

FAO Sarah Holmes
Lead Member of the Examining Authority
Sea Link DCO
The Planning Inspectorate
National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

17 February 2026

By email to southeastanglialink@planninginspectorate.gov.uk and by file transfer

Dear Ms Holmes,

Planning Act 2008 (as amended)

Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc (National Grid) for an Order granting Development Consent for Sea Link

Deadline 4A Cover Letter

This cover letter has been prepared by National Grid (the Applicant) to accompany their Deadline 4A submission made on 17 February 2026 of the SEA Link DCO Examination.

These submissions are set out in Table 1 below and are made in accordance with the revised Examination Timetable set out at **Annex A of the Rule 8(3), rule 9 and rule 17 - Applicant's request for proposed changes to the development consent order application and notice of variation to the examination timetable dated 5 December 2025 [PD-015]**.

The table below lists the documents submitted by the Applicant at Deadline 4A.

Table 1: documents submitted at Deadline 4A

Doc Ref	Document Title	Rev	Reason for Submission
Volume 3			
3.1 (G)	draft Development Consent Order (Clean and Tracked)	C	Updates reflect commitments made in documents submitted at Deadline 4; particularly updates to Schedule 3, Requirements.
3.2 (F)	Explanatory Memorandum (Clean and Tracked)	F	Updates reflect Application Document 3.1(G) draft Development Consent Order submitted at Deadline 4A. The Explanatory Memorandum has also been updated to include a table setting out the authorities who will discharge or be consulted upon the discharge of management plans detailed in Requirement 6, submitted at Deadline 4.
Volume 6			
6.2.3.2 (E)	Part 3 Kent Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity (Clean and Tracked)	E	Updates reflect Air Quality modelling that will be submitted by the Applicant at Deadline 5.
Volume 7			
7.5.2 (B)	Outline Offshore Construction Environmental Management Plan (Clean)	B	Updates reflect updated Application Document 9.84 (B) REAC submitted at Deadline 4A.
7.12.2 (B)	Design Principles - Kent (Clean and Tracked)	B	Update to create one set of Key Design Principles that apply to both the Kent Substation and the Kent Converter Station.
Volume 9			
9.7 (E)	Applicant's Schedule of Changes to the Draft Development Consent Order (Clean and Tracked)	E	Updates reflect draft Development Consent Order submitted at Deadline 4A.
9.13 (C)	Pegwell Bay Construction Method Technical Note (Clean and Tracked)	C	New figure added.

9.38.5.1	Deadline 4A Cover Letter	A	This document.
9.77 (F)	Application and Examination Document Tracker	F	Update to reflect Deadline 4A submission.
9.83 (B)	Outline Code of Construction Practice (Clean and Tracked)	B	Updates reflect restructuring of Application Document 9.84 (B) Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) and new commitments to address comments as appropriate.
9.84 (B)	Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) (Clean and Tracked)	B	Updates reflect restructuring of commitments secured in Application Document 3.1(G) draft Development Consent Order and explained further below. Also incorporates additional commitments to address comments raised.
9.116	Applicant's Comments on Selected Other Late Submissions Received at Deadline 3	A	Response by Applicant to late submissions received at Deadline 3.
9.117	Applicant's Response to AP104 from Issue Specific Hearing 2	A	Applicant's detailed response to AP104 committed to at Deadline 4 in Application Document 9.90 Applicant's Response to January Hearing Action Points from Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1 (CAH1) and Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) – Deadline 4 [REP4-086] .

All updated documents are labelled as Revision (B), Revision (C) etc as applicable, and supersede the documents previously submitted by the Applicant.

Where applicable, these documents are provided in clean and tracked versions as requested in the Rule 6 Letter **[PD-010]**. The Application and Examination Document Tracker (**Application Document 9.77 (F)**) has been updated to reflect the above submissions.

National Trust Additional Submission

The Applicant thanks National Trust for their submissions **[AS-162 to AS-164]** and ongoing engagement with the Project. All matters have been noted, and the Applicant can confirm that it will continue to proactively engage with National Trust on all issues raised. The Applicant most recently held a meeting with National Trust on 12 February.

Given the ongoing engagement with National Trust and to avoid repetition, the Applicant has not reiterated its response to National Trust's Deadline 4 submissions in a written response. The Applicant hopes the ongoing discussions will satisfy National Trust concerns and that a voluntary agreement can be reached by the end of the examination.

Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments

The Applicant notes that there has been significant interest in the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments throughout the Examination to date, including discussion at the hearings in the week beginning 26 January 2026 on, for example:

- The extent to which the REAC is a securing mechanism for commitments or a document that lists commitments secured in other documents;
- Whether REAC commitments apply to the pre-commencement period, operational period and decommissioning; and
- The extent to which commitments in the REAC are firmly secured or subject to change at a later date. This was particularly raised for commitments that are considered necessary by statutory environmental bodies or other Interested Parties to mitigate significant effects on, for example, designated ecological sites.

The Applicant has revisited the REAC with a view to addressing all concerns above.

The extent to which the REAC is a securing mechanism for commitments or a document that lists commitments secured in other documents

The REAC contains both new commitments and a list of commitments secured elsewhere. To enable this to be more clearly understood, the document has been separated into Section 1, which lists commitments to be firmly secured by Requirement 5, and Section 2, which provides a more traditional mitigation route map, directing the reader to where commitments are secured in other documents. Section 2 does not need to be secured because it presents a list of commitments and actions already secured in other documents so is not referenced in requirements.

Whether REAC commitments apply to the pre-commencement period, operational period and decommissioning;

When the Application was submitted, the REAC was secured as an Appendix to the Construction Environmental Management Plan, secured under Requirement 6. The approach of submitting a REAC as an Appendix to the CEMP is not unusual, but in this case caused complexity because the REAC for Sea Link included measures that

were secured in the REAC itself, and as the Examining Authority and Interested Parties have noted, meant that measures for the operational period were secured in a 'construction' management plan. This issue was solved by removing the REAC from the Appendix to the CEMP and securing it separately in Requirement 6 (rather than as an Appendix to the CEMP) and altering the wording on Requirement 6 to make it clear that management plans can cover all periods, not just construction. This text was submitted into the Examination at Deadline 4, and has been incorporated into the Draft DCO at Deadline 4A.

The extent to which commitments in the REAC are firmly secured or subject to change at a later date

The REAC (as part of the CEMP) was previously a document that was in outline, with a final document to be submitted 'substantially in accordance' with the outline version. In most cases flexibility in management plans is necessary and beneficial as it enables final plans to evolve to respond to the latest technologies, construction methods, detailed designs and in collaboration with developers of other projects and the discharging authorities. However, the Applicant has listened to concerns raised and agrees that there are some commitments in the REAC that can and should be firmly secured without this flexibility. The Applicant has therefore revisited the REAC to determine those commitments that can be secured in this way, extracting these commitments into Section 1. Section 1 of the REAC is now secured by Requirement 5, which means it is secured in its final form. Given that these commitments are secured more firmly than they were previously, we have revisited the wording of commitments to ensure they are sufficiently precise and incorporate any flexibility that still needs to be incorporated into the commitments themselves.

We hope that the above will aid all parties in understanding the significant actions and commitments made by the Applicant to secure application of the mitigation hierarchy and address comments made prior to and since submission of the Application. We also hope this will provide additional reassurance to all parties on the measures secured in Section 1.

In this REAC update there are also a number of additional commitments that have been added to address queries and comments received from the Examining Authority and Interested Parties on the Proposed Project.

Due to the document restructure, a document showing all changes in tracks would have been challenging to read and would not have aided parties in identifying the more important amendments to the wording of commitments. Therefore, the tracked version submitted shows amendments to the text only, not changes to formatting.

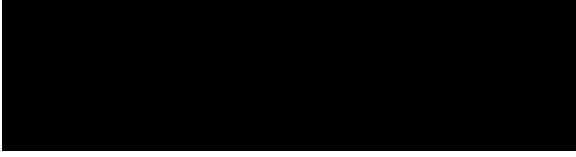
Action Point 124

The Applicant responded at Deadline 4 to Action Point 124 in relation to the ExA's question about whether a noise design parameter is required in relation to substation sites and indicated that it would respond in relation to the converter sites at Deadline 4A. The Applicant is continuing to give consideration to this issue and will provide a comprehensive response at Deadline 5.

Conclusion

Should the ExA have any queries in relation to this letter, they are invited to contact me, Seb Stevens (Sebastian.Stevens@nationalgrid.com) in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,



Senior Project Manager
For and on behalf of National Grid Electricity Transmission