

The Great Grid Upgrade

Sea Link

Sea Link

Volume 9: Examination Submissions

Document 9.142: Statement of Common Ground Between National Grid Electricity Transmission and Aldeburgh Golf Club (AGC)

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020026

Version: B
April 2026

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Version History

Date	Issue	Status	Description / Changes
April 2026	A	Final	Issue to PINS for Deadline 6
April 2026	B	Final	Issue to PINS for Deadline 7

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is a written statement produced as part of the application process for a Development Consent Order (DCO) and is prepared jointly between the applicant and another party. It sets out matters of agreement between both parties, as well as matters where there is not an agreement. It also details matters that are under discussion.
- 1.1.2 The aim of a SoCG is to help the Examining Authority manage the Examination Phase of a DCO application. Understanding the status of the matters at hand will allow the Examining Authority to focus their questioning and provide greater predictability for all participants in examination. A SoCG may be submitted prior to the start of or during Examination and then updated as necessary or as requested during the Examination Phase.
- 1.1.3 This SoCG is between National Grid Electricity Transmission Ltd (“NGET”) and the Aldeburgh Golf Club (AGC) relating to the DCO application for the Sea Link Project. It has been prepared in accordance with the guidance published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2024).

1.2 This Statement of Common Ground

- 1.2.1 This SoCG has been prepared to identify matters agreed and matters currently outstanding between National Grid and AGC. The SoCG will evolve as the DCO application progresses to submission and through examination.
- 1.2.2 For the purpose of this SoCG, National Grid and the AGC will jointly be referred to as the “Parties”. When referencing the AGC alone, they will be referred to as “the Consultee”.

1.3 Description of the Proposed Project

- 1.3.1 The Proposed Project is a proposal by National Grid to reinforce the transmission network in the Southeast and East Anglia. The Proposed Project is required to accommodate additional power flows generated from renewable and low carbon generation, as well as accommodating additional new interconnection with mainland Europe.
- 1.3.2 National Grid owns, builds and maintains the electricity transmission network in England and Wales. Under the Electricity Act 1989, National Grid holds a transmission licence under which it is required to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated, and economic electricity transmission system.
- 1.3.3 This would be achieved by reinforcing the network with a High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) Link between the proposed Friston substation in the Sizewell area of Suffolk and the existing Richborough to Canterbury 400 kV overhead line close to Richborough in Kent.

- 1.3.4 National Grid is also required, under Section 38 of the Electricity Act 1989, to comply with the provisions of Schedule 9 of the Act. Schedule 9 requires licence holders, in the formulation of proposals to transmit electricity, to:
- 1.3.5 Schedule 9(1)(a) '*...have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest;*' and
- 1.3.6 Schedule 9(1)(b) '*...do what [it] reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects*'.
- 1.3.7 The Proposed Project would comprise the following elements:

The Suffolk Onshore Scheme

- A connection from the existing transmission network via Friston Substation, including the substation itself. Friston Substation already has development consent as part of other third-party projects. If Friston Substation has already been constructed under another consent, only a connection into the substation would be constructed as part of the Proposed Project.
- A high voltage alternating current (HVAC) underground cable of approximately 1.9 km in length between the proposed Friston Substation and a proposed converter station (below).
- A 2 GW high voltage direct current (HVDC) converter station (including permanent access from the B1121 and a new bridge over the River Fromus) up to 26 m high plus external equipment (such as lightning protection, safety rails for maintenance works, ventilation equipment, aerials, similar small scale operational plant, or other roof treatment) near Saxmundham.
- A HVDC underground cable connection of approximately 10 km in length between the proposed converter station near Saxmundham, and a transition joint bay (TJB) approximately 900 m inshore from a landfall point (below) where the cable transitions from onshore to offshore technology.
- A landfall on the Suffolk coast (between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness).

The Offshore Scheme

- Approximately 122 km of subsea HVDC cable, running between the Suffolk landfall location (between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness), and the Kent landfall location at Pegwell Bay.

