Sea Link

nationalgrid

Community newsletter
October 2022

National Grid Electricity Transmission is consulting on proposals for Sea Link, a new underground and subsea electricity link between the proposed Friston substation in Suffolk and Richborough in Kent.

The need for reinforcement

The Government's ten point plan for a green industrial revolution, together with the net zero strategy and the British energy security strategy, is driving unprecedented investment into new renewable and low carbon electricity generation. This includes the target of up to 50 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind generation by 2030.

At the same time, electricity demand is set to increase as other sectors of the economy move away from fossil fuels and increasingly rely on renewable and low carbon electricity.

This will put significant pressure on the national electricity transmission system, the network of pylons, substations and cables that takes energy from where it's generated to where it's used. The network needs to be reinforced so that electricity continues to flow securely and reliably around the UK.

National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) is planning several major reinforcement projects needed to meet this challenge; Sea Link is one of those reinforcements.

Why Suffolk and why Kent?

A growing amount of low carbon and renewable energy generation is scheduled to connect to the network up and down the east coast including Suffolk. Reinforcing the network here is vital if we are to make efficient use of these new sources of power.

The network in the south of England is experiencing a similar increase in generation. Its proximity to the continent makes Kent an ideal location for interconnectors (undersea electricity links to different countries) and several already operate here.

The network needs reinforcing so that in the future there will be sufficient transmission capacity in the region.

Sea Link creates a shortcut between the electricity network in Kent and Suffolk and offers a mutual benefit to both. It will help carry excess wind generation to the interconnectors in Kent and it will carry interconnector imports from Kent onto the East Anglian network and beyond to meet energy demands.

What is Sea Link?

The Sea Link proposal includes:

- two high voltage direct current (HVDC) converter stations (which converts AC to DC, and vice versa), one in Kent and one in Suffolk
- underground and subsea electricity cables between these two stations
- an underground cable connection to the proposed Friston substation in Suffolk
- an underground cable or overhead line connection to the existing Richborough to Canterbury overhead line in Kent.

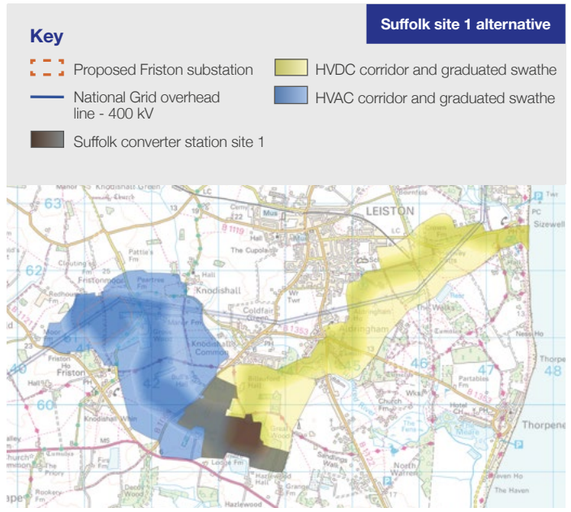
What are the proposals in Suffolk?

In Suffolk we are proposing:

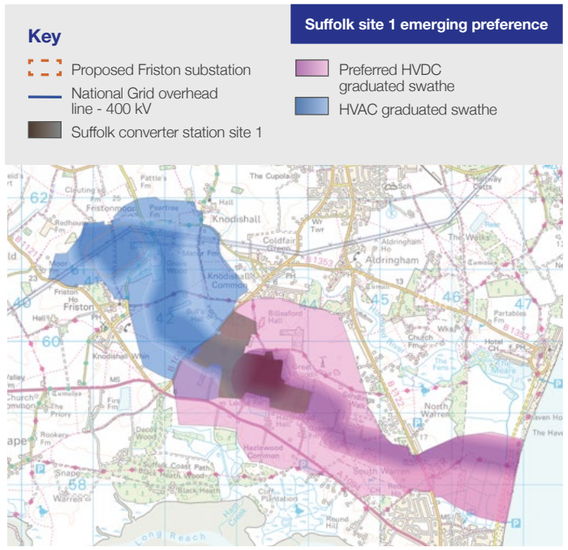
- a 2 GW HVDC converter station
- a high voltage alternating current (HVAC) underground cable connection between the converter station and the proposed Friston substation
- an extension to the proposed Friston substation, typically up to 50 m
- a HVDC underground cable connection between the converter station and a landfall point on the coast, where it transfers to a marine cable.

