

# Community update

April 2024

**At the end of last year, we invited communities to share their views on plans for Sea Link, a new, primarily offshore, electricity network reinforcement between Suffolk and Kent.**

Sea Link forms part of The Great Grid Upgrade, the largest overhaul of the electricity grid in generations. The project will help connect more renewable energy to homes and businesses, whilst increasing the UK's energy security.

Between October and December 2023, we held a statutory consultation on our proposals. Thank you to all those who took part. We received over 2,700 responses from members of the public, landowners, district and county councils, parish and town councils, and statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency and Natural England.

We are currently in the process of reviewing all feedback received. Your comments are extremely valuable and will help us develop and refine our proposals. As part of our application for development consent, we will prepare a consultation report. This report will set out all feedback we received throughout each of our pre-application consultations, along with how we have had regard to that feedback.

### Key themes from consultation feedback:



**Need for Sea Link:** Many responses questioned the need to reinforce the electricity transmission network between Suffolk and Kent



**Alternatives:** Many responses asked or commented on what alternatives were considered, such as different converter station sites (including brownfield) and keeping more infrastructure offshore



**Minimising impacts:** Many responses reiterated the need to minimise the impacts of the project on the environment.

More than

**2,700**  
**responses**

**Around 1,200**

people attended our public exhibitions

**Over 30,000**

homes and businesses across Suffolk and Kent were contacted to advertise the consultation

## Next steps

We are committed to developing our plans together with local communities. Over the coming weeks and months, we will continue talking to public bodies, such as local councils and Natural England on a range of topics as we continue to refine our proposals. We will also be re-engaging parish councils on next steps.

We intend to update the community at regular intervals as we begin to prepare our application for development consent and will be sending regular email newsletters, which will start by looking at some of the key themes from consultation feedback. To sign up to receive these updates, please use the QR code, or contact us using the details at the bottom of this newsletter.

### Register for email updates



## Offshore Coordination Support Scheme

Sea Link is working with two offshore wind farms, North Falls and Five Estuaries, as part of the Government's Offshore Coordination Support Scheme (OCSS). The OCSS provides grants to offshore energy projects to look at the feasibility, challenges and options for coordinated offshore transmission infrastructure.

The first step is a high-level feasibility study, which is already underway. We will share key learnings from this study with Government. While this scheme enables the projects to consider alternative coordinated connections, it is important that each project continues to progress individually, to ensure there is no delay in building the infrastructure required to support the UK's net zero targets.

## Inspiring the next generation

Youth engagement will be a key part of our work as we head towards submitting our application for development consent and beyond. We want to make sure that young people are better engaged in our consultations, and promote the career and educational opportunities available to young people, both at National Grid and across the wider energy industry.

We have already supported at careers events in both Suffolk and Kent. If you have an event coming up that a member of our team could attend, please get in touch.

## Coordination with other projects

Following its supplementary non-statutory consultation in 2023, National Grid Ventures (NGV) has published a consultation report for the LionLink project, which sets out emerging preferences for the project's routing and siting.

While it is proposing a different landfall location (and therefore a different cable corridor) to Sea Link, for reasons outlined in their consultation report, the project has stated a preference to use the Saxmundham site – which is the preferred Sea Link option – for its converter station.

We will continue to explore opportunities to coordinate with up to two potential future NGV projects. Coordination could take many different forms, including co-location of converter station sites, a shared high voltage alternating current underground cable corridor between the converter station and the proposed Friston substation, and a shared landfall and high voltage direct current cable corridor.

## Know a community project that could use some extra hands? Let us know!

In addition to our community grant programme, we want to support communities in Suffolk and Kent through volunteering. If you know of any community projects or local charities that could use some help, let us know.

## Contact us

Our consultation period has now ended but our dedicated team remains on hand to answer your questions. You can contact us in the following ways:

**Call us** – You can contact the team on 0808 134 9569 (Mon – Fri, 9am-5:30pm)

**Send us a letter** – Write to us at FREEPOST Sea Link

**Email us** – Send an email to [contact@sealink.nationalgrid.com](mailto:contact@sealink.nationalgrid.com)

To find out more about Sea Link, please visit our project website at [nationalgrid.com/sealink](https://nationalgrid.com/sealink)

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