From: [redacted]
To: South East Anglia Link
Subject: Sealink objection update
Date: 09 October 2026 16:01:24

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[redacted]

I am writing as a resident of Thanet to register my strong objection to the Sea Link Development Consent Order, specifically regarding the proposed converter station on Minster Marshes.

I understand the examination phase has closed, but I ask that this correspondence be placed before the Secretary of State as part of the decision-making record.

My objection is based on the following:

1. Protected Habitat Destruction

Minster Marshes is functionally connected to Pegwell Bay, which holds SSSI, RAMSAR, SAC, and National Nature Reserve status. The proposal would place a 28-metre high, 90,000 square metre converter station directly on this marshland. This is not a marginal site—it is a vitally important ecological corridor.

2. Irreplaceable Wildlife

Local experts have recorded over 170 species on these marshes, including turtle doves, skylarks, nightingales, curlew, water voles, and the critically endangered European eel. In 2023, 90% of all woodcock and jacksnipe ringed in Kent were ringed here, along with 50% of the county's skylarks. These are not abstract statistics—they represent a site of county-level ecological significance.

3. Timing and Pre-emptive Works

National Grid has already commenced archaeological excavation, ground investigation, and drone magnetometry in the area, despite the DCO not yet being determined. Sir Roger Gale MP has rightly questioned whether this "puts the cart some considerable distance before the horse". I share his concern that these preparatory works undermine the integrity of the decision-making process.

4. Legal and Policy Conflict

The proposal appears to conflict with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Government's own Environmental Improvement Plan. Approving it would set a troubling precedent for protected sites nationwide.

As someone who has walked these marshes and witnessed their value firsthand, I urge the Secretary of State to refuse this application.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that this correspondence has been added to the project file.

Yours faithfully,

Mr J C Carter

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
To: South East Anglia Link
Subject: Sealink objection
Date: 09 October 2026 18:04:41

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Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

55 Whitehall

London SW1A 2EY

Date: 9th October 2026

Re: Objection to the Sea Link Development Consent Order (Planning Inspectorate Reference EN020026) – Sea Link Project and Converter Station

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing as a resident of [your town/village] to object to the Sea Link project, including the proposed converter station at Saxmundham and the associated onshore and offshore infrastructure. I understand that the Examining Authority's report and recommendation for this application (EN020026) was due to be submitted to you by 5 August 2026, and that your decision is expected within three months thereafter . I respectfully ask that you refuse development consent.

My objections are based on the following grounds:

1. The cost estimates presented during examination were unreliable and the project is poor value for money.

During the DCO examination, National Grid presented an estimated project cost of approximately £1.1 billion. However, Ofgem's subsequent project assessment has now put the cost of Sea Link at approximately £3.2 billion—around three times the figure presented during examination . The National Audit Office has separately published a report on 11 September 2026 highlighting weaknesses in the oversight and scrutiny of electricity transmission network upgrades, including the need for stronger regulatory capability to protect consumers . If the true cost to consumers is nearly triple what was presented, the examination process cannot have given decision-makers or affected communities a realistic basis to assess the project.

2. The need case has weakened substantially since the application was made.

The original need case for Sea Link assumed a 1,852MW export deficit at Friston associated with the Nautilus interconnector. Nautilus was subsequently relocated away from Friston before the Sea Link application was submitted in March 2025. This reduced the apparent deficit to approximately 352MW . In other words, the scale of the problem Sea Link was designed to solve is now less than one-fifth of the original assumption. It is unclear why a 2GW transmission link is still considered proportionate when the identified need has shrunk so dramatically.

3. There is credible evidence that a cheaper alternative exists.

During the examination, Suffolk Energy Action Solutions identified an alternative based on upgrading and reconductoring existing pylon corridors, estimated to cost under £300 million. This could potentially save consumers approaching £3 billion compared with the current Sea Link proposal . If a less invasive and far cheaper solution can address the network requirements, the Secretary of State should require National Grid to demonstrate why it has been discounted.

4. The converter station and associated works raise significant local concerns.

The proposed converter station would house buildings up to 26 metres high with a footprint of up to 8.1 hectares . The site is located east of Saxmundham, and the broader project includes underground and overhead electricity lines and substations . The local highway network is already under pressure. National Grid has indicated that Abnormal Indivisible Loads may require up to 45 days of road closures, with the potential for traffic to be diverted through Saxmundham . Suffolk County Council has stated that the junction at Church Hill "should be avoided by all construction vehicles" because modelling shows it is over capacity at peak hours . The Examining Authority has itself suggested reduced working hours to give respite to residents, including no work on Saturday afternoons, Sundays or Bank Holidays . These are not minor inconveniences; they represent a sustained and significant disruption to a community that did not choose to host this infrastructure.

5. Unresolved technical issues remain.

Ofgem has identified unresolved harmonic 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 not yet been determined. In addition, identified reinforcement between Richborough and Canterbury in Kent is excluded from National Grid's current £3.2 billion project assessment submission . A project of this scale should not be consented when fundamental technical and cost questions remain unanswered.

For these reasons, I urge you to refuse development consent for the Sea Link project. The need case has not been made, the costs have proven unreliable, a credible alternative exists, and the local impacts are severe and inadequately mitigated.

Thank you for considering my objection. I would be grateful for confirmation that this letter has been received and placed on the relevant file.

Yours sincerely,

Mr JC Carter

[redacted]