We are asking for feedback on proposals for where the underground cables and the converter station should go. We have identified five potential cable routes to two potential converter station sites. These are illustrated on maps along with more details on the project in our consultation materials.

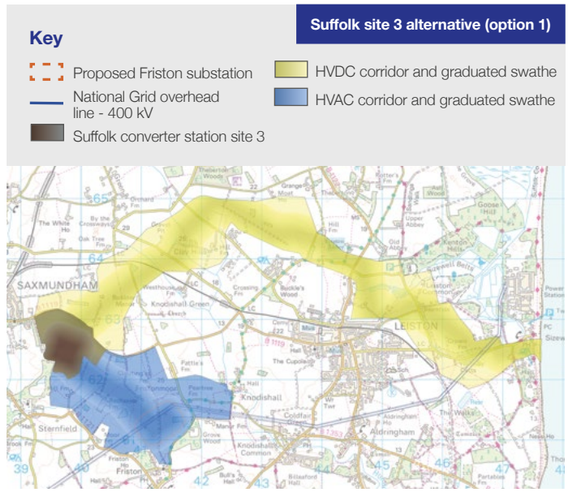
Suffolk site 1 alternative



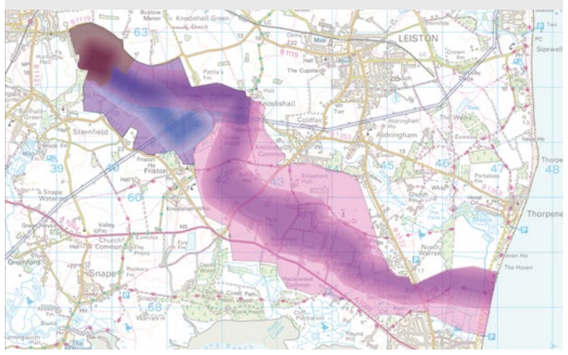
Suffolk site 1 emerging preference



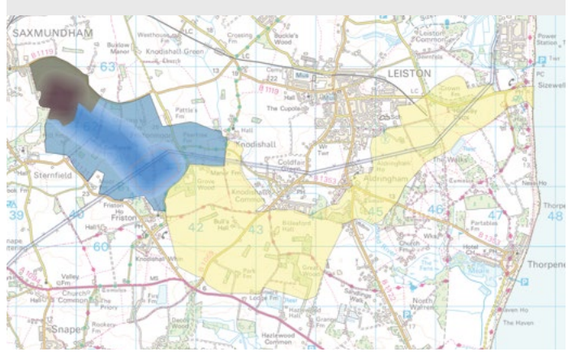
Suffolk site 3 alternative (option 1)



Suffolk site 3 emerging preference



Suffolk site 3 alternative (option 2)



Exploring opportunities for coordination

In response to stakeholder feedback, NGET and National Grid Ventures (NGV) are exploring:

- in Suffolk, opportunities to coordinate NGV's projects, EuroLink and Nautilus, and NGET's project, Sea Link, including separately consulting on shared: converter station sites; cable route corridors; and landfalls
- opportunities with other developers to minimise the impact of construction on the environment and local communities
- offshore coordination with other developers as part of the Offshore Transmission Network Review

In exploring these opportunities to coordinate, NGV's Eurolink and NGET's Sea Link are consulting at the same time. We hope that by sharing our proposals, people feel better informed about how different parts of the infrastructure could fit together and can share their views on each of the projects accordingly.

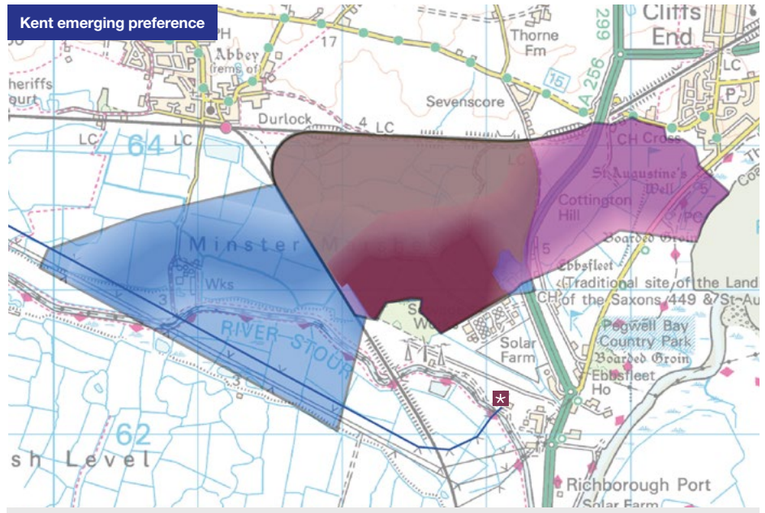
What are the proposals in Kent?

