



# Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) NEWSLETTER

Issue 5, January 2025

## Introduction

### What is an NSIP?

An NSIP is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. They are a certain type of project, over a certain size, and considered by the Government to be so big and nationally important that permission to build them needs to be given at a national level, by the responsible Secretary of State. The thresholds for NSIPs are set out in sections 15 to 30A of the PA2008. Instead of applying to the local authority for planning permission, the developer must apply to PINS for a different kind of permission called a Development Consent Order (DCO). The PA2008 process was introduced to streamline the decision-making process for major infrastructure projects. Since then, over 110 NSIPs have been consented in the UK. PINS is responsible for undertaking Development Consent Order (DCO) examinations and writing a report with recommendations to the Secretary of State to aid their decision-making.

Parish and town councils are key stakeholders and consultees in the NSIP process. Suffolk has to deal with a very large number of NSIPs, particularly related to energy developments, so raising awareness of the current status of all of Suffolk's NSIPs with parish and town councils is important to allow for their fullest engagement in the process of NSIPs affecting their area.

Suffolk County Council's (SCC) Scrutiny Committee discussed on 30 June 2023, the impact of NSIPs on Suffolk's communities and how the Council works with communities to encourage consultation responses that are reflective of the views of local people. The CEO of SALC, Sally Longmate, highlighted the pressures and issues parish councils face in relation to NSIP's. The documents related to that meeting are available on the SCC website, and a recording of the meeting is available on YouTube.



1 - Video of Scrutiny Committee 30th June 2023

**SCC Scrutiny Committee documents:**

[https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(30-06-2023\),%20Scrutiny%20Committee](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(30-06-2023),%20Scrutiny%20Committee)

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*Recommendation f) from the Scrutiny Committee states that parish councils should be updated about the status of Suffolk's current and potential NSIPs. This newsletter will be provided every couple of months, prepared by SCC officers, and circulated through SALC.*

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## Guidance for Town and Parish Councils



### Getting to Grips with NSIPs

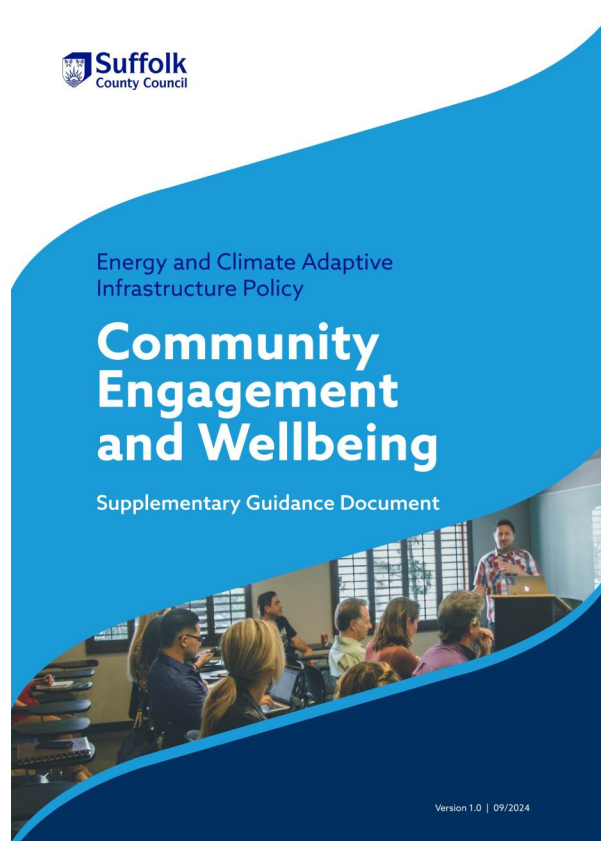
Advice for Town and Parish Councils on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)

The Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) and Suffolk County Council (SCC) have produced a guidance document on how town and parish councils can engage more effectively with the NSIP process. The guidance includes explanations of key documents, stages, and procedures within the NSIP process. In drafting the guidance, SALC's experience in the governance and procedures of town and parish councils has been complimented by the SCC's significant knowledge and expertise in the NSIP process to inform potential roles that town and parish councils can play in NSIP projects.

More information : link to the guidance document [Use this link to view the document](#)

Link to the Suffolk Association of Local Council's dedicated page for local councils on NSIPs - [use this link](#)

## SCC Guidance for NSIP Developers: Community Engagement and Wellbeing



This Guidance document was written by Suffolk County Council (SCC), for NSIP Developers to take account of.

*How the document came to be:*

Following a public question to the meeting of the County Council on 21 March 2024 regarding the well-being of communities and the mental health impacts of nationally significant infrastructure consenting, from the chairman of Friston parish council Mr Michael Mahoney, officers have been working with Cllr Richard Rout, Deputy Cabinet Member for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, to consider how to address this very important issue. The council's Head of Public Mental Health has engaged further with Friston Parish Council and worked with the Council's NSIP team to explore solutions. Officers sought advice from leading UK experts on health impact assessments and community engagement to inform the discussion.

