



National  
Trust

From: [REDACTED]

Date: January 2026

Subject: To summarise progress in relation to Heads of Terms negotiations with National Grid Transmission

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### **Background**

National Grid Electricity Transmission (“NG”), through its appointed land agents Dalcour Maclarens (“DM”), has been seeking to agree Heads of Terms (“HOTs”) with the National Trust (“NT”) for land rights connected with the Sea Link Development Consent Order (DCO) application (Planning Inspectorate reference EN020026).

NT has engaged constructively throughout the process, appointing professional agents and advisers to represent its interests, particularly in relation to environmental, ecological and land management matters.

### **Chronology of Key Events**

#### March/April 2025

DM on behalf of NG, wrote to NT with first set of Heads of Terms which were fairly standard and high level in nature. They were drafted on the assumption that the affected land was agricultural farmland, rather than land of high ecological value. Materially broader in scope, seeking greater rights and imposing greater obligations on NT than those applied for within the DCO. An internal decision was made to appoint a professional agent specialising in DCO’s with experience of working with “inalienable land”. After our initial exchanges there was a personnel change within DM and there was very little correspondence

#### May/June 2025

Personnel changes for both DM and internally within NT meant that there was minimal correspondence in May but by June it was confirmed that Ardent Management would be instructed to act on behalf of NT to negotiate Heads of Terms. Following this appointment NT wrote to the NG to get confirmation that NG would cover the external surveyor’s fees but this was not confirmed. Acting in “Good faith” Ardent Management continued acting on behalf of NT and attended meetings to try and progress the Heads of Terms. On 26<sup>th</sup> June a meeting was held between NG, DM and NT which focused primarily on environmental and ecological issues and general concerns surrounding the HDD method. A number of actions were identified for NG, responses to these items remain outstanding at the time of writing.

#### June – October 2025

Patron: His Majesty The King  
Chair: René Olivieri CBE  
Director-General: Hilary McGrady CBE

Registered office:  
Heelis, Kemble Drive, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 2NA  
Registered charity number 205846

Due to extensions and various changes regarding the DCO submission there was very little correspondence regarding the HOTs and issues regarding the external agents' fees remained ongoing. Multiple emails were sent to NG to provide us with an update on the minutes from the meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> June with minutes issues by DM on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2025. Some of the pieces of information requested remain outstanding at this current time.

#### November/December 2025

NG agreed to pay the external agents' fees on 03 November, and an initial agents meeting was held to begin substantive negotiations. An up-to-date version of the HOTs dated 22 August 2025 was sent on 8<sup>th</sup> December along with various other documents in relation to the DCO. Ardent Management began a detailed review of the HOTs in December and early January.

#### January 2026 (Current Position)

Internal NT meetings have been held with various specialists and whilst there has been progress, some amendments are required to NG's HOTs before an agreement can be reached, a summary of the key issues is listed below.

- Additional environmental management documents have been requested, with concern that existing provisions do not provide sufficient, enforceable control over construction impacts.
- NT has sought stronger, legally binding arrangements to govern construction activity, including clearer accountability beyond the granting of the DCO.
- The scope of rights and restrictions sought by National Grid has been narrowed to ensure they are proportionate and limited to what is genuinely required for the works.
- Restrictions currently proposed across the whole option area are considered overly onerous; NT is seeking to confine long-term restrictions to the final easement corridor where possible.
- Survey rights have been clarified to respect existing leases and tenant occupation, with a request that all survey outputs are shared with the Trust.
- NT has preserved its existing objection position and sought clarification on how temporary possession powers would interact with any agreement.
- Greater control is being sought over any future assignment of rights to ensure they are not transferred without appropriate safeguards.
- NT has raised concerns that the indemnity and insurance provisions are insufficient for a project of this environmental sensitivity and complexity.
- Clarification has been sought on the intended duration of the easement.
- The compensation is being reviewed internally.

Cont/d