

# **UK STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT**

*under Article 9(4) of EU Regulation No. 347/2013 on guidelines  
for trans-European energy infrastructure  
(TEN-E Regulation)*

prepared by

**GridLink Interconnector Ltd**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

GridLink Interconnector Limited is the project promoter for the development, construction and operation of the GridLink interconnector project, which comprises a 1,400 MW 525 kV electricity interconnector between Kingsnorth in the UK and Dunkerque in France (hereafter 'GridLink').

It is important that the GridLink project is carried out in sensitive way that gives due consideration to the local communities and stakeholders who may be affected by project activities.

Therefore, to support the development phase of the project, GridLink is committed to carrying out stakeholder engagement and public consultations to inform all interested parties about the planned project infrastructure, implementation plan, environmental studies, permit granting procedures and mechanisms for opinions, comments or complaints to be submitted for consideration by the project promoter.

Furthermore, after completion of the development phase, GridLink intends to maintain appropriate communications with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that information dissemination, delivery of any commitments made to stakeholders and consultations continue throughout construction and operations.

## 1.2 PROJECT OF COMMON INTEREST (PCI)

GridLink has been awarded the status of Project of Common Interest (PCI) by the European Commission.

The award of PCI status was confirmed by the publication of *Commission Delegated Regulation No. 2018/540 of 23 November 2017 amending Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the Union list of projects of common interest* in the Official Journal on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

In accordance with *Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the Union list of projects of common interest* (known as the 'TEN-E Regulation'), each country connected by GridLink has nominated a National Competent Authority (NCA) responsible for overseeing the implementation of PCIs. The NCAs in the UK and France are:

<u>UK</u>	<u>FRANCE</u>
<p><b>National Competent Authority:</b> Marine Management Organisation (MMO)*</p> <p><b>Contact name:</b> Ms. Abbey Coppin</p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:abbey.coppin@marinemangement.org.uk">abbey.coppin@marinemangement.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> (+ 44) (0) 208 026 5061</p>	<p><b>National Competent Authority:</b> Chargée de mission infrastructures de transport d'électricité, Direction Générale de l'Energie et du Climat (MTES, DGEC)</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Ms. Sidonie Blanchard</p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:Sidonie.Blanchard@developpement-durable.gouv.fr">Sidonie.Blanchard@developpement-durable.gouv.fr</a></p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> (+33) (0) 1 408 185 90</p>

\* The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has delegated authority to co-ordinate the TEN-E process to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO)

The NCAs are required to coordinate and facilitate a “Comprehensive Decision” related to the permitting of a PCI within each national territory. Further information on the role and requirements of the NCAs can be found in Article 8(1) of the TEN-E Regulation.

### 1.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with Article 9(3) of the TEN-E Regulation, the project promoter must prepare a concept for public participation (approved by the NCA).

The public participation must include:

- a) At least one public consultation event, with a written invitation to relevant affected stakeholders, prior to the application for development consents;
- b) Website that provides:
  - i. Details of public consultation events;
  - ii. Access to project documents (including a regularly updated non-technical summary and information leaflet);
  - iii. Information and contact details for the national competent authorities (NCAs) and the Project Promoter; and
  - iv. Links to the European Commission website and related documents and procedures;
- c) Start of public consultation in each country within two months of each other.

The stakeholders affected by the project should be extensively informed and consulted at an early stage, when potential concerns can be taken into account, and in an open and transparent manner.

In the context of the public consultation to be carried out before submission of applications for development consent, the specified requirements are:

- Publish an information leaflet giving an overview of the purpose and preliminary timetable of the project, national grid development plans, alternative routes and sites considered, expected impacts and mitigation measures, and web-site address for further information;
- Inform all stakeholders affected about the project through the web-site and any other appropriate information means;
- Invite in written form relevant affected stakeholders to dedicated meetings to discuss any concerns.

Article 9(4) of the TEN-E Regulation requires that the project promoter must prepare a report summarising the results of activities related to the participation of the public prior to the submission of the application file.