*What the document aims to do:*

As responsibilities for community engagement lie with developers, the Council's greatest lever is to influence developers. Hence, the Council has developed guidance for project promoters about community engagement and safeguarding the well-being of communities, which was published in September 2024. This guidance appears to be first of its kind in the United Kingdom, and its publication has been shared widely with Government officials, the Planning Inspectorate and local authorities across England.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/major-infrastructure-projects-including-nsips/nsip-information-for-developers-and-project-promoters>

Suffolk County Council has published other guidance on NSIPs. The most recent guidance documents are aimed at developers/ promoters of NSIP schemes. These can be found on Suffolk County Councils website here: [NSIP information for developers and project promoters - Suffolk County Council](#)

## **Regional Energy Planning - proposals by the energy regulator, Ofgem**

Suffolk County Council has responded to a consultation from the regulator Ofgem, about the proposed system of Regional Energy system planning. The proposed new system has the potential to manage the development of energy infrastructure much better and allow greater local accountability and much better management of change.

The Consultation can be found at: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/consultation/regional-energy-strategic-plan-policy-framework-consultation>

And the response from Suffolk County Council can be seen at:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/Suffolk-County-Council-RESP-Consultation-Response-081024-FINAL-redacted.pdf>

## Local authority roles in the NSIP process

During the NSIP process, the role of the county and district council is that of a statutory consultee who can try to persuade/advise, but local authorities cannot force changes upon the developer, as they are not the decision-makers. Neither the county nor the district council are responsible for designing or delivering any scheme. However, they are important stakeholders who often can shape the design and mitigation of projects.

Parish and town councils hosting, or being adjacent to, proposed NSIPs are also statutory consultees. It is important for these councils to provide the local community perspective in the process, aiming to influence design, mitigation, and community benefit proposals.

## NSIP Project Updates

(Projects in Alphabetical order)

### Glossary

- NSIP = Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
- PINS = Planning Inspectorate
- SCC = Suffolk County Council
- SALC = Suffolk Association of Local Councils
- DCO = Development Consent Order

## Bramford to Twinstead

*Location: Babergh*

*This project proposal by National Grid is to construct a new 400 kV power line between Bramford to Twinstead to reinforce the electricity transmission network.*

***(No update this issue)***

*Update from previous issue (October 2024):*

The Secretary of State granted Development Consent on the 12 September. Officers were pleased that the Development Consent Order requires submission of detailed construction management plans instead of just relying upon the high-level outline versions submitted with the application. National Grid have announced Balfour Beatty as their main contractors and discussions are expected to commence shortly in respect of the construction.

**More information:**

- Link to Bramford to Twinstead's National Grid webpage: [Link to National Grid's website](#)
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to Bramford to Twinstead can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020002>

## East Anglia ONE North and TWO Offshore Wind Farms (Scottish Power Renewables (SPR))

*Location: East Suffolk*

*East Anglia 1 North and 2 is a proposal to create connections to a new substation at Friston via High Voltage Alternating Current undersea and underground cables.*

***(No update this issue)***

*Update from previous issue (October 2024):*

It is noted that East Anglia TWO has been successful in the government's recent Contract for Difference auction round. For more information on this:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tidalwave-of-clean-energy-investment-worth-billions-unlocked-ahead-of-investment-summit>

SCC is continuing to deal with Discharge of Requirements (DoRs) with colleagues at East Suffolk Council.

**More information:**

- Link to East Anglia ONE North's webpage: [https://www.scottishpowerrenewables.com/pages/east\\_anglia\\_one\\_north.aspx](https://www.scottishpowerrenewables.com/pages/east_anglia_one_north.aspx)

- Link to East Anglia TWO's webpage:  
[https://www.scottishpowerrenewables.com/pages/east\\_anglia\\_two.aspx](https://www.scottishpowerrenewables.com/pages/east_anglia_two.aspx)
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to East Anglia ONE North can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010077>
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to East Anglia TWO can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010078>

## Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm

*Location: Off East Suffolk coast / Essex*

*A wind farm, proposed off the East Suffolk coast, with the landing point and onshore infrastructure proposed to be in Essex.*

### **Update (January 2025):**

The examination into the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm, which began on 17 September 2024, continues and is expected to conclude in March 2025. Officers from Suffolk County Council have been attending hearings and participating in the written process, raising issues relating to landscape impact, traffic and transport, and skills and employment.

