

**Dear Secretary of State,**

**SEA LINK AND LIONLINK – COST, NEED AND VALUE FOR MONEY**

I am writing as a resident of Walberswick to ask the Government to take another look at the cost and need for the proposed Sea Link and LionLink projects.

I fully support renewable energy and the move towards Net Zero. However, I believe we also have a responsibility to make sure that projects costing billions of pounds are genuinely needed and provide good value for money for electricity consumers.

My main concern is the huge increase in the estimated cost of Sea Link. During the DCO examination, the cost was put at around **£1.1 billion**. Ofgem now estimates it at around **£3.2 billion**.

That is a very significant increase. It surely raises the question of whether the original case for the project still stands when the cost has changed so dramatically.

There have also been major changes to the need for Sea Link. The project was originally linked to an expected **1,852MW electricity export requirement at Friston connected with Nautilus**. Following the relocation of Nautilus, I understand this has fallen to around **352MW**.

There are also concerns that further work elsewhere on the electricity network may be needed before Sea Link can operate at its full planned capacity. These additional costs need to be included when deciding whether the project represents value for money.

During the examination, an alternative involving upgrading existing pylons was put forward at an estimated cost of **less than £300 million**. When compared with a £3.2 billion project, I believe this and other alternatives deserve a proper independent assessment before consumers are committed to such a large expense.

I also have concerns about the economic case for **LionLink**. The important question is whether it will actually benefit UK electricity consumers. I understand that Ofgem has indicated that LionLink could lead to **higher GB wholesale electricity prices than would otherwise be the case**.

If this is the case, the Government should explain why UK consumers should bear the cost of the project and how the benefits to consumers compare with the financial benefits to the companies involved.

I therefore respectfully ask the Government to:

- take another look at whether Sea Link is still needed at its current scale and cost;
- independently assess much cheaper alternatives, including upgrading existing infrastructure;
- establish the full cost to consumers, including any additional work needed elsewhere on the network;
- reconsider the economic case for LionLink using the latest information; and
- look seriously at offshore and other alternatives that could achieve the same aims at lower cost.

I appreciate that upgrading the electricity network is necessary to support renewable energy. But with household bills already a major concern, I believe the Government must make sure that billions of pounds of spending are genuinely necessary and represent good value for money.

If Suffolk is going to face the disruption and impact of these projects, there should be a clear economic case for them.

Thank you for taking my concerns into consideration.

**Yours sincerely,**

**Ben Sutton**

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Ben Sutton.