

Community newsletter

July 2024

National Grid Electricity Transmission is undertaking further consultation on changes to its proposals for reinforcing the electricity transmission network between Suffolk and Kent.

Project update

Since the end of our statutory consultation in December 2023, we have been reviewing all feedback received and have carried out further technical and environmental assessments.

As a result of this work, we have made some alterations to our plans, that we want to share with you before we submit our application for development consent early next year.

The changes we are proposing do not substantially alter the project as a whole. Much of our proposals remain largely the same as presented at our consultation last year.

What is Sea Link?

Sea Link is a proposed 2 gigawatt (GW) high voltage direct current (HVDC) cable between Suffolk and Kent, approximately 138 kilometres (km) long and predominantly offshore.

To bring the power from the subsea cables into and out of the electricity network in both Suffolk and Kent, we would need to build new onshore infrastructure including converter stations, substations and new underground and overhead electricity lines, as well as upgrading existing overhead electricity lines.

Power will be able to flow along the Sea Link cables in either direction, depending on where renewable energy is being generated at that time and where in the country power is needed.

What has changed?

- in Suffolk, the changes include an alteration to the cable route north of Aldeburgh, confirmation of the proposed access route to the converter station and changes to this access route and the associated bridge over the River Fromus. We are also proposing various changes to construction and maintenance access routes, compounds, and temporary overhead line diversions, and have identified additional land for environmental mitigation and enhancement. The strategy for coordination with other projects has also evolved
- offshore, the changes include refinements to the cable route, additional marine areas for construction vessel manoeuvring, and changes to the approach for backfilling marine trenches
- in Kent, the changes include an increase of the overall maximum height of the converter station, confirmation of the type of pylon we intend to use for the connection to the existing overhead line, and identifying a further construction and maintenance access route off Sandwich Road via the former hoverport. We are also proposing various other changes to construction and maintenance access routes, compounds, and temporary overhead line diversions, and have identified additional land for environmental mitigation and enhancement.

We have also made a range of smaller changes to our proposals, including various refinements, reductions and increases to the size of the land we would need to build and operate Sea Link. We are also providing further detail on our construction methodology, including changes to planned working hours.

The need for Sea Link

Sea Link is needed because the existing electricity transmission network does not have enough capacity to reliably transport all the new energy we expect to connect to the network over the next ten years and beyond.

The way we generate electricity in the UK is changing rapidly, and we are transitioning to more secure, cheaper, and cleaner forms of energy, like new offshore windfarms. This is a result of the UK Government's commitment to net zero (achieving a balance between the greenhouse gases put into the atmosphere and those taken out).

The energy industry is key to this transition - from developing renewable energy generation, to upgrading the existing electricity transmission network, enabling other sectors to decarbonise and enabling communities across the country to benefit from clean energy.

As part of this, the electricity transmission network is undergoing its largest overhaul in generations. We need more than five times the amount of transmission infrastructure built in the last 30 years in the UK to be delivered in the next seven years. National Grid Electricity Transmission, which owns and operates the high voltage transmission network in England and Wales, has a key part to play in developing this new transmission infrastructure. This work is known as The Great Grid Upgrade, and Sea Link is one of the projects being delivered to make sure the network is ready for the increase in supply and demand of electricity.

Exploring opportunities for coordination in Suffolk

Our plans in Suffolk have been developed for Sea Link as a standalone project but have been designed in a coordinated way with other projects, including two potential National Grid projects.

As development work on Sea Link and these other projects has progressed, our approach to coordination has evolved. Read more about coordination in our Project update document.

More information on what was presented during statutory consultation can be found in the document library on our website, nationalgrid.com/sealink. All feedback received will be summarised and responded to in the Consultation report, which will form part of our application for development consent.