The Kent Onshore Scheme

- A landfall point on the Kent coast at Pegwell Bay.
- A TJB approximately 800 m inshore to transition from offshore HVDC cable to onshore HVDC cable, before continuing underground for approximately 1.7 km to a new converter station (below).
- A 2 GW HVDC converter station (including a new permanent access off the A256), up to 28 m high plus external equipment such as lightning protection, safety rails for

maintenance works, ventilation equipment, aerials, and similar small scale operational plant near Minster. A new substation would be located immediately adjacent.

- Removal of approximately 2.2 km of existing HVAC overhead line, and installation of two sections of new HVAC overhead line, together totalling approximately 3.5 km, each connecting from the substation near Minster and the existing Richborough to Canterbury overhead line.

1.3.8 The Proposed Project also includes modifications to sections of existing overhead lines in Suffolk (only if Friston Substation is not built pursuant to another consent) and Kent, diversions of third-party assets, and land drainage from the construction and operational footprint. It also includes opportunities for environmental mitigation and compensation. The construction phase will involve various temporary construction activities including overhead line diversions, use of temporary towers or masts, working areas for construction equipment and machinery, site offices, parking spaces, storage, accesses, bellmouths, and haul roads, as well as watercourse crossings and the diversion of public rights of way (PROWs) and other ancillary operations.

Table 1.1 Abbreviations

Abbreviation/Term	Definition
DCO	Development Consent Order
AGC	Aldeburgh Golf Club
HVAC	High Voltage Alternating Current
HVDC	High Voltage Direct Current
PRoW	Public Right of Way
TJB	Transition Joint Bay

2. Record of Engagement

2.1 Role of AGC in the DCO process

- 2.1.1 AGC is a Championship Golf Course on the Suffolk Coast.
- 2.1.2 Sea Link cable route passes within the land owned and maintained by AGC. Therefore, the consultee should provide guidance and comments on the Sea Link proposal and co-own the Statement of Common Ground between AGC and National Grid.
- 2.1.3 AGC has been encouraged to discuss and work with the Applicant at the pre-application stage of the application process for the project.

2.2 Summary of discussions

- 2.2.1 Table 2.1 summarises the consultation and engagement that has taken place between the Parties.
- 2.2.2 The Applicant and AGC have agreed on the final status of this document, however changes to the wording to Agreed, Not Agreed or Not Agreed but Not Material has been completed in this final version which has not been sent to AGC, however these changes have only been made to change Under Discussion to Not Agreed in this final version of the document.

Table 2.1 Summary of discussions

Date	Topic	Format	Discussion points
21/12/2021	Project Intro/Surveys	Letter	Initial project introduction and request for survey access.
11/01/2022	Project Intro/Surveys	Letter	Initial project introduction and request for survey access.
21/04/2022	Project Intro/Surveys	Teams meeting	Teams meeting with agent for AGC and Dalcour Maclaren to discuss non-intrusive survey access licence and golf course extension.
11/11/2022	Project Intro/Surveys	Face to Face Meeting	National Grid and Dalcour Maclaren met with AGC and their agent to discuss how the project would interact with proposed golf course extension.
24/10/2022	Project Intro/Surveys	Letter	Initial project introduction and request for survey access.
26/10/2022	Non-Statutory Consultation	Letter	Letter to provide details of upcoming non-statutory consultation period.
08/03/2023	Surveys	Face to Face Meeting	National Grid and Dalcour Maclaren met with AGC and their agent to discuss project proposals, how the project would interact with proposed golf course extension and intrusive/non-intrusive survey access.