This document provides a **Stakeholder Consultation Summary Report** covering the stakeholder engagement and specifically the public consultations that have been carried out, including with the general public, elected members of local councils, local authorities, competent authorities, statutory consultees, non-statutory consultees and interest groups in the UK.

#### 1.4 COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, GridLink amended its stakeholder engagement and public consultation strategy to comply with Government guidelines.

As GridLink has been carrying out stakeholder engagement since 2017, many stakeholders had already been informed about the project and consulted about the proposals before the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the approach to stakeholder engagement about the contents of the environmental reports and the pre-application public consultations.

The main effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been:

- The public meeting and exhibition were postponed from June 2020 to September 2020.
- As the restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic have continued into September, the public meeting and exhibition have been changed to an online platform – a virtual exhibition has been operated via the GridLink web-site and an online public meeting has been carried out.
- Thematic meetings have been changed to teleconferences or videoconferences, with the distribution of presentation material in advance to the participants.

Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, GridLink believes that the stakeholder engagement has remained comprehensive and robust, with the opportunity for stakeholders to participate and provide feedback via a variety of accessible mechanisms.

## 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

GridLink is a proposed high voltage, direct current (HVDC) electricity interconnector with a transfer capacity of 1,400 megawatts (MW) and a nominal operating voltage of 525 kilovolts (kV).

The project infrastructure comprises five elements:

1. Two submarine HVDC cables bundled together with a fibre optic cable installed together between 1.7 m and 3.5 m under the seabed between the UK and France. The submarine cable route is approximately 140 km in length, comprising 108 km in UK territorial waters and 32 km in French territorial waters respectively.
2. Two underground HVDC cables with a fibre optic cable installed together from each shoreline to the converter stations in UK and France. The HVDC cables cross the shoreline by Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) at approximately 10 m below any sensitive features, such as sea defences, ship canals or environmentally sensitive habitats, so that the ground surface is unaffected. In France, after the shore crossing, the underground cable route is approximately 13.3 km in length. In the UK, there is no underground HVDC cable because the HDD exit point is at the converter station site.
3. Converter stations to convert the current from direct current (used for long distance transport of power to reduce energy losses) to alternating current that is compatible with the national public electricity grids in the UK and France.
4. Underground high voltage, alternating current (HVAC) cables from the converter stations to the existing 400 kV network in UK and France. The underground cable routes are approximately 1.5 km in UK and 3 km in France respectively.
5. Connection to the national grids in the UK and France, by installation of equipment in Spare Bay 3 at Kingsnorth 400 kV sub-station owned and operated by National Grid ESO in the UK (there is no extension required at sub-station) and a new sub-station next to the Warande 400 kV sub-station owned and operated by RTE in France.

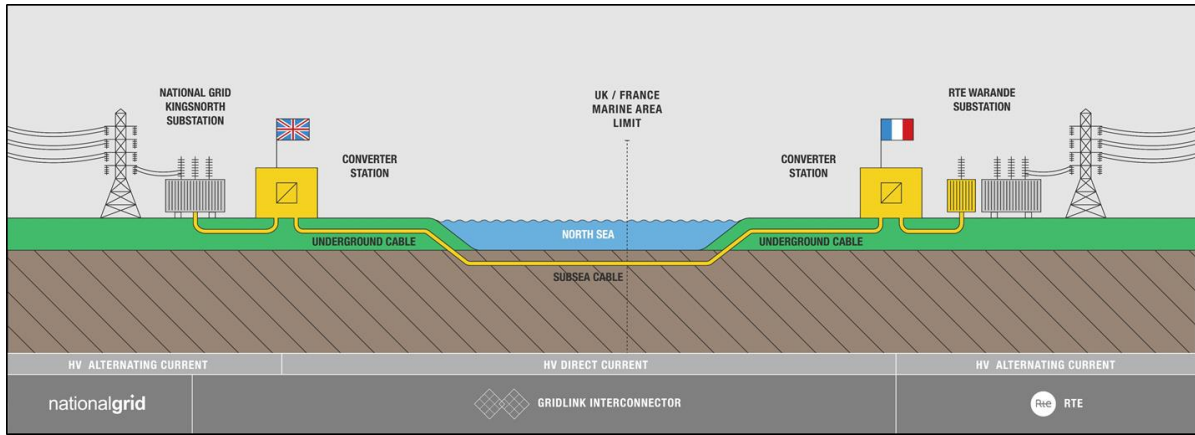
The underground HVAC cables and new sub-station in France will be implemented by RTE on behalf of GridLink, in accordance with the grid connection agreement between RTE and GridLink.

