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Dear Inspectors,

Written post hearing submissions – Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2)

PINS Ref: EN020026 – Sea Link

Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission for an Order Granting Development Consent for Sea Link

Please find enclosed Dover District Council's (DDC) written post hearing submissions following ISH2 (28th January – 30th January 2026).

Agenda Item 3.6 – The ExA asked the applicant how biodiversity net gain (BNG) would be secured and the weight that should be given if it were not secured in any DCO granted. The Applicant advised BNG would be secured via a S106 or unilateral undertaking (UU) legal agreement. Further information would be provided by the Applicant in relation to a question raised by the ExA on which of the proposed habitat creation measures would fall within the legal agreement or be part of the net gain proposals. East Suffolk District Council (ESDC) advised they had a preference for this to be secured via S106 for BNG monitoring; the local authority would need to see and comment on the s106 as to whether it secures BNG. This was echoed by Suffolk County Council (SCC), who also noted the BNG feasibility report (paragraph 5.2.10) commits to a 30 year period for the management of BNG, however varying time periods were referenced in other documents. The Applicant advised the intention was to secure BNG via a UU, which they considered has the same enforcement powers as a S106 and they would submit draft heads of terms to the local authorities and a draft agreement to the ExA (although could not commit to a specific deadline for this).

DDC notes the commitment made to securing BNG and would seek to ensure any legal agreement (either S106 or UU) also secures the provision of monitoring fees to the authority responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of delivering a net gain in biodiversity to ensure the availability of resources and that this can be achieved for the lifetime of the development. The Council will work positively with the Applicant to progress this matter during the examination.

Item 4 - The ExA asked the Applicant about impacts and mitigation for functionally linked land (FLL) and how Operation Turtledove had been taken into account in developing its proposals for mitigating effects on FLL at the proposed Minster converter station site. The Applicant advised Operation Turtledove had not been explicitly taken into account as it was unrelated to the proposals for mitigating FLL for golden plovers; the mitigation of FLL was largely driven by the special protection areas (SPA) and its golden plover populations. They advised that turtledoves would

broadly use the kind of woodland planting and woodland edge habitats that were proposed to be planted around the converter station so these would be beneficial to turtledoves. There was then further discussion on the quantity of land required to mitigate for skylarks.

In DDC's statement of common ground (7.4.6 (C)) submitted by the Applicant at Deadline 3, items 3.2.3 and 3.5.21 note ongoing discussions with the Applicant on the mitigation land proposed to the west of the Sandwich Bypass/ A256. The Applicant has advised DDC that the latest land plans show this area is proposed for permanent acquisition, meaning National Grid would have absolute control of the parcel of land to ensure mitigation is delivered (such that the reference to step in rights in paragraph 6.2.2. of the Kent outline landscape and ecological management plan (oLEMP) would be removed and the updated document submitted at Deadline 4). It is also understood the oLEMP would be updated to be more explicit regarding frequency of monitoring of the golden plover mitigation land and remedial actions if the monitoring indicates it is not being used (by golden plover/skylarks). Further discussion is expected between DDC and the Applicant on whether DDC would be expected to monitor compliance with the approved LEMP and any funding to do so and DDC expects to provide an update on progress at the next deadline.

In respect of the wording of Article 10, DDC met with the applicant, Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk District Council on 3rd February 2026 to discuss the wording of this section of the dDCO. It is understood Suffolk County Council will be submitting suggested wording at Deadline 4 and if required, DDC will provide comments on this at the following deadline.

I hope these responses adequately identify DDC's current position in respect of these matters and assist the Examination accordingly.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Principal Planning Officer

Development Management