Ms K McKenzie
[redacted]

The Rt Hon Miatta Fahnbulleh MP
Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero Department for Energy Security and Net Zero,
3 Whitehall Place,
London SW1A 2AW

Dear Ms Fahnbulleh

URGENT RFI RESPONSE: SEA LINK (EN020026)

You will be aware of National Grid's Sea Link proposal, which would install an HVDC cable between Suffolk and Kent, together with major converter stations at both ends as part of the Great Grid Upgrade. Having received the Examining Authority's report in early August, you now have until the end of October to decide whether to accept its recommendations following four years of consultation and examination.

I was encouraged to see your request on 28 August for further information from National Grid and statutory consultees. This demonstrates recognition of the significant environmental consequences of this project. As currently proposed, Sea Link would cause substantial and irreversible damage to the very landscapes and habitats it claims to protect.

However, I am deeply concerned that National Grid appears to have begun construction activity on Minster Marshes before a final decision has been made. We have photographic evidence showing works that go beyond the archaeological surveys and topsoil stripping approved by Thanet District Council following the close of consultation.

The inevitable public perception is that the outcome has already been decided.

If that impression takes hold, it will undermine confidence in the planning process and call into question the value of four years of consultation funded, in part, through public money via OFGEM's ASTI programme. It is worth remembering that National Grid is a publicly listed company that reported profits of £4.6 billion, yet project cost estimates for Sea Link do not appear to have been meaningfully updated in the public domain since 2018.

Allowing construction activities to advance before a decision is reached risks damaging public trust and could turn Sea Link into another high-profile infrastructure controversy.

Your decision on Sea Link will have lasting consequences for the environment, the integrity of the planning system, and public confidence in government.

I urge you to examine this situation carefully.

Please act decisively and ensure that due process is respected.

Yours sincerely [redacted]

[redacted]

Karen McKenzie [redacted]
Member of Save Minster Marshes