

Sea Link DCO – EN020026

Response to the Secretary of State's Request for Information dated 28 August 2026

Gordon Young (Affected Party Ref: [REDACTED])

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

Via: SouthEastAngliaLink@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing in response to your letter of 28 August 2026 requesting further information in relation to the Sea Link Development Consent Order application. I note that I am specifically named as an Affected Party and understand that I am therefore invited to respond to Question 45.

Question 45 – Compulsory Acquisition and Temporary Possession

I was identified as an Affected Party during the Examination and submitted an objection in relation to the compulsory acquisition and temporary possession powers sought by NGET.

For clarity, however, **I do not own, occupy or have any legal interest or land rights in the land over which NGET is seeking these powers.** My property is situated close to the affected land, and my objection arises from the direct effects that the proposed works may have upon my property, residential amenity and immediate surroundings.

Accordingly, there is no outstanding land agreement between myself and NGET requiring negotiation or signature, and I am therefore not in a position to provide an agreement of the type referred to in Question 45.

Nevertheless, my objection as an Affected Party remains unchanged. I respectfully ask that my position is recorded accordingly and that my representations continue to be taken into account in determining the DCO.

In addition to my response to Question 45, I would like to draw the Secretary of State's particular attention to **four major concerns** which I believe require resolution before the DCO is determined: the newly disclosed Harmonics Issue and its potential environmental implications; the unresolved position regarding Benhall Railway Bridge; NGET's reluctance to properly consider the credible *Northern Access Route* proposed by Suffolk County Council, which offered the potential to reduce harm to local communities; and continuing questions over Sea Link's cost, need and value for money.

Significant new concern – the unresolved Harmonics Issue

Since the close of the Examination, Ofgem's Project Assessment has revealed what I consider to be an extremely significant new issue concerning the technical deliverability of Sea Link.

Ofgem has disclosed that NGET has identified power-quality and harmonic problems associated with Sea Link and that even the largest filter solutions proposed by bidders are unlikely to achieve compliance with applicable harmonic limits under all system conditions. Of still greater concern, Ofgem states that the measures presently proposed by NGET **do not fully resolve the Harmonics Issue** and that additional activity elsewhere on the transmission network may be required. This could include wider network reinforcement or additional harmonic mitigation, the precise scope and location of which have yet to be identified.

I find this deeply concerning as an Affected Party who participated extensively in the Examination. This is not simply a technical operational matter. If additional infrastructure or reinforcement is required for Sea Link to operate at its intended 2GW capacity, those works may themselves have environmental consequences.

The implications potentially extend across most, if not all, environmental impact topics considered through the Environmental Statement, including landscape, ecology, land use, traffic, noise, heritage, water environment, human health and wellbeing, cumulative effects and potentially compulsory acquisition and temporary possession.

Until NGET identifies what additional works are required, their location and physical extent, it is difficult to see how their likely environmental effects can properly be understood or assessed.

This is particularly concerning because the Harmonics Issue and any associated additional works were not presented during the Examination. Interested and Affected Parties therefore had no opportunity to examine or make representations on their potential environmental consequences. The Environmental Statement did not identify these additional works or assess their effects, raising a serious question as to whether the environmental information presently before the Secretary of State provides a sufficiently complete assessment of the development and its likely significant effects.

It is also troubling that such a fundamental issue has emerged only **after the Examination closed and the Examining Authority submitted its Report and Recommendation**, and through Ofgem rather than NGET.

I respectfully ask the Secretary of State to establish when NGET first became aware of the Harmonics Issue, what was known during the Examination and, if it was known, why it was not disclosed.

Before determining the DCO, I also respectfully request that the Secretary of State establishes what additional infrastructure or mitigation is required; where it would be located; whether it is necessary for Sea Link to operate at its intended 2GW capacity; and what environmental effects it would have, both individually and cumulatively.

If NGET cannot presently answer these questions because the solution has not yet been identified, I respectfully question how the Secretary of State can be satisfied that the full environmental consequences of the project have been assessed.

As an Affected Party living close to the proposed Suffolk infrastructure, this is particularly important to me. The Examination provided the opportunity for affected communities to understand and scrutinise the development. If materially new environmental information is now required, affected parties should have an appropriate opportunity to consider and respond to it before a decision is made.

Benhall Railway Bridge – Question 39

I would also draw particular attention to Question 39 concerning Benhall Railway Bridge, where you have asked NGET to confirm whether a structural survey has been completed and, if so, to submit it.

The B1121 and Benhall Railway Bridge form a fundamental part of NGET's proposed access arrangements for the Suffolk converter station, including the movement of Abnormal Indivisible Loads. The difficulties associated with the bridge were repeatedly raised during the Examination. Suffolk County Council also expressed concerns about the feasibility of its use for construction traffic and AIL movements, including its **46-tonne weight limit**.

It is therefore extremely concerning that such a fundamental issue remained unresolved at the end of the Examination and that, as late as 28 August 2026, the Secretary of State has had to request confirmation as to whether the structural survey has even been completed.

This concern is compounded by NGET's reluctance during the Examination to properly consider the **credible Northern Access Route proposed by Suffolk County Council**,

which offered an alternative means of accessing the converter station with the potential to avoid the constraints of Benhall Railway Bridge and reduce harm to local communities.

If the bridge cannot safely accommodate the proposed movements without substantial works, the consequences could affect construction methodology, traffic routing, environmental effects, land requirements and potentially the overall deliverability of the Suffolk element of Sea Link.

I therefore respectfully request that the application is not determined until NGET has provided the structural assessment requested under Question 39 and its implications, including the reasonable alternative access route identified by Suffolk County Council, have been properly considered.

Cost, need and value for money

I also remain deeply concerned about Sea Link's substantially increased cost and whether it represents an economical and efficient solution for consumers.

The project is now identified at approximately **£3.2 billion**. This deserves particularly careful scrutiny when questions remain over the original need case, reasonable alternative means of reinforcing the network and, following disclosure of the Harmonics Issue, whether further expenditure and infrastructure may be required before Sea Link can operate at its intended 2GW capacity.

This is particularly important while households continue to face cost-of-living pressures and rising energy bills. Major transmission investment is ultimately funded through consumers' electricity bills, creating a clear public interest in ensuring that projects of this scale are demonstrably necessary, efficient and represent value for money.

The National Audit Office has also raised wider concerns about the process for selecting and funding transmission upgrades, including the absence of a whole-system assessment of alternatives.

I therefore respectfully ask the Secretary of State to satisfy herself, using **current rather than historic information**, that Sea Link remains necessary, its present and potential additional costs are justified, and reasonable lower-cost alternatives have been properly considered before consent is granted.

As someone living close to the proposed Suffolk infrastructure, I remain deeply concerned that important questions about Sea Link are still unresolved at this very late stage in the process.

I have participated throughout the Examination in good faith and have sought to highlight the very real impacts this project could have on my home, my community and the wider area. The new information that has emerged since the Examination closed only adds to those concerns.

I therefore respectfully ask that the Secretary of State ensures these outstanding matters are properly addressed before determining the DCO and, where materially new information is provided, that affected parties are given a fair opportunity to consider and respond to it.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Young
(Affected Party Ref: [REDACTED])