Date	Topic	Format	Discussion points
April/May 2023	Surveys	Email	Correspondence between Dalcour Maclaren and the agent for AGC in relation to agreeing survey access for intrusive and non-intrusive surveys.
22/05/2023	Surveys	Legal Notice	Section 172 notice (Housing and Planning Act 2016) served on owners and occupiers of AGC land for non-intrusive and intrusive surveys.
May 2023	Surveys	Email	Correspondence between Dalcour Maclaren and AGC regarding protocols for taking survey access.
June-December 2023	Surveys	Email	Correspondence between Dalcour Maclaren and AGC regarding ongoing surveys.
08/08/2023	Surveys	Email	Dalcour Maclaren notify AGC of intrusive survey programme for September.
23/10/2023	Statutory Consultation	Letter	Letter to provide details of upcoming Statutory Consultation period.
23/10/2023	Statutory Consultation	Face to Face Meeting	Dalcour Maclaren and National Grid met with AGCs agent to discuss project Statutory Consultation.
09/11/2023	Statutory Consultation	Face to Face Meeting	Dalcour Maclaren and National Grid met with AGC and their agent to discuss project Statutory Consultation.
21/11/2023	Statutory Consultation	Face to Face Meeting	Dalcour Maclaren and National Grid met with AGC and their agent to discuss project Statutory Consultation.
November-December 2023	Statutory Consultation	Email	Follow up emails from Statutory Consultation meeting between Dalcour Maclaren/National Grid and AGC in relation to turf nursery and cable route.
2024	Surveys	Email	Correspondence regarding ongoing survey access.
February-March 2024	Surveys	Email	Correspondence regarding archaeological trial trenching.
10/05/2024	Surveys	Face to Face Meeting	Dalcour Maclaren and National Grid met with AGC and their agent to discuss proposals for archaeological trial trenching works and AGC ongoing construction works.
May-September 2024	Surveys	Email	Ongoing correspondence regarding archaeological trial trenching and agreeing intrusive and non-intrusive survey access licences.
07/08/2024	Targeted Consultation and surveys	Face to Face Meeting	Dalcour Maclaren met with AGC and their agent to discuss project Statutory Consultation, archaeological trial trenching and AGC reservoir plans.

Date	Topic	Format	Discussion points
August 2024	Targeted Consultation	Email	Correspondence with AGC and their agent regarding AGC reservoir plans.
06/09/2024	Surveys	Face to Face – On Site Meeting	Dalcour Maclaren met AGC representatives (greenkeeper) on site to discuss on site practical matters for archaeological trial trenching works.
25/11/2024	Project Updates	Face to Face Meeting	Dalcour Maclaren and National Grid met with AGC and their agent to discuss AGC proposals for reservoir and interaction with Sea Link cable route.
2025	Surveys	Email	Correspondence regarding ongoing survey access and licence renewals.
24/01/2025	Heads of Terms	Email/Post	Issue template Heads of Terms to AGC and their agent.
26/02/2025	Heads of Terms	Face to Face Meeting	Dalcour Maclaren met with AGCs agent to discuss template Heads of Terms.
28/02/2025	Heads of Terms	Email/Post	Issue populated Heads of Terms – first issue.
04/03/2025	Heads of Terms	Teams	Suffolk agents meeting to discuss template Heads of Terms.
April-June 2025	Heads of Terms	Email	Various emails to AGC agent (as part of Suffolk agents group) regarding template Heads of Terms.
10/04/2024	Heads of Terms	Face to Face Meeting	Dalcour Maclaren and National Grid met with AGC and their agent to discuss Heads of Terms.
23/05/2025	Heads of Terms	Email	Dalcour Maclaren issued version 2 of Heads of Terms to AGCs agent to reflect changes to the cable route to allow for AGC reservoir development.
May – June 2025	Surveys	Email	Correspondence regarding archaeological finds.
19/06/2025	Heads of Terms	Teams	Suffolk agents meeting to discuss template Heads of Terms.
August 2025	Heads of Terms	Email	Correspondence with AGCs agent regarding AGC proposals for reservoir.
19/08/2025	Heads of Terms	Email	Dalcour Maclaren issued version 3 of Heads of Terms to AGCs agent to incorporate changes from the Suffolk Agents group meetings.
10/09/2025	Heads of Terms	Email	Dalcour Maclaren emailed AGCs agent to follow up on issue of Heads of Terms Version 3 and request a meeting with AGC.
15/10/2025	Heads of Terms	Email	Dalcour Maclaren emailed AGCs agent to follow up on issue of Heads of Terms Version 3 and request a meeting with AGC.