### **More information:**

- Five Estuaries Website: <https://fiveestuaries.co.uk>
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to Five Estuaries can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010115>

## LionLink

*Location: East Suffolk*

*LionLink is the proposal by National Grid Ventures Electricity Submission for a subsea electricity link between Suffolk and the Netherlands, which will also connect with Dutch windfarms.*

***(No update this issue)***

*Update from previous issue (October 2024):*

The LionLink Interconnector Scheme is in a pre-application phase of development with further (primarily offshore) surveys taking place this year, with statutory consultation and Preliminary Environmental Impact Report due in 2025. SCC continues to seek coordination between LionLink and Sea Link, including a shared cable corridor, even though LionLink is currently promoting a separate cable corridor, from the Southwold/Walberswick area down to Saxmundham.

**More information:**

- Link to LionLink's National Grid website page: [Link to National Grid's website](#)
- Link to SCC's response to the non-statutory consultation:  
<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/councils-concerns-for-lionlinks-impact-on-suffolk-coastline#:~:text=%20The%20impact%20of%20LionLink%20on,on%20the%20borders%20of%20Minsmere.>
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to LionLink can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020033>

## **Nautilus**

*Location: East Suffolk*

*Nautilus is a National Grid Ventures proposal to create a Multi-Purpose Interconnector with Belgium. Currently the plans would see the project make landfall between Sizewell and Thorpeness, with cables running to Friston, where the interconnector would be sited, connecting to the Grid at an as-yet unbuilt substation.*

**Update (January 2025):**

On 12 November 2024 the energy regulator, Ofgem, announced that it had decided that the Nautilus Interconnector between the UK and Belgium would connect at the Isle of Grain in Kent, and not in Suffolk, as the regulator had proposed in the summer of 2024. Suffolk County Council welcomes news that the Nautilus Interconnector project will not be coming to Suffolk.



### **More information:**

- Link to Nautilus's National Grid website page:  
<https://www.nationalgrid.com/national-grid-ventures/interconnectors-connecting-cleaner-future/nautilus-interconnector>
- Link to the Suffolk County Council page on Nautilus: [Nautilus - Suffolk County Council](#)
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to Nautilus can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020023>

## **North Falls Offshore Wind Farm**

*Location: Off East Suffolk coast / Essex*

*A wind farms, proposed off the East Suffolk coast, with the landing point and onshore infrastructure proposed to be in Essex.*

### **Update (January 2025):**

North Falls was accepted for examination in August 2024, and SCC submitted its relevant representation on 17 September. The examination of the North Falls Offshore Wind Farm is due to begin at the end of January 2025. The examination is expected to close by 28 July.

### **More information:**

- North Falls Website: <https://www.northfallsoffshore.com>
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to North Falls can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010119>

## **Norwich to Tilbury**

*Location: Babergh and Mid Suffolk*

*This project proposal by National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) is to construct a new 400 kV electricity transmission line between Norwich and Tilbury.*

### **Update (January 2025):**

Following the Statutory Consultation which ended in July, National Grid have been considering the thousands of responses that they received. A targeted non-statutory consultation lasting four weeks is expected to take place very soon. Consultation will be targeted on those affected by the specific changes proposed. Details of all the proposed changes will appear on the Norwich to Tilbury website. The DCO application is expected to be submitted during the Summer of 2025.

Suffolk County Council was disappointed to learn that National Grid has decided to install overhead lines through the Waveney Valley, rather than running cables underground, as they had set out in their previous consultation. The Council's views on this matter are detailed in this press release: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/unique-landscape-to-be-changed-forever-by-pylons>

More information:

- Link to Norwich to Tilbury's National Grid webpage: [Link to National Grid's website](#)
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to Norwich to Tilbury can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020027>

## Sea Link

*Location: East Suffolk*

*Sea Link is a proposal for a subsea, grid reinforcement link between Suffolk and Kent. Currently there is a proposed converter station near Saxmundham, connected by underground cables from a landing point between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness.*

### **Update (January 2025):**

Suffolk County Council officers are continuing to engage with the applicant on the details of the proposed Sea Link scheme prior to the submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO), which is expected in Quarter 1, 2025.

Suffolk County Council responded to a pre-submission engagement in January 2025, raising and reiterating the Council's concerns regarding the proposed River Fromus Crossing and its impacts on heritage assets, the unsuitability of Benhall Railway Bridge as an access route to

the converter station site, and the proposed core working hours for construction of the scheme.

Following the review of the Sea Link proposals by the Design Review Panel, a district function which the Suffolk County Council attended as an observer, a report of the panel's findings has been issued to the promoter, National Grid Electricity Transmission.

The Council has requested that the panel's findings are published publicly prior to the submission of the Development Consent Order to allow host communities to understand the design approach to the scheme and how the design principles and masterplan of the site are being developed.

The Council believes a coordinated and integrated access solution between the major infrastructure projects affecting Suffolk, including Sizewell C and National Grid schemes, is essential in reducing the cumulative impacts of multiple projects being under construction at the same time.

