

To: The Rt Hon Miatta Fahnbulleh MP, Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero,

c/o: Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery Team, DESNZ

Interested Party Reference number: [REDACTED]

Dear Secretary of State,

SEA LINK DCO – CALL FOR AN INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE SEAS ALTERNATIVE

In response to your letter of 28 August asking for more information from various parties, I am writing to urge the Government to review the proposed Sea Link project in East Suffolk in light of the National Audit Office's recent report on grid upgrades and Ofgem's latest cost assessments. Major infrastructure projects must provide genuine value for money, but Sea Link no longer meets that standard.

Ofgem now estimates Sea Link's cost at **£3.2 billion** —three times the £1.1 billion figure presented by National Grid during the DCO examination. This massive £2 billion discrepancy means the examination took place without a realistic understanding of the project's true cost. Furthermore, the original justification for Sea Link has evaporated; it was designed to handle a deficit linked to the Nautilus interconnector, which has since been relocated, reducing the regional energy deficit from 1,852MW to just 352MW.

Serious technical and financial uncertainties also remain:

- **Unresolved harmonic issues** on the network may require extensive, unbudgeted extra works before Sea Link can operate compliantly.
- **Essential grid reinforcements** between Richborough and Canterbury have been completely excluded from the current £3.2 billion budget submission.

There is a faster, cheaper solution. Suffolk Energy Action Solutions (SEAS) has proposed upgrading and reconductoring existing pylon corridors in Suffolk and Kent. This alternative is estimated to cost **under £300 million**, saving consumers nearly £3 billion. By upgrading existing infrastructure, it can be delivered much faster and avoids the severe environmental devastation and community disruption of Sea Link.

The cumulative impact of multiple NSIPs (such as Sea Link and LionLink, Sizewell C and Scottish Power Renewables' EA1N and EA2) targeting this fragile part of East Suffolk is becoming intolerable. Our communities are facing severe mental stress from years of continuous consultations and examinations. We are already dealing with traffic

congestion, road closures, and diversions, with the prospect of weeks of round-the-clock noise and vibration disruption looming as projects like EA2 begin.

While I fully support the transition to Net Zero, we must not spend billions on damaging new infrastructure without first independently testing whether existing networks can achieve the same goal faster and at a fraction of the cost.

Before consumers are committed to a £3.2 billion expenditure, I urge you to order an independent, transparent assessment of the SEAS alternative against Sea Link regarding cost, delivery time, capacity, and environmental impact.

Yours sincerely,

Derek Chadwick

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