The GridLink project is illustrated in **Figure 1**.

The locations of the converter stations and overall cable route are shown in **Figure 2**.

The converter station site and 1.5 km onshore HVAC cable route in the UK are shown in **Figure 3**. The converter station is located next to the shoreline, therefore the subsea HVDC cable crosses the shoreline by Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) and immediately enters the converter station site.

**Figure 1: Schematic of the GridLink Project**



**Figure 2: GridLink Converter Station Sites and Cable Route**



**Figure 3: GridLink Converter Station Site and Underground Cable in UK**



## 2.2 DEVELOPMENT CONSENTS AND PERMITS

In order to construct the onshore and offshore infrastructure of the GridLink project, development consents and permits are required for the installation of subsea and underground cables, and the construction of converter stations in the UK and France.

The development consents and permits in the UK are listed below:

- Subsea HVDC cable:
  - License to use the Seabed
  - Marine Licence
  - Environmental Permit for works related to rivers and watercourses
  - River Works Licence (Medway Estuary)
  - River Works Licence (Thames Estuary)
- Underground HVAC cable:
  - Permitted development rights
- Converter station:
  - Planning Permission
  - Land Drainage Consent

The applicable legislation and competent authorities for the statutory permit granting procedures are summarised in **Table 1**.



**Table 1: Development Consents and Permits required by the GridLink Project in UK**

Project Infrastructure	Development Consent/ Permit	Applicable Legislation	Competent Authority
Subsea HVDC cable	Licence to use seabed	Crown Estate Act 1961	Crown Estate
	Marine Licence	Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009	Marine Management Organisation
	Environmental Permit for works related to rivers and watercourses*	Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010	Environment Agency
	River Works Licence (Medway Estuary)	Medway Ports Act 1973	Peel Ports
	River Works Licence (Thames Estuary)	Port of London Act 1968	Port of London Authority
Converter station	Planning Permission	Town and Country Planning Act 1990	Medway Council
	Land Drainage Consent	Land Drainage Act 1991, as amended	Lower Medway Drainage Board
Underground HVAC cable	Permitted Development Rights	The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015	Medway Council

\*An Environmental Permit is required as the subsea HVDC cable is: a) Electrical cable service crossing a main river; b) Service crossing below the bed of a river by directional drilling; c) Activity within 16 m of a tidal main river; d) Works that may impact upon flood defences

The key development consents and permits that provide approval for construction of the infrastructure necessary to implement GridLink are the Marine Licence and Planning Permission. These consents are subject to legislation that determines if an environmental impact assessment (or environmental report) is required and obligations to carry out public consultations. In the case of GridLink, scoping and screening procedures completed with MMO and Medway Council indicated that there is no mandatory requirement to prepare an environmental impact assessment, but that environmental reports should be provided to support the applications for the Marine Licence and Planning Permission.

### 3. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLANNING

#### 3.1 SCOPING OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In the UK, stakeholder engagement is determined by the project promoter and it is not supervised by the National Competent Authority or any other statutory authority.

Therefore, GridLink Interconnector Ltd consulted with Medway Council, as the local authority responsible for determining the Planning Application for the converter station and underground cables, and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), as the statutory authority responsible for determining the Marine Licence for the subsea cable, regarding the appropriate scope of stakeholder engagement and, in particular, public consultations. In addition, GridLink requested screening/scoping opinions from Medway Council and MMO regarding the requirement to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment and associated contents, which also provided information on requirements for public consultations.