Find out more

You can learn about the changes we're making to our plans in the following ways:

Read our Project update document

All of the changes we are making to our plans are summarised in our Project update document, which you can download from our website. Alternatively, you can pick up a paper copy of this document and our latest newsletter from the below locations between Monday 8 July and Sunday 11 August:

Kent	Suffolk
Ash Library, 11 Queen's Rd, Ash, Canterbury CT3 2BG	Saxmundham Library, Block B, Street Farm Rd, Saxmundham IP17 1AL
Minster Library, 4a Monkton Rd, Minster, Ramsgate CT12 4EA	Leiston Library, Main St, Leiston IP16 4ER
Sandwich Library, 13 Market St, Sandwich CT13 9DA	Aldeburgh Library, Victoria Rd, Aldeburgh IP15 5EG
Ramsgate Library, Guildford Lawn, Ramsgate CT11 9AY	Snape Village Hall, 5 Garrett Cl, Snape, Saxmundham IP17 1RN
Newington Library, Royal Harbour Academy, Stirling Way, Ramsgate CT12 6FA	Friston Village Hall, Church Rd, Friston, Saxmundham IP17 1PU
Thanet District Council, Cecil Street, Margate CT9 1AY	For opening hours, please contact the venue or our team using the contact details at the end of this newsletter.
Margate Library, Thanet Gateway Plus, Cecil Street, Margate CT9 1RE	

Attend a webinar

A pre-recorded webinar explaining the changes is available to watch on our project website at nationalgrid.com/sealink. You can also sign up to a live webinar via email or by calling us. Each live session includes the opportunity to ask questions.

Kent		Suffolk	
Date	Time	Date	Time
Tuesday 16 July 2024	6:30pm-7:45pm	Monday 15 July 2024	6:30pm-7:45pm
Monday 22 July 2024	6:30pm-7:45pm	Wednesday 17 July 2024	6:30pm-7:45pm

What's happened so far?

In 2022, we held a non-statutory consultation to introduce our proposals for Sea Link. This was an opportunity for you to provide feedback on our early proposals, to explain why the reinforcement is needed, and to set out the options considered by National Grid. You can read about our non-statutory consultation activity, the feedback we received, and how we have responded to that feedback, in the Non-statutory consultation report, which is available on our website.

In 2023, we held a statutory consultation on our refined proposals for Sea Link. As part of this consultation, we presented our Preliminary environmental information report, which looks at the likely significant effects of our proposed activities on the local environment and how we intend to mitigate any adverse impacts. We also provided further information on how we had developed our proposals, including detailed plans.

How our proposals evolve over time

Between each round of consultation, and in the run up to the submission of an application for development consent, we have and will continue to refine our proposals based on:

- the feedback we receive from local communities, local authorities and stakeholders
- the results of ongoing environmental and engineering assessment work
- surveys taking place along the proposed route.

We continually review our proposals as new information comes to light. You can read more about how our project has evolved in our Project update document or on our website.

Detailed maps are available on our project website and at deposit points. You can request paper copies by contacting us using the details at the end of this newsletter, charges for some documents may apply.



Share your further feedback

If you would like to share further feedback on the latest changes to our plans for Sea Link or on the proposals more generally, you can do so in the following ways:

- Email us – contact@sealink.nationalgrid.com
- Write to us – **FREEPOST Sea Link**

Providing feedback

You do not need to resubmit comments given at a previous stage of consultation. When sharing your comments, it would be helpful if you could include which part of the Sea Link project they relate to:

- **permanent infrastructure:** proposed changes to the permanent infrastructure planned as part of Sea Link, including the cable routes and converter station/substation(s)
- **construction and maintenance work:** proposed changes to how we would build and maintain Sea Link during the construction and operational phases
- **mitigation, enhancements and approach to biodiversity net gain:** proposed changes to how we will mitigate the impact of Sea Link on the environment and deliver enhancements to the local environment
- **strategy for coordination:** proposed changes to how we will coordinate the construction and operation of Sea Link with other projects proposed or planned in Suffolk
- **anything else**

Please provide your feedback by 11:59pm on 11 August 2024.



Next steps

We will continue to carefully consider any feedback we receive, alongside the findings from ongoing environmental assessment work and surveys, as we prepare our application for development consent.

You can read more about the development consent process on the Planning Inspectorate's website at [infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk](https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk).

To find out more, visit our website at [nationalgrid.com/sealink](https://www.nationalgrid.com/sealink) (or scan the QR code), email contact@sealink.nationalgrid.com or call us on **0808 134 9569**.