Date	Topic	Format	Discussion points
04/11/2025	SoCG	Email	Dalcour Maclaren issue first draft SoCG to AGC and agent for review.
09/12/2025	Heads of Terms	Email	Dalcour Maclaren issue revised Heads of Terms to AGC agent.
29/01/2026	Heads of Terms	In Person	Dalcour Macalren met with AGC committee and their agent to discuss Heads of Terms and SoCG.
February 2026	Heads of Terms	Emails	Arrange for on site survey to review location of cable Limits of Deviation in relation to the developed new holes.
23/02/2026	Site Meeting	In Person	Meeting on Site to view the order limits marked out by AGC surveyor against the new holes and the irrigation cable locations for the new holes and turf nursery.
February and March 2026	SoCG	Emails	Ongoing correspondence between Dalcour Macalren and AGC and their agent in relation to draft SoCG.
20/03/2026	Email	Email	Dalcour Maclaren issue revised Heads of Terms plan to AGC agent for review.

3. Areas of Discussion Between the Parties

3.1 Key Principles

Table 3.1 Key Principles

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants Current Position	Status
3.1.1	N/A	Disruption to Play or AGC Operations during or after Construction	NGET should guarantee that there is no disruption to play or course maintenance.	N	Not Agreed
3.1.2	N/A	Limit Reputational Impact on AGC by minimising time on site and reducing impact (visual, noise, dust etc) throughout construction	<p>The return on AGC's recent multi-million pound investment in their Course relies on its enhanced reputation being monetised through membership satisfaction, membership fees and green fee income.</p> <p>NGET's Provisional Design (and subsequent detailed design) should minimise the impact and the duration of the works.</p>	The Applicant will seek to optimise the program in the area of the Golf Course to minimise any impact. The Applicant is committed to working with AGC to understand the operation of the Club, and where possible will seek to avoid works when the club has large prestigious competitions.	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants Current Position	Status
3.1.3	N/A	Insurance Indemnity & HSE Measures	<p>AGC require complete indemnity from NGET for the risk of injury of any workforce due to the actions of players and staff on the Golf Course during construction.</p> <p>NGET are responsible for the HSE measures required on the construction site to keep their staff (and sub-contractors staff) safe and, in particular, to satisfy their insurance requirements.</p>	<p>The Applicant is unable to provide indemnity to their workforce for all actions of players and or Staff on the Golf Course during construction.</p> <p>The Applicant understands the risks posed to their staff and workers by working adjacent to live golf holes and will take the mitigation required to protect its workforce.</p>	Not Agreed
3.1.4	N/A	Responsibility of NGET to meet Key Principles	<p>It is NGET's Responsibility to meet the Key Principles 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 in their Final Design, and it is their responsibility (not AGC's) to ensure that the Final Design is complete and comprehensive.</p> <p>Acceptance of a Final Design by AGC does not negate NGET's responsibility in this regard.</p>	<p>The Applicant is working on the design to minimise the impact on AGC and their operations, it is not proposed for The Applicant to request approval for design from AGC.</p>	Not Agreed but Not Material

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants Current Position	Status
3.1.5	N/A	Provisional Design (including best estimate of schedule of works), subsequent Final Detailed Design and Change Control Process.	A Provisional Design must be agreed before signing Heads of Terms to give AGC the confidence that the actual plans will meet the agreed key principles. AGC should be consulted throughout the development of the Provisional Design and their input should be included wherever reasonable to do so.	The Applicant will where possible consult AGC on its proposal as they develop, providing their proposal in sufficient time to allow change if this is mutually agreed to be beneficial to the applicant and AGC.	Not Agreed but Not Material
			A Change Control Process should be agreed and implemented to manage the development of the Provisional Design into the Final Detailed Design in a controlled manner, ensuring that AGC is consulted during the process.	The Applicant will meet with AGC during the project to update them on the process of the design and the program.	Not Agreed but Not Material
			The Final Detailed Design (& final contractual timetable) will be required	The Applicant will provide the final design and program at its earliest possible opportunity for discussion with AGC.	Not Agreed but Not Material

