

From: Jen Wilson

Sent: Monday, September 21, 2026 12:01

To: South East Anglia Link

Subject: Fw: Sea Link (EN020026) Your 28th August 26 request for further information. My IP ref [REDACTED]

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

Via Email: SouthEastAngliaLink@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Subject: Sea Link (EN020026) – Your request for Information

Dear Secretary of State,

SEA LINK, LIONLINK AND VALUE FOR MONEY FOR CONSUMERS

I note that on the 28th August you requested further information from several parties in relation to the Sea Link DCO and whilst I am not a listed recipient, I am an Interested Party and wish to draw your attention to two recent and important reports from the National Audit Office and Ofgem, both of which raise crucial 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.

Firstly, I feel compelled to express my disappointment in your predecessor Ed Miliband who, despite requests, refused to visit and meet with residents and businesses who already had and would be further badly impacted by the multitude of energy projects destined for this tiny area of East Suffolk. Labour promised change yet all these energy NSIPS were proposed by the previous Conservative government and, in the case of Sizewell C, given DCO approval by the reckless Kwasi Kwarteng against the recommendation of the Planning Inspectorate - because of this, one would have hoped that the incoming Labour government would have thoroughly assessed the viability of the project before risking billions of public funds to prop it up. I urge you to take a different approach by visiting and speaking to the communities effected - to understand the distress and mental torture of watching a once tranquil and vast wildlife rich area being destroyed by unnecessary and inappropriate energy projects.

In my opinion this government under the leadership of Keir Starmer and Rachel Reeves as Chancellor made major financial and environmental errors by blindly following proposals of the previous government. Therefore, in order to reduce energy bills and to conserve the environment it is imperative that the new administration ensures that the billions of pounds to be invested in new energy infrastructure, firstly, is an essential and necessary project, proportionate and also provides genuine value for money for consumers.

In the the recent National Audit Office (NAO) report, **Value for Money – Upgrading the Electricity Transmission Network**, dated 11/09/26. The NAO highlights many 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. Crucially, 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**, the proposed 2GW transmission project through East Suffolk.

Ofgem's recent assessment of Sea Link at **£3.2 billion is nearly three times the cost presented during the DCO examination** raising serious concerns about the reliability and transparency of the information presented during that Examination. **National Grid presented an estimated project cost of approximately £1.1 billion, despite Interested parties challenging that figure and evidence being presented that the true cost was likely to be around £3.2 billion. Ofgem has now assessed Sea Link at approximately £3.2 billion, broadly confirming the figure put forward by SEAS in the DCO examination.** The £1.1 billion figure presented during the Examination therefore proved wholly unrealistic, something so familiar to those who were Interested Parties in the Sizewell C DCO. It would be deeply concerning if decision-makers didn't learn from past mistakes.

The circumstances underpinning Sea Link's original need have also changed. Sea Link was developed around an assumed **1,852MW export deficit at Friston**, associated with the proposed Nautilus interconnector. Nautilus was subsequently relocated away from Friston before the Sea Link application was submitted, reducing the apparent deficit to approximately **352MW**.

Ofgem has also identified unresolved integration issues which may require additional works elsewhere on the transmission network before Sea Link can operate compliantly at its intended 2GW capacity. The precise scope and location of these works have yet to be determined. In addition, identified reinforcement between Richborough and Canterbury in Kent is excluded from NGET's current £3.2 billion Project Assessment submission.

I am aware that during the DCO examination, 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**. Therefore, it is essential to ascertain the true need and total cost to consumers of delivering Sea Link.

The NAO's concerns about consumer protection must result in 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.

Based on the NAO's recommendations, I believe the Government should carry out 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.

I would also like to emphasise that in addition to the overall case against LionLink, the latest proposed landfall site in Walberswick (G3) is wholly unsuitable, as it was with the previous proposed sites at G & G2. Homes sit directly adjacent on two sides of the landfall site, with nearly half of all village homes within 500 metres with dozens much closer. This means:

- Unacceptably high levels of noise, vibration and light pollution from construction work lasting for 2 years or more with severe impacts from 24/7 HDD drilling for weeks on end.
- Impacts on elderly residents, children and vulnerable people will still be severe, along with significant disruption to wildlife on the protected habitats which lie in close proximity.
- Severe traffic disruption and emergency evacuation risks arise from use of the B1387 which is the sole access road for residents and tens of thousands of visitors.
- Significant impacts on recreational tourism, and consequent threats to the viability of local businesses and jobs.

While I support offshore wind and the transition to Net Zero, it should not mean accepting avoidable costs or consecutive large-scale infrastructure developments without establishing whether: they offer true value for money; there are better coordinated and less environmentally damaging alternatives.

The energy transition needs public support but Ed Miliband failed to garner that support which would be much stronger if people could see that Government is challenging unnecessary expenditure, protecting consumers, the environment and ensuring that the infrastructure being built is genuinely needed.

Before consumers and communities have these unnecessary projects inflicted on them the Government needs 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.**

I hope you take my points into consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer Wilson,

[Redacted signature]

Sent from my iPad