whether the same need can be met more quickly, with far less disruption and at a fraction of the cost.

I therefore respectfully ask the Government to ensure that the SEAS alternative is independently assessed against Sea Link before consumers are committed to spending £3.2 billion or more.

For those of us who live here, this is about much more than pylons and pounds. It is about the future of Suffolk and the wellbeing of the people who call it home. I look forward to your answers to my questions and observations.

Yours sincerely,

John Kearns

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]