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants Current Position	Status
			before the Final Contract is signed.		
3.1.6	N/A	Reputational Impact of Delays	<p>The final contract should include penalties for the delay of the works beyond the agreed end date to reflect the Reputational Impact on AGC and to incentivise NGET to coordinate workstreams and their effective delivery to ensure timely completion.</p> <p>AGC accept that NGET should not be penalised for delays outside of their control. These events should be agreed explicitly as part of a Force Majeure Clause.</p>	<p>The Applicant cannot Accept financial penalties for the works within the land of AGC, the AGC section of the works is a small part of the larger scheme. The overall program will start in 2027 and be complete including reinstatement by 2031/2032, the exact timings if the works within AGC land will be discussed with AGC prior to the work taking place. The Applicant will look to minimise any delays to the project and will commit to ongoing liaison around the program and provide progress updates on a regular basis.</p> <p>Agreed.</p>	Not Agreed.
3.1.7	N/A	Attractiveness of the course		<p>The Applicant will use all reasonable endeavours to work with AGC to ensure that the works carried out are done so in the least impactful way to avoid damage to the attractiveness of the course to members, visitors and other users.</p>	Agreed

3.2 Provisional Design

Table 3.2 Sea Links Route Through Aldeburgh Golf Course Land

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants Current Position	Status
3.2.1	Application Document 2.14.1 Indicative General Arrangements Plans – Suffolk [APP-038] – Sheet 5 of 6	Sea Links Cable Routing	AGC agree the new cable route subject to the actual cable location does not effect the operation of the irrigation system (in particular the electrics). See 3.1.2.	The Applicant has identified an area of pasture/grass land to the North of the AGC course suitable for cable routing. AGC have now extended their course into to this land, the cable corridor has been altered through this area to avoid the new golf holes and keep the cable to the North of the land holding.	Agreed
3.2.2	N/A	Sea Links Cable location within the Limits of Deviation	AGC agrees subject to agreed Provisional Design & Testing.	The Applicant will site the cable route within the Limits of Deviation (LoD) to avoid the Electromagnetic Field (EMF) from the cables interfering with the irrigation signal cables for the new holes.	Agreed
3.2.3	N/A	Sea Link Cable with the Limits of Deviation	AGC agrees subject to agreed Provisional Design & Testing.	The Applicant has reviewed onsite the location of the cables provided by the AGC survey and are happy to ensure the cable is laid at a distance so not to interfere with the irrigation cables in the turf nursery.	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants Current Position	Status
3.2.4	N/A	Construction Fencing	<p>Golf Ball Netting</p> <p>The use of golf ball netting along the edge of (or inside) the limit of deviation to prevent golf balls entering the work area – if required by NGET for HSE & Insurance. The netting should be as far away from the Course as possible, inside the Limit of Deviation and only remain in place for the period when it is actually required to protect the contractor’s personnel.</p>	<p>The Applicant has discussed the use of Golf ball netting along the edge of the LoD as far away from the golf course as reasonable possible to prevent golf balls entering the works area. The Applicant will install this with agreement from AGC subject to the Applicant and their contractors risk assessments. The installation and removal of the protective netting will be discussed with AGC.</p>	Agreed
3.2.5	N/A	Planting and Landscaping for the New Golf Holes		<p>The Applicant agreed to delay the trial trenching for archaeology in the area to the North of the new golf holes due to the installation by AGC of landscaping associated with their planning application for the new golf holes. The Applicant will assess this planting and replace where possible following the works or where not possible will propose alternative planting to create the same effect.</p>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants Current Position	Status
3.2.6	N/A	Location of the Sea Link Cable trench within the LoD	<p>AGC would like NGET to place the cable as far to the north or the LoD as possible to be at the furthest point away from the Golf Course and playing area.</p> <p><i>“AGC only accept route changes due to archaeological works and ground surveys – not due to any other reason (in particular coordination with any other future infrastructure projects).”</i></p>	<p>The Applicant will use all reasonable endeavours to place the Cable trench as far to the North of the LoD as possible within the land owned by AGC (minimum of 10 m from the Northern boundary). This exact location will be subject to final design and surveys including archaeological works.</p>	Agreed

