

Community update

November 2025

National Grid is upgrading the electricity transmission network between Kent and Suffolk via Sea Link, a new underground cable link which is primarily offshore.

Earlier this year, we submitted an application for a development consent order to build Sea Link. The application is very detailed, so in this update we are providing a clear summary of what our proposals do (and do not) include.

3%

of the cable would be onshore and underground in Kent.

No open trenching in the saltmarsh

cables would be installed underneath using trenchless construction methods.

88%

of the Sea Link cables would be offshore with cables coming onshore underground.



expected to lower energy bills



boosting energy security



supplying power to 2 million homes



Cross-section of underground cable

1 How would the Pegwell Bay saltmarsh be affected by Sea Link?

Sea Link would not impact the saltmarsh. We would install cables approximately 15 metres (equivalent in height to around three and a half double decker buses) beneath the saltmarsh and reserve using trenchless technology. No disturbance would occur to the saltmarsh or the nature reserve, which would remain open for public use during construction and operation.

You can watch a video about how we use trenchless technology to install cables beneath environmentally sensitive sites and the coast by scanning the QR code with your phone's camera:



2 Why didn't you consider brownfield sites for the converter station?

We did look at brownfield sites in Kent, however none of them were large enough for the infrastructure we need to build, or near enough to where Sea Link must connect.

We are proposing to build our converter station and substation near Minster because it is the closest suitable location to where Sea Link would come ashore and to our existing network. This minimises the length of other infrastructure required to connect Sea Link to the existing network where the upgrade is needed.

3 What's happening at the hoverport?

We are not building any infrastructure on the hoverport. The hoverport would be used to access the intertidal area of Pegwell Bay (the area above water level at low tide and underwater at high tide) to install and maintain the marine cables. Maintenance visits would be extremely limited and only occur when absolutely necessary.

Earlier this year, we identified that the saltmarsh habitat at Pegwell Bay had expanded further than previously recorded. We are committed to avoiding any damage to the saltmarsh, so are proposing to include more of the hoverport to access the intertidal area. This would help us to avoid driving vehicles on or close to the saltmarsh habitat.

4 How is the environmental impact of Sea Link being managed?

Over the past few years, our teams have worked with experts, like the Environment Agency and Natural England. We have carried out hundreds of surveys to understand the potential environmental impact.

We would deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain. That means that we would leave the natural environment in a better state than we found it. We are planning to do that in many ways, including delivering new habitats for golden plover and skylarks, and creating woodland, grassland and pond habitats near the converter station.

5 Why can't Sea Link connect somewhere else, like the Isle of Grain?

Sea Link must connect east of Sittingbourne as the existing network here needs upgrading. The Isle of Grain is too far north and west of Sittingbourne. Connecting Sea Link at Grain would mean building more new infrastructure and overhead pylons between Grain and East Kent to where the upgrade to the network is needed.

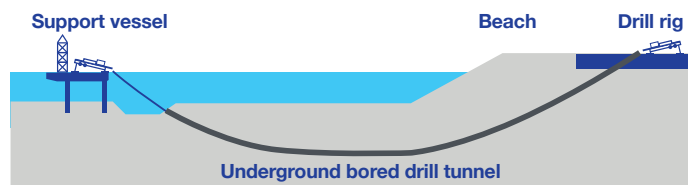


Diagram showing trenchless construction

What's happening now?



The detailed Examination of our application began on 5 November 2025 and will run until 5 May 2026. This process is being run by the Planning Inspectorate.

During the Examination, there will be hearings where those who have registered in advance can attend and give their views about our application. The first round of hearings in Kent took place on 11 and 12 November 2025, with further hearings to be held in early 2026.

For more information, please visit the Planning Inspectorate's website by scanning the QR code with your phone's camera or search online for 'Sea Link Planning Inspectorate'.

Contact us

You can find out more about our proposals by scanning the QR code with your phone's camera or visiting nationalgrid.com/sealink



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