

LionLink Community Newsletter

February 2025



Welcome to our first LionLink Community Newsletter of 2025.

Here we outline our plans for the year including the announcement of our preferred landfall site for LionLink, our latest project timeline, and details of our upcoming community drop-ins.

National Grid Ventures (NGV) is developing plans to build LionLink, a new subsea cable (known as an interconnector) between the UK and the Netherlands. LionLink will bring offshore wind energy

to the UK by connecting to a Dutch offshore wind farm. It will enable the flow of energy between the UK and Dutch electricity systems.

LionLink will connect enough energy to the UK's electricity grid to power c.2.5 million homes. It will play an important role in keeping household energy bills down and providing the UK with a secure and reliable energy supply.

Lionlink will deliver a range of benefits, including:



Strengthening the UK's national energy security – supplying enough energy to power approximately 2.5 million homes.



Lowering energy bills – LionLink is expected to save UK consumers almost £300 million in its first ten years of operation.



Providing clean, green, renewable energy – the carbon savings of its first year is equivalent to taking nearly 600,000 cars off the road.

LIONLINK

Preferred landfall site decision

Following extensive analysis, we have chosen Walberswick as our preferred landfall site. The landfall site north of Southwold has been discounted, and no construction will take place in Southwold.

The key reasons for this decision are:



Shorter onshore cable route

The Walberswick landfall site requires a shorter onshore cable route to the proposed converter station site in Saxmundham (14.3km) compared to the Southwold route (16.9km).

Choosing the shorter Walberswick route should reduce the overall environmental impact and disruption to residents. This is because it should shorten the construction timeline and require fewer materials, construction sites, and vehicle movements.



Lower combined environmental impact

The project team has carefully analysed the combined impact of the landfall sites and cable routes (onshore and offshore) for the Walberswick and Southwold options. We concluded that the overall environmental impact would be less in Walberswick – and that there were more options to reduce the impact there too.

Although the Walberswick onshore cable route passes through a section of the Minsmere-Walberswick Special Protection Area, we will avoid direct impact by using special construction methods, such as underground drilling and noise monitoring equipment.

Fewer heritage trees and hedgerows will be lost with the shorter route to Walberswick. It will also require fewer crossings of waterways, utility pipes, and roads to reach the converter station site at Saxmundham. This will reduce environmental damage and disruption to residents.

Construction at Southwold would be more challenging and require both the construction of a temporary platform as well as more reinforcements to protect the steep cliff and seawall defence. This would create more disruption for the environment and increase traffic disruption for Southwold residents.



Less traffic disruption

The shorter cable route to Walberswick should result in less disruption to local roads. We also hope to use existing farm tracks to create access roads which would allow us to avoid the main road into Walberswick village.

Avoiding the complex construction needed at Southwold will reduce construction traffic and avoid disruption to Southwold Pier car park, which we know is important for people in and visiting the town.



More sustainable coastal location

LionLink is expected to be in operation for at least 40 years, so the sustainability of the site is also a consideration. Walberswick is less susceptible to coastal erosion and flooding so is a more suitable option longer term.