3.3 AGC Future development

Table 3.3 AGC Future Development

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants current position	Status
3.3.1	N/A	AGC has made NGET aware of a proposal to construct a Irrigation reservoir to the west of its land holding		The Applicant has stated that it requires a 20 m corridor within the area identified for the reservoir and that this will be within the Heads of Terms of the voluntary land agreement.	Agreed
3.3.2	N/A	Future Reservoir	Reservoir plans to include a cable crossing for pipe.	Once AGC have applied for planning permission or shared the plans with the Applicant will review and use all reasonable endeavours to provide a solution so that the two projects can be satisfactorily co-ordinated from a design perspective. Where required a crossing agreement will be put in place should a pipe cross the Applicant's cable.	Not Agreed

3.4 Construction

Table 3.4 Construction

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants Current Position	Status
3.4.1	N/A	Visual Impact of the Haul Road and Construction	Visual impact of haul road and construction on the course to minimise impact on business and ensure that the works will not cause any disruption to play or maintenance work.	The Applicant will use all reasonable endeavours to require their contractor to minimise the impact of the Haul Road and construction activities on the Golf course.	Agreed
3.4.2	N/A	Limit length of disruption ie the length of time NG are working on site - Limit Reputational Impact on AGC by minimising time on site and reducing impact (visual, noise, dust etc) throughout construction	Can AGC section of cable be last cable laying section and first cable pull to minimise disruption - The return on AGC's recent multi-million pound investment in their Course relies on its enhanced reputation being monetised through membership satisfaction, membership fees and green fee income. NGET's Method Statement (and subsequent detailed design) should minimise the impact and the duration of the works.	The Applicant will use all reasonable endeavours to incorporate this requirement within their contractor's program of works and consult with AGC once the contractor has finalised the design.	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants Current Position	Status
3.4.3	N/A	Width and type of Haul Road	AGC preference for 3 m wide haul road to limit impact of course and to use track matting rather than stone.	The Applicant will use all reasonable endeavours to work with the contractor to minimise the size of the Haul Road. The final Design will take into account this request along with the safety and operational requirement of the Haul Road.	Agreed
3.4.4	N/A	Top Soil bunds	Would like soil bunds to wither be stored outside the working area where the cable is close to new holes or banded to south of trench to provide buffer between haul road/works and course. Preference for any bunds to be seeded.	The Applicant will review the request with its contractor and the requirements of the DCO soil management plans to ensure that these are followed. We will review the locations of any soil bunds with AGC and any treatment of the bunds i.e. Seeding.	Not Agreed but Not Material
3.4.5	N/A	Program	AGC requests a copy of NGETs program.	The Applicant will look to provide a full programme of works which is relevant to AGC as soon as it becomes available.	Not Agreed but Not Material
3.4.6	N/A	Project Management	NGET to appoint a single Project Manager as point of contact for AGC who should	The Applicant will ensure that AGC has the appropriate point of contact to keep AGC up to date with	Not Agreed but Not Material

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	AGC Current Position	The Applicants Current Position	Status
3.4.7	N/A	Site Management & Coordination	An approach to Site Management & Coordination needs to be agreed and put in place.	The Applicant is happy to discuss this with AGC.	Not Agreed but Not Material

4. Approvals

Signed



On Behalf of

NGET

Name



Position

Senior Project Manager

Date

23/04/2026

Signed

On Behalf of

AGC

Name

Position

Date

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