

National Grid Sea Link, Document 9.19 Sea Link DCO notification of change to DCO application

[Change Application Consultation Document \(2\).pdf \(nationalgrid.com\)](#)

4.5 Change 4 – Benhall Railway Bridge, Suffolk

Saxmundham Town Council wishes to comment on the proposed changes relating to the works at Benhall Railway Bridge due to significant concerns regarding the likely impacts on traffic congestion, noise, air quality, and the local economy.

Whatever solution is ultimately adopted, there will be substantial implications for the local community:

1. **Traffic Restrictions** – Vehicular traffic will be unable to exit from the A12 via the Benhall junction while works to install the temporary bridge (up to 15 separate occasions) are undertaken. The Town Council requests further information on the estimated timescales for both installation and removal during each phase.
2. **Rail Disruption** – If the ‘bridge fixing’ option is selected, delays are likely to affect both passenger and Sizewell C freight rail services.
3. **Alternative Overbridge Option** – The semi-permanent overbridge proposal may reduce road congestion and associated impacts on air quality and noise. However, the Town Council seeks clarification on the applicant’s view that this option could result in greater environmental harm overall.

It is essential that closures of the B1121 Benhall Bridge junction are minimised to prevent severe congestion within Saxmundham and additional pressure on the signal-controlled crossroads in the town centre.

Diverted traffic will otherwise be forced onto unsuitable residential roads including Rendham Road, Mill Road, and Chantry Road (which is subject to a 7.5-tonne weight restriction). Vehicles travelling from Leiston to the A12 would also be likely to use this route, creating additional congestion along Church Hill and Church Street.

In addition to the inconvenience caused by longer journey times, residents will experience increased noise and poorer air quality. The closure of the B1121 is also expected to have a detrimental effect on local businesses, as customers and delivery vehicles may avoid the town due to severe congestion and access difficulties.

Saxmundham Town Council therefore urges the applicant to:

- Provide detailed traffic and environmental impact assessments for each proposed construction option;
- Confirm the anticipated duration and timing of any closures; and
- Work proactively with Suffolk County Council’s highways team to ensure any diversions are safe, suitable, and properly managed to minimise disruption to Saxmundham residents and businesses.