Offshore considerations

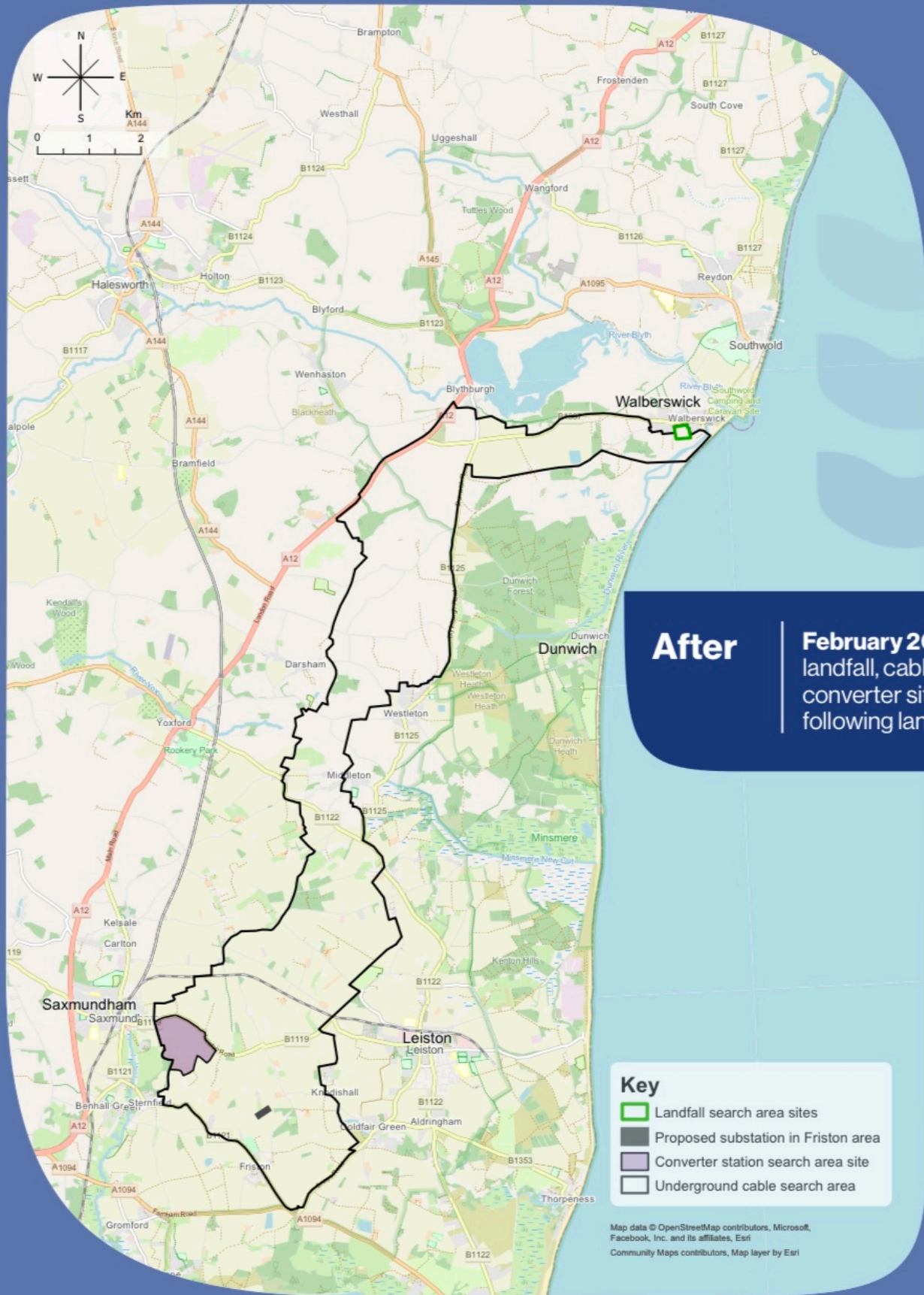
Offshore considerations are a crucial factor to our decision making and we have discounted sites further down the coast due to the impact on marine habitats. The slightly longer offshore cable route (3km) between the Dutch offshore windfarm and Walberswick has a marginal influence on the overall impact of the project on the marine environment and therefore was not a determining factor in our landfall decision.





What is a landfall site?

A landfall site is the location where the subsea cables are brought onto the land and are connected to onshore cables. No construction will take place on the beach and no visible infrastructure will be left on the beach or the shoreline.



After February 2025: Preferred landfall, cable route and converter site options following landfall decision.

- Key**
- Landfall search area sites
 - Proposed substation in Friston area
 - Converter station search area site
 - Underground cable search area

Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Microsoft, Facebook, Inc. and its affiliates, Esri
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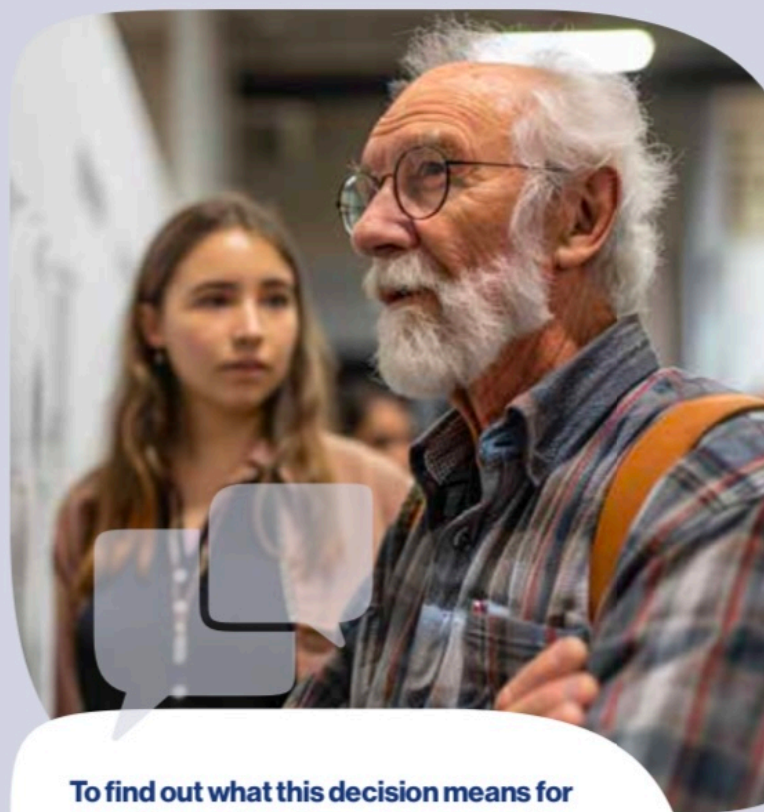
What is a 'search area'?

