**An update from Saxmundham Town Council – March 2025**

A high angle view of a factory

Description automatically generated**Sealink Converter Station – Have Your Say**

Your opportunity to have your say during the Sea Link planning process is imminent. Only those registered as an Interested Party (‘IP’) will be able to engage therefore the Town Council encourages as many people as possible to register to have their voice heard as soon as the application is accepted by the Planning Inspectorate (‘PINS’) for examination.

**Why do I need to register?**

The proposed Sea Link converter station is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (‘NSIP’), therefore the planning application, and consultation of affected people, follows a specific route. If you would like to express your opinion on the proposals, you will need to register as an IP with PINS.

**What happens next?**

Within the next two months it is expected that National Grid will submit their Sea Link application for a Development Consent Order (‘DCO’) to PINS. PINS then has up to 28 days to decide if the application meets the required standard. Once PINS have accepted the DCO application, they will engage **only** with people who have registered as an IP.

**Registering as an interested party**

**Anyone** can register as an IP with PINS by submitting a summary of their views on the application which is known as a Relevant Representation (‘RR’). You can register directly with PINS on their website at national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020026. The Town Council is also pleased to offer support by holding drop-in sessions at the Town House in Station Approach to help residents register as an IP. Dates and times will be publicised once the registration process is open.

**Writing your Relevant Representation:**

The RR is a simple statement about one or several issues of the project that concern you (for example - noise, traffic, flooding, loss of ecological habitat, effect on listed buildings, loss of visual amenity) and a brief explanation for your concerns. RRs that simply state: ‘it’s in the wrong place’, ‘it’s not needed’, or ‘there are alternative brownfield sites’ will be rejected by PINS therefore it is important to direct PINS to examine the reasons why you think the proposed location may be the wrong site for the converter station. During the examination process, there will be opportunities to expand on your RR with a Written Representation (‘WR’) and, if you wish, you may attend the examination and speak. More information on this will be provided later.

**When can you register?**

You can only register as an IP after National Grid submit the DCO and it is accepted by PINS. At this point, you will only have 28 days to submit your RR and thus become an IP**.** Therefore, keep an eye on the news, National Grid’s Sealink website at nationalgrid.com/the-great-grid-upgrade/sea-link, and the Town Council’s website at saxmundham.org, our noticeboards around town, and our Facebook page to ensure you do not miss this window of opportunity.

**Why this matters:**

PINS will decide the extent of the examination based on the RR’s received from IPs. Therefore, the more concerns registered will result in a far wider examination of the Sea Link proposals.

If you need help or further information from the Town Council, please email townclerk@saxmundham-tc.gov.uk.