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Court fight against \$8bn Iberdrola mega-project cleared to continue in new UK offshore wind blow

Campaigners against onshore works for part of East Anglia hub say they have permission to appeal earlier ruling

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By [Andrew Lee](#)

A British judge gave celebrity-backed campaigners the all-clear to continue their long legal battle against the onshore power infrastructure for one of the world’s largest offshore wind hubs, potentially casting a new shadow over the UK’s 2030 ambitions for wind at sea.

Suffolk Energy Action Solutions (SEAS) said it was on Thursday granted permission to appeal against an earlier decision by the High Court in London that [rejected its calls for a judicial review](#) into UK government consent for substations being built as part of Iberdrola’s offshore wind mega-project off eastern England.

The campaigners are fighting against infrastructure for the East Anglia 1 North and East Anglia 2 projects. These form about half of the £6.5bn (\$7.9bn) 3GW East Anglia Hub planned in the North Sea by ScottishPower Renewables, Iberdrola’s UK subsidiary.

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SEAS said in a statement sent to *Recharge* that Lord Justice Singh when granting their appeal said “the central issue in this case raises important points of general principle and should be considered by this court and so there is a 'compelling' reason to permit an appeal to proceed.”

SEAS said: “We believe that the Court of Appeal is the best place for us to argue points of law that have significant importance, not just to East Suffolk but also for the wider public interest. We anticipate our hearing will be either in December or early next year.”

Advancing East Anglia Hub is a key component of UK government ambitions to hit 50GW of offshore wind by 2030, up from around 14GW now, which are already teetering from setbacks including a [shunned renewable energy auction](#) round and the cancellation by Vattenfall [of one of its own East Anglia projects](#).

SEAS says it is not opposed to offshore wind but rather the “catastrophic” impact of the onshore substations. At 14 metres high, the group argues these would dominate the landscape around the medieval village of Friston and coastal town of Aldeburgh, near where the stations are planned.

Their campaign has previously received the backing of celebrities including Hollywood star Ralph Fiennes and local Members of Parliament.

SEAS proposes that much of the infrastructure could be placed on offshore platforms, connected to a single onshore hub in an already developed site nearer London. The group says this would reduce impacts on the environment and local tourism – and would also be around £2bn (\$2.6bn) cheaper.

A ScottishPower Renewables spokesperson said: “Our East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two offshore windfarms are critical infrastructure projects that will not only help bring more homegrown green electricity on to the grid, but will deliver billions of pounds of investment and support thousands of jobs in the East of England and across the UK.

after 'disastrous' green power auction

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“We remain committed to delivering them as quickly as possible to achieve the clean energy future we all want – and need. As there are ongoing legal proceedings, we won’t be commenting any further.” [\(Copyright\)](#)

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