



**The Examining Authority's Rule 17 Letter
Issued on 21 April 2026**

**Response from the
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds**

**Submitted for Deadline 7
29 April 2026**

Planning Act 2008 (as amended)

In the matter of:

**Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission for the
Sea Link Project**

**Planning Inspectorate Ref: EN20026
RSPB Registration Identification Ref: [REDACTED]**

4.1 Update on access to the Sandlings Special Protection Area (SPA)

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) response to third written questions [REP6-271] suggests that no discussions have arisen regarding access within Sandlings SPA. However, RSPB's written representation [REP1-158] discusses access within RSPB North Warren, which the ExA understood to include areas within the SPA. The Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) [REP6-134] commitment B73 suggests that this will be agreed with the RSPB. RSPB to confirm its position regarding access within the SPA, including whether commitment B73 is sufficient and if not suggest alternative REAC wording with the applicant or propose alternative requirement wording.

We apologise for the error in our response to ExQ3 [REP6-271] – a short stretch of one of the access routes proposed within RSPB North Warren does pass within the Sandlings SPA at the southern edge. This route would be to enable access by vehicle in the event of a frac out and links the construction compound to the landfall area. We are content that the wording of REAC commitment B73 (*“Routes and access arrangements for vehicle and pedestrian access to Sandlings SPA and Leiston-Aldeburgh SSSI will be agreed with RSPB”*) is sufficient for this purpose.