Medway Council has advised two key recommendations:

- a) Comply with the *Medway Statement of Community Involvement* (September 2014, as amended in August 2020), published by Medway Council;
- b) Carry out Members Briefing(s) to inform elected Council members regarding the plans for the GridLink project.

In the *Medway Statement of Community Involvement*, Medway Council states that its objective is to seek community involvement in development of its plans (plan-making) and decisions on planning applications by project promoters. In terms of developments such as GridLink, the relevant elements of the Statement are:

- Early engagement;
- Engagement in a positive and proactive manner;
- Present development proposals to Councillors at an early stage of the planning process (before submitting an application);
- Encouragement of the use of models and materials to help communication, for example at exhibitions.

Consultation with the MMO identified several key issues relevant to the public consultation strategy:

- Strong recommendation that pre-application stakeholder engagement is carried out before any application for a Marine Licence is submitted;
- Requirements for consultations with environmental groups as part of the scoping opinion related to environmental studies;
- Advice that consultation and coordination with other marine users is critical prior to, and during, the offshore survey.

GridLink also held a Scoping Workshop with key statutory authorities and consultees to define the potential environmental effects and requirements for future consultations at an early stage of the site selection and cable route planning . The Scoping Workshop included Medway Council, MMO,

Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England and the ecology and archaeological departments of Kent County Council.

The recommendations from these preliminary consultations were incorporated into the stakeholder engagement and public consultation activities.

### 3.2 STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

The stakeholder groups that have been consulted by GridLink are summarised in **Table 2**.

These stakeholder groups represent a wide range of regulatory, environmental, local community and public interests that may potentially be affected by the GridLink project.

**Table 2: Stakeholder Groups**

Group	Stakeholder
Residents	Hoo St Werburgh Individual properties in area surrounding Kingsnorth Wider communities along the Medway Estuary
Local community councils	Hoo St Werburgh Parish Council
Local authorities	Medway Council
Regional authorities	Kent County Council
Competent authorities for development consents	Medway Council Marine Management Organisation (MMO) Crown Estate Environment Agency Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board
Landowners	Uniper UK Ltd
Maritime navigation authorities / harbour masters	Peel Ports (Port of Sheerness) Port of London Authority (PLA)
Statutory consultees for environmental assessments	Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) Natural England Environment Agency Historic England Maritime and Coastguard Agency Trinity House Ministry of Defence (MoD) Oil & Gas Authority (OGA) Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED)
Environmental interest groups	Kent Wildlife Trust Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society
Commercial fishermen	National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO) Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (KEIFCA) Rochester Oystermen and Floating Fisheries (ROFF) Thanet Fishermen's Association Whitstable Fishermen's Association Swale Fishermen Ltd Harwich Harbour Fishermen's Association Thames Estuary Fishermen's Association Leigh Trawlermen Cooperative
Offshore third party power cable owners	BritNed Development Ltd (BritNed interconnector) NEMO Ltd (NEMO interconnector) Blue Transmission London Array Ltd (London Array windfarm) Balfour Beatty plc (Thanet windfarm) Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd (Kentish Flats windfarm) Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd (Thanet windfarm extension)

Group	Stakeholder
Offshore third party telecommunications cable owners	Century Link (PEC, Tangerine, Atlantic Crossing - Seg B1) BT (various out-of-service/historic cables)
Other marine industry	British Marine Aggregate Producers Association (BMAPA)
Recreational marine users	Sailing clubs Diving clubs Marinas

### 3.3 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

GridLink planned the optimum timing for stakeholder engagement activities, when sufficient project information was available to enable clear discussions but also when the project design was sufficiently flexible so that it could be influenced or changed in response to the consultation feedback.

The first stakeholder consultations were carried out in February 2017, and it has continued up to the current time. Where appropriate, consultations have been repeated and updated for any changes to the GridLink project, for example MMO, Medway Council and Natural England were re-consulted after changes were made to the choice of converter station site and all amendments to the submarine cable route have been presented to the navigation authorities and fishermen associations for comment.