Search areas are the broad area in which infrastructure is being considered for development. For example, this means that works will not be required across the entirety of the converter, landfall and cable route boundaries shown on this map. The exact placement of our onshore infrastructure will be defined as part of our consent application.

The process

Our selection of the Walberswick landfall site has involved a comprehensive, multi-step process.

- 1 Initial site feasibility searches and report – 2018 - 2022**
 - We identified potential onshore infrastructure locations considering environmental limitations and technical feasibility. Our initial assessment resulted in a shortlist of viable landfall sites for further study.
- 2 First public consultation – late 2022**
 - We held the first public consultation on our initial siting and routing options, including landfall sites at Walberswick, Southwold, Aldeburgh, and Dunwich.
 - In response to community feedback received, we identified an alternative landfall site at Walberswick and an alternate onshore cable corridor north of Southwold.
- 3 Second public consultation – late 2023**
 - We held a second public consultation on our alternative Walberswick landfall site and Southwold cable route, as well as the options presented in 2022.
- 4 Refined site options – Spring 2024**
 - We published a Supplementary Non-Statutory Consultation Report, which summarised responses to feedback received, and set out our emerging preferences and discounted sites. Here, we discounted the Aldeburgh, Dunwich and original Walberswick landfall options. We also selected a sole converter station option in the Saxmundham area. You can find the report on our website.
- 5 Seabed surveys – Spring / Summer 2024**
 - To assess offshore routes to the Dutch windfarm, we conducted seabed surveys off the coast at Walberswick and Southwold.
- 6 Ground investigation survey works – Summer / Autumn 2024**
 - We conducted ground investigation survey works along the proposed cable route for LionLink, at the Walberswick and Southwold landfall sites and offshore route.
- 7 Preferred option selection – February 2025**
 - After thorough evaluation, we selected Walberswick as the preferred landfall site.



To find out what this decision means for you, please attend one of our upcoming community drop-ins or webinar. These are not consultation events, but an opportunity to learn more about the project and meet our team of experts ahead of our formal statutory consultation expected to take place in Autumn/Winter 2025.

14 March 2025 14:00 – 20:00
Saxmundham Market Hall
In-person drop in

15 March 2025 10:00 – 16:00
Walberswick Village Hall
In-person drop in

19 March 2025 18:00 – 19:30
Register via the website (see below)
Webinar

To register to attend the webinar or read more information about our proposals, please visit our project website here: nationalgrid.com/lionlink or by scanning this QR code.

We look forward to seeing you and answering any questions you may have.





Next steps

LionLink is a major project that requires significant studies and surveys ahead of applying for Development Consent. As such, timelines are susceptible to change. We are now working to an operational date of 2032.

This adjustment to our timeline means that our statutory consultation will take place in Autumn/Winter 2025. This consultation will provide:

- details of our latest proposals and design
- the findings of our Preliminary Environmental Information Report and proposed mitigation measures
- proposed construction methodology and timetable
- information on community benefits and local initiatives.

The statutory consultation will be the final opportunity to provide feedback on our preferred options before they are submitted as part of the application for Development Consent.

2025

Spring 2025

- Selection of preferred landfall site.
- Community drop-ins and webinar.
- Archaeological works along the cable route and preferred sites.

Autumn 2025

- Statutory consultation.
- Preliminary Environmental Information Report published.

2026

- Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Statement finalised.
- Development Consent Order (DCO) submitted.

2026

Our commitment to you

If you would like to keep up to date with the latest news on LionLink and to receive a virtual copy of future newsletters, please sign up via our website.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in the LionLink project.

For more information on LionLink please contact:

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