**More information:**

- Link to Sea Link's National Grid website page: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/the-great-grid-upgrade/sea-link>
- Link to Sea Link Grid Reinforcement Statutory Consultation Suffolk County Council Response: [https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(12-12-2023\),%20The%20Cabinet](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(12-12-2023),%20The%20Cabinet)
- Link to Sea Link Grid Reinforcement Targeted Consultation Suffolk County Council Response: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/Sea-Link-Targeted-Consultation-Response.pdf>
- Link to Sea Link Grid Reinforcement Pre-Submission Engagement Suffolk County Council Response: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/sea-link-pre-submission-engagement-response.pdf>
- Link to Suffolk County Council's Sea Link web page - <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/major-infrastructure-projects/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-nsips/national-grid-electricity-generation-sea-link>

- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to Sea Link can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020026>

## Sizewell C

*Location: East Suffolk*

*Sizewell C is a 3.2-gigawatt EPR nuclear power station.*

Sizewell C announced formal commencement on 15 January 2024.

### **Update (January 2025):**

While the Final Investment Decision is expected in Spring 2025, significant commencement works are already being undertaken. Discharge of Requirements have mainly thus far been archaeological schemes; however, detailed designs of the associated development highways improvements are now starting to be submitted (e.g. Yoxford roundabout). It is anticipated that construction of the key road mitigation schemes, including Two Village Bypass and Sizewell Link Road, will start in spring 2025. On-site works on these sites to date have been primarily archaeological survey works.

### **More information:**

- Link to the Sizewell C website: <https://www.sizewellc.com>
- Link to Suffolk County Councils webpage on Sizewell C: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/major-infrastructure-projects-including-nsips/sizewell-c-nuclear-power-plant>
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to Sizewell C can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010012>

## Sunnica

*Location: West Suffolk*

*Sunnica is a proposed 1,130 hectares (2,792 acres) Solar Farm development across Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.*

***(No update this issue)***

*Update from previous issue (October 2024):*

On 12 July 2024 the Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP, the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, granted development consent for Sunnica Energy Farm against the recommendation of the Examining Authority which handled the case. Suffolk County Council, alongside Cambridgeshire County Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council and West Suffolk Council, had opposed this large solar farm project straddling West Suffolk and East Cambridgeshire, due to its scale and the degree of impact on the landscape and on communities.

SCC is seeking further clarity from the applicant on the project's programme following the conclusion of claims for judicial review.

**More information:**

- Link to Sunnica's website: <https://sunnica.co.uk>
- Link to Suffolk County Council's webpage on Sunnica: [Sunnica Energy Farm - Suffolk County Council](#)
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to Sunnica can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010106>

## **White Elm Solar Farm**

*Location: Mid Suffolk*

*White Elm Solar Farm is a proposed 675-acre solar farm, including battery storage, with a design capacity exceeding 50MW and located within the three parishes of Mendlesham, Wickham Skeith and Thwaite, approximately 7.5km north of Stowmarket.*

**Update (January 2025):**

At the end of November, Suffolk County Council submitted detailed comments to the Planning Inspectorate regarding the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping, considering technical matters of assessment and not the principle of the development itself.

These comments will feed into the Planning Inspectorate Scoping Opinion which is expected to be published in due course. Further information can be found via the following webpage:

<https://national-infrastructureconsenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN0110003>

The Suffolk Association of Local Council's (SALC), in collaboration with Council officers, provided advice to support the Parish Councils who had been asked by the Planning Inspectorate to make comments on EIA Scoping.

#### **More information:**

- Link to White Elm Solar Farm's Website: <https://www.whiteelmsolarfarm.com>
- Link to the PINS webpage where all public documents relating to White Elm Solar Farm can be found: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN0110003>

## **Other NSIPs**

The following NSIPs in Suffolk have currently no significant updates to report:

- SPR: East Anglia One and Three: Both are consented. East Anglia One (EA1) is complete; East Anglia Three (EA3) is under construction. The EA3 converter station is currently being constructed at Bramford and works along the cable ducting route are being undertaken.
- Gull Wing Bridge: Thousands of Lowestoft residents made history on 7 September 2024 as they walked, wheeled and drove for the first time across the town's new, world-leading and unique Gull Wing bridge. The civic opening ceremony will take place on Tuesday 19 November. <https://gullwingbridge.co.uk>
- Drax: (formerly Progress Power) at Eye Airfield: Consented. Construction is ongoing.

In addition, there is the possibility in the medium term of additional NSIPs, in relation to hydrogen infrastructure, water reservoirs, energy generation and potentially, in the longer term, further National Grid infrastructure. Future newsletters will update on further developments.

***Suffolk Association of Local Councils and Suffolk County Council***