The key objectives of the stakeholder engagement activities have been to request information to support the environmental studies and assessments, present the project design, discuss alternatives and identify mitigation measures.

GridLink has adopted a variety of communication mechanisms to engage with stakeholders, depending on the preference of the stakeholder and whether there was already a specific consultation process in place, such as the use of a web-site inquiry form for statutory consultees. GridLink’s preference has been to hold thematic meetings with stakeholders wherever possible. Any stakeholder contacted in writing or by e-mail has been offered a meeting on request.

## 4. RESULTS OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

GridLink has consulted with 89 stakeholders. Details of the stakeholders contacted by GridLink are summarised in **Table 3**.

The results of the stakeholder engagement, and how the feedback has been considered in the environmental assessments, are provided in the Environmental Reports accompanying the application for Planning Permission and Marine Environmental Report accompanying the Marine Licence application respectively.

A summary of the key comments and requests that were received is provided below:

- **Request for additional information about the demand for interconnectors, current implementation of other interconnectors, how the interconnector will operate and who provides the electricity that is transported** – GridLink has provided additional information related to these subjects to the stakeholders during the consultations, and also added technical descriptions and studies to the public information available on its web-site.
- **Request for clarification of the benefits that the interconnector offers to renewable energy** – GridLink has provided additional information to the stakeholders during the consultations and within the public information available on its web-site.
- **Non-statutory consultees, such as RSPB and Kent Wildlife Trust, should be consulted** – GridLink has ensured that the stakeholder engagement included a wide range of non-statutory consultees and interest groups, including the RSPB and Kent Wildlife Trust.
- **The submarine cable route should take into account fishing grounds and activities** – GridLink has consulted widely with the fishing associations active in the Medway Estuary, Thames Estuary and southern North Sea, and taken fishing grounds into account in selecting the submarine cable route, design of crossings any existing subsea cables, and cable installation methods. GridLink is carrying out before and after fishing surveys to confirm that fishing activities can continue after the submarine cable is installed.
- **Disturbance to birds using the Medway Estuary should be considered** – GridLink has conducted extensive bird surveys for 2 years to evaluate the presence of over-wintering, nesting and feeding birds around the converter station site and submarine cable route, and incorporated a range of mitigation measures to minimise any impacts from noise, lighting or other disruption during construction or operations.
- **The publicising of the public consultations should not rely on press advertising, social media and web-site in case people are not computer-literate or see the media** – GridLink included distribution of flyers about the public consultations to the residential addresses of Hoo St Werbergh Parish and two drop-in information points at Dockside Outlet Retail Centre and Riverside Country Park, as well as publication of advertisements and press releases in local social media, newspapers and radio.

GridLink has considered all the feedback and opinions received from stakeholders and the public consultations, in particular with regards to the submarine cable routing and definition of mitigation measures to minimise any residual environmental impacts. Any specific mitigation measures that have been selected to address a particular concern have been communicated to the relevant stakeholders for review and to ensure that they satisfy the concern that has been expressed.

