

I set out in my statement when registering with the Examining Authority as an Affected Person my frustration at the lack of any real engagement by the Applicant with me as an affected landowner, when it comes to entering into a voluntary agreement to give the Applicant the rights it needs to construct and operate the new transmission line. In the initial non statutory consultation and the later statutory consultation I made written responses setting out my farm's needs in this regard:

1) the provision of temporary grazing adjacent to the farm so that we do not need to reduce stock numbers. We will lose 30 acres for the duration of the occupation by the Applicant. 30 acres equates to grazing and preserved forage for 60 sheep, a third of our flock. We have found the required land on a neighbouring farm. Our neighbour is willing to let it. He is surprised and frustrated that he has not received any approach from the Applicant, to let this land to the Applicant so it can make it available to us. Three weeks ago in a meeting with the Applicant's land agent his land agent raised this issue, but nothing further has been heard by him or his agent.

2) a commitment to redrain the three fields worst affected by the works. They are relatively small fields and patching up the existing system we are advised is impracticable. The cheapest and best solution is to put in a new land drainage system upon completion of reinstatement.

3) move a proposed permanent access easement slightly West to provide a more direct line of access for the Applicant and remove the access from a field otherwise unaffected by permanent rights.

All of these issues were raised by me and my land agent with Fisher German at a site meeting on 8 July 2025 as well as being the subject of written responses. There has been no response at all from the Applicant.

In addition to the foregoing I was an early landowner to receive draft site specific Heads of Terms. In early September 2025 I received three sets each dated 29 August 2025, one for each parcel of land, all different, and all poorly drafted. The detail of what was wrong is set out in para 6 of my registration statement. I responded to the Applicant via my land agent with a detailed response on each of the three documents, within the window for responding. No response from Applicant.

In October 2025 my land agent was in communication with other land agents all of whom had similar concerns with their client's site specific HoT and as a group they arranged to meet with Fisher German, the meeting being arranged for November. The day before the arranged meeting it was cancelled by Fisher German, the explanation was that FG were awaiting a revised set of HoT from the Applicant's solicitors. In December my agent received a revised draft HoT and arranged to meet Fisher German on 23 January 2026 to go through it. When they met, Fisher German had a further version of the document which had not been provided to my agent prior to the meeting. FG would not provide him with a copy at the meeting as they said that issues with the document had been raised by other agents and it was to be reviewed by Applicant's solicitors. A copy would be sent on to my agent. As of yesterday, despite reminder emails from my agent to Fisher German he has still to receive a revised document.

Put bluntly I am willing, and have always been willing, to voluntarily enter into an agreement which mitigates the impact of the works on my farm and business and gives the Applicant the rights it seeks, but 6 months on we are no further forward and its not for want of trying on my part.

Having watched the video of the 1st Compulsory Acquisition hearing and with my personal experience I don't believe the Applicant has a genuine interest in seeking voluntary agreements with landowners. I was left with the impression that the Applicant simply wants to rely on compulsory powers to enable the construction works to be carried to a speedy conclusion in the national interest. What happens to our lives, farms and businesses would seem to be of no consequence. I think the Examining Authority is right to ask the questions it has asked and to be sceptical of the Applicant's intent. The National Grid clearly needs to be upgraded but the Applicant should work with us, not continue to ignore us.