In Kent we are proposing:

- a 2 GW HVDC converter station
- a connection onto the existing Richborough to Canterbury overhead line, which will need to be rewired
- a HVAC underground cable connection, overhead line or a combination of both to connect the converter station to the Richborough to Canterbury overhead line
- a HVDC underground cable connection between the converter station and a landfall point on the coast at Pegwell Bay, where it transfers to a marine cable.

We have identified an emerging preference for the location of the underground cables and the converter station, we are asking for feedback on these proposals.

Kent emerging preference



What are the proposals offshore?

We are proposing a marine corridor route that is approximately 130 km in length. We have identified emerging preferences for landfall in Kent and Suffolk, as well as an alternative landfall option in Suffolk.

The routes we are proposing have been designed to minimise interactions with designated environmental sites and other offshore infrastructure, such as wind farms and other cables. The exact alignments of the cables will be further informed by additional marine surveys.

Our public consultation: 24 October – 18 December 2022

We want to ensure that people interested in the proposals have an opportunity to understand it and give us their views. All feedback will be carefully considered. We will hold a second round of public consultation in 2023 before we finalise the plans.

We have arranged a programme of face-to-face events and webinars, details of which are in this newsletter. You can also visit our website or call a member of the team for more details.

Sea Link is a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP). This means that we are required to submit a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate, which we aim to do in 2024. They in turn will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for a final decision.

Public consultation events

Our programme of in-person events and online webinars will provide you with the opportunity to find out more about the proposals and offer your feedback. Please find the full list of events and webinars below.

Date	Time	Location
Suffolk		
Thursday 10 November	1pm – 8pm	Old Generator Station, King's Field, Aldeburgh, IP15 5HY
Friday 11 November	1pm – 8pm	Friston Village Hall , Church Road, Friston, Saxmundham, IP17 1PU
Saturday 12 November	10am – 5pm	Fromus Centre, The Saxmundham Hub, Street Farm Road, Saxmundham, IP17 1AL
Kent		
Thursday 17 November	9am – 4pm	Guildhall, Cattle Market, Sandwich, CT13 9AH
Friday 18 November	1pm – 8pm	Newington Community Centre, Princess Margaret Avenue, Ramsgate, CT12 6HX
Saturday 19 November	10am – 5pm	Cliffsend Village Hall, 55 Foads Lane, Cliffsend, Ramsgate, CT12 5JH
Webinars		
Tuesday 22 November	6pm – 7pm	Our proposals in Suffolk
Tuesday 23 November	6pm – 7pm	Our proposals in Kent
Thursday 24 November	6pm – 7pm	Marine route proposals
Tuesday 29 November	6pm – 7pm	Our proposals in Suffolk
Wednesday 30 November	6pm – 7pm	Our proposals in Kent
Thursday 1 December	6pm – 7pm	Marine route proposals

Have your say

Our consultation runs from 24 October 2022 to 18 December 2022.

Consultation documents will be available online. Additionally, we will place paper copies of our consultation documents at publicly accessible locations along the route of our proposals, known as deposit points. Details of these locations can be found online, or by calling the team.

To find out more information on Sea Link and provide your feedback on the project, you can contact us using any of the following methods:

Complete a feedback form

Paper copies of our feedback forms can be collected from any of the deposit points. You can also download and print a copy of the feedback form from our website. Alternatively, please get in touch and we will post one to you.

Send us a letter

Please send a letter / or completed feedback form to FREEPOST SEA LINK (no stamp or further address details are required).

Email us

If you prefer to send us your comments via email, you can send them to contact@sealink.nationalgrid.com

Call us

Freephone 0808 134 9569 (lines are open Monday to Friday 9am – 5.30pm).

Visit our website

nationalgrid.com/sealink