**Table 3: Summary of Stakeholder Engagement**

Ref	Stakeholder	Type
1	Medway Council - Planning	Local authority
2	Medway Council - Economic Development	Local authority
3	Medway Council - Highways	Local authority
4	Medway Council - Ecology	Local authority
5	Medway Council - Landscape	Local authority
6	Hoo St Werburgh Parish Council	Parish Council
7	Hoo St Werburgh and Chattenden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	Parish Council
8	Kent County Council - Cultural heritage	Cultural heritage
9	Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	Competent authority
10	Crown Estate	Competent authority
11	Peel Ports (Port of Sheerness)	Navigation authority
12	Port of London Authority (PLA)	Navigation authority
13	Uniper UK Ltd	Landowner
14	Historic England	Cultural heritage
15	Natural England	Nature conservation
16	Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)	Nature conservation
17	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)	Nature conservation
18	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Nature conservation
19	Kent Wildlife Trust	Nature conservation
20	Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society	Nature conservation
21	Environment Agency	Flood risk
22	Medway Internal Drainage Board	Land drainage
23	Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)	Coastguard
24	Trinity House	Cultural heritage
25	Ministry of Defence (MoD)	Military
26	Oil & Gas Authority (OGA)	Oil & gas
27	Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED)	Oil & gas
28	Chamber of Shipping	Shipping
29	British Marine Aggregate Producers Association (BMAPA)	Dredging
30	National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO)	Fishing
31	Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (KEIFCA)	Fishing
32	Rochester Oyster and Floating Fishery (ROFF)	Fishing
33	Thanet Fishermen's Association	Fishing
34	Whitstable Fishermen's Association	Fishing
35	Swale Fishermen Ltd	Fishing
36	Harwich Harbour Fishermen's Association	Fishing
37	Thames Estuary Fishermen's Association	Fishing
38	Leigh Trawlermen Cooperative	Fishing
39	BritNed Development Ltd (BritNed interconnector)	Third party asset owner
40	NEMO Ltd (NEMO interconnector)	Third party asset owner
41	Blue Transmission London Array Ltd (London Array windfarm)	Third party asset owner
42	Balfour Beatty plc (Thanet windfarm)	Third party asset owner
43	Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd (Kentish Flats windfarm)	Third party asset owner
44	Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd (Thanet windfarm extension)	Third party asset owner
45	BT (various telecommunications cables)	Third party asset owner
46	CenturyLink (various telecommunications cables)	Third party asset owner
47	Royal Yachting Association	Sailing
48	Cruising Association	Sailing
49	Medway Cruising School	Sailing
50	Medway Bridge Marina	Sailing
51	Strood Yacht Club	Sailing
52	Rochester Cruising Club	Sailing
53	Skilltrack	Sailing

Ref	Stakeholder	Type
54	Kentish Sail Association	Sailing
55	Morning Star Trust	Sailing
56	Sail and Power Services	Sailing
57	Royal Engineers Boat Operations (Asa 133)	Sailing
58	Chatham Maritime Marina	Sailing
59	Elite Sailing	Sailing
60	Guardian Marine Training Services Ltd	Sailing
61	Upnor Sailing Club	Sailing
62	Medway Yacht Club	Sailing
63	Arethusa Venture Centre	Sailing
64	Wilsonian Sailing Club	Sailing
65	Hoo Ness Yacht Club	Sailing
66	Port Werburgh	Sailing
67	Hundered of Hoo Sailing Club	Sailing
68	Gillingham Marina	Sailing
69	Segas Sailing Club	Sailing
70	Medway WaterSports Centre	Sailing
71	Medway Cruising Club	Sailing
72	Lower Halstow Yacht Club	Sailing
73	Kingsferry Boat Club	Sailing
74	Queenborough Harbour	Sailing
75	Queenborough Yacht Club	Sailing
76	Solo Offshore Racing Club	Sailing
77	UK Catamaran Racing Association	Sailing
78	Whitstable Yacht Club	Sailing
79	Whitstable Watersports Centre	Sailing
80	Whitstable Cruising Club	Sailing
81	Oystercoast Watersports	Sailing
82	Tankerton Bay Sailing Club	Sailing
83	Hamperton Pier Yacht Club	Sailing
84	Herne Bay Sailing Club	Sailing
85	Minnis Bay Windsurfing Club	Sailing
86	Minnis Bay Sailing Club	Sailing
87	Margate Yacht Club	Sailing
88	British Sub-Aqua Club	Diving
89	British Divers Marine Life Rescue	Diving

## 5. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

GridLink has carried out public consultations as a key element of stakeholder engagement.

The public consultations have been designed to comply with:

- a) *Medway Statement of Community Involvement* (September 2014, as amended in August 2020), published by Medway Council;
- b) *Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the Union list of projects of common interest* (known as the ‘TEN-E Regulation’), in accordance with the UK Guidance *THE TEN- E REGULATION EU347/2013 Manual of Procedures: The permitting process for Projects of Common Interest in the UK* (May 2014), published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change.

The public consultations have comprised the activities summarised in **Table 4**.

**Table 4: Public Consultation Activities**

Activity	Description	Timetable
Public meeting	Online public meeting	11 September 2020
Public exhibition	Virtual public exhibition via the GridLink web-site	28 August 2020 to 31 January 2021
Information points	Two information points providing flyers, information leaflets and non-technical summary documents to read and/or take away at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dockside Outlet Retail Centre, St Mary’s Island</li> <li>• Riverside Country Park, Rainham</li> </ul>	28 August to 11 September 2020
Hoo St Werbergh and Chattenden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	Teleconference	26 August 2020
Medway Council elected representatives	Members Briefing	28 October 2019
	Members Briefing	26 February 2019
Web-site	Project information and a contact point for questions or requests via the Contact Us form is available at: <a href="http://www.gridlinkinterconnector.com">www.gridlinkinterconnector.com</a>	27 November 2017 ongoing

Local residents were notified about the public consultation events by:

- Flyers delivered to residential properties in Hoo St Werbergh (4,800 addresses);
- Information points;
- Press advertisements and social media notices;
- Posters at Hoo St Werbergh;
- Web-site announcement;
- Press release.

Details of the results of the public consultations are provided in the *Statement of Community Involvement* prepared by BECG Group on behalf of GridLink in **Appendix 1**.



## 6. WEB-SITE

GridLink Interconnector Ltd established a web-site at [www.gridlinkinterconnector.com](http://www.gridlinkinterconnector.com) in November 2017, which will operate for the lifetime of the project.

The web-site contains information about the GridLink project duplicated in dual languages of English and French. The web-site includes information and documents related to:

- General planning of the project, including implementation plan and timeline;
- Project information, including the need for interconnectors, technical studies and application files for development consents and permits, with the possibility to download technical studies and provision of links to other web-sites related to the European and national policy and regional planning of interconnectors;
- Information on the tender procurement procedures for services, surveys and Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contracts;
- Mechanism for web-site visitors to contact GridLink Interconnector Ltd using a Contact Us form;
- Planning documents and records of public consultations in UK and France;
- Integrated link to/from the RTE website.

The web-site also publishes the mandatory documents and information required due to the status of GridLink as a Project of Common Interest (PCI):

- Information leaflet;
- Non-technical summary;
- Public consultation schedule, indicating the dates and places of the public events;
- Contact for obtaining complete files of applications for development consents and permissions;
- Contact Us form to make comments or objections in the context of the consultations;
- Information about the National Competent Authorities (NCAs) for the PCI;
- Link to the Manual of Procedures published by the UK NCA.
- Link to the European Commission website.

The documents available on the website are updated whenever there is a significant change to the project.

The GridLink web-site home page is shown in **Figure 4**.

The project web-site has a specific tab dedicated to public consultation materials, records and contact information, and also to access the virtual exhibitions related to the sections of the project in the UK and France, as illustrated in **Figure 5**.

Figure 4: GridLink Web-site Homepage

**GRIDLINK INTERCONNECTOR**

UK Virtual Exhibition | FR Virtual Exhibition | English | Français

HOME | ABOUT US | PROJECT INFORMATION | PUBLIC CONSULTATION | TIMELINE | TENDERS | LATEST NEWS | CONTACT US

**KINGSNORTH** | **PORT OF DUNKERQUE**

**GRIDLINK INTERCONNECTOR IN NUMBERS**

- 2025 COMPLETION
- 1.4GW INTERCONNECTOR
- 153KM CABLE

**IMPROVING THE SUPPLY OF ELECTRICITY IN EUROPE**

GridLink interconnector is a new 1.4GW high voltage electricity interconnector between UK and France helping each country to meet its energy needs for the next 25 years.

Once operational, GridLink will transport sufficient electricity to supply 2.2 million households in France and the UK.

**Introducing GridLink**

GridLink is a significant new infrastructure project that will lay two High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) cables under the sea to connect Dunkerque in France and Kingsnorth in UK.

Its total subsea route length will be 137km, making it one of the shortest interconnectors between UK and Europe. GridLink is a major step forward in addressing UK and France's future energy needs.

GridLink has been selected as a Project of Common Interest (PCI) by the European Commission. PCIs are key cross border infrastructure projects that link the energy systems of European countries to help achieve energy policy and climate change objectives. As a PCI, GridLink has also been successful in securing a development funding grant of up to €15.1 million from the Connecting Europe Facility, a European funding initiative developed to direct investment into strategic infrastructure projects.

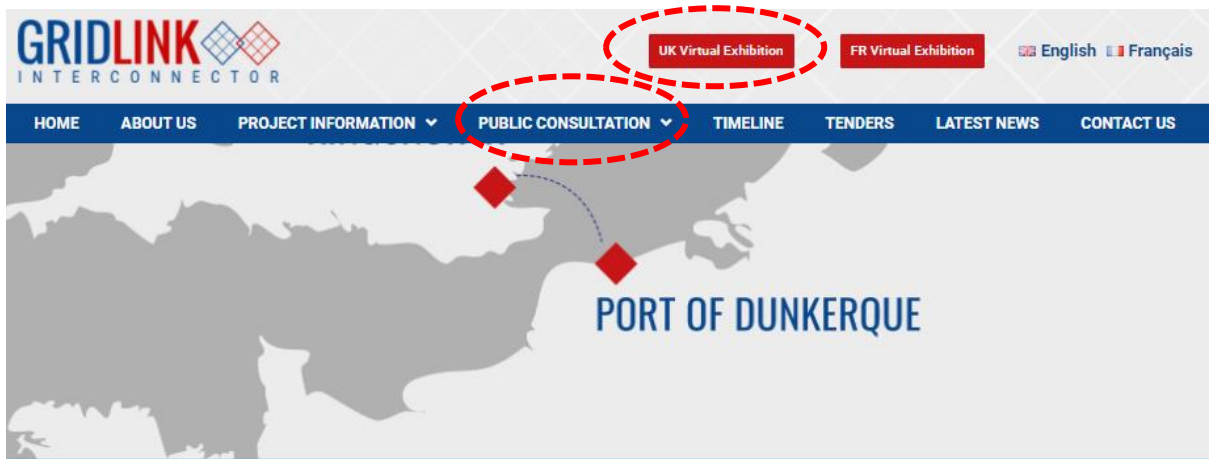
**Why build an interconnector?**

Interconnectors improve the connection of power producers to consumers, including enhancing the distribution of renewable energy and providing security in case of any interruptions to electricity supply caused by weather conditions, difficulties at electricity producers or faults on the network. As a result, it will also help lower the cost of electricity for consumers, industry and business.

The interconnector will also make a sizeable contribution to reducing carbon emissions by enabling the displacement of fossil fuels by other sources of energy. The projected reduction is up to 20 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over the lifetime of the project.

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**Figure 5: GridLink Web-site Menu Tabs**



## 7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

GridLink Interconnector Ltd has carried out extensive stakeholder engagement and public consultations regarding the GridLink interconnector project.

The means of engagement have included a web-site, virtual exhibition, information points, online public meeting, and thematic meetings and teleconferences with individual interested parties. Information about the project has been made widely available through a flyer, information leaflet and non-technical summary, as well as a range of underpinning documents. These have been provided directly to stakeholders and are available to download from the GridLink web-site. The records of public consultations are also made available on the web-site.

The results of the stakeholder engagement have been taken into account by GridLink, wherever practicable, to inform the planning, design and implementation of the project. In particular, they have been considered in the preparation of the Environmental Reports accompanying the application for Planning Permission and Marine Environmental Report accompanying the Marine Licence application.

Furthermore, after completion of the development phase, GridLink intends to maintain appropriate communications with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that information dissemination, delivery of any commitments made to stakeholders and consultations continue throughout construction and operations.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Refer to *Statement of Community Involvement* (BECG Group, September 2020)