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Date: 04/09/2023

Sent by Email only
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Dear Sirs

THE NATIONAL GRID ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PLC (SCOTLAND TO ENGLAND GREEN LINK 1) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2023

STEPHEN GREGSON
WEST FARMHOUSE, 1 BURDON VILLAGE, SUNDERLAND, TYNE AND WEAR, SR3 2PY

I write out with regards to my proof of evidence.

My evidence is based on mine and members of George F. White LLP experience over years of acting on behalf of landowners in Compulsory Matter cases like this case. George F. White LLP's Chairman Robyn Peat who is assisting on this case is also a Fellow of the RICS and a member of the RICS CPO Dispute Resolution Panel, and has over 30 years of experience in these matters.

In our experience the landowners of this project have not been properly considered nor their land holding, and business been taken into account. The agricultural industry is going through the biggest change the industry has ever faced and this coupled with the management of this project has caused a lot of uncertainty and prohibited opportunities that could have been taken to reduce the impact of the agricultural transition.

I would like to point out a few points.

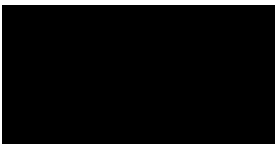
1. Other schemes we are and have been involved with the acquiring authority instruct drainage experts to procure pre and post drainage surveys and written strategies along with the landowner to explain in detail how the drainage will be installed to protect the surrounding land whilst the cable will be installed and how the drainage will be installed post construction. It is important to have the written strategy so Landowners can ensure they are satisfied that the drainage will be suitable for their land and soil. Agricultural land drainage is very different to civils and other drainage and the contractors that will be instructed to install the cable will not be familiar with agricultural drainage and therefore an agricultural drainage specialist would be instructed to ensure the pre and post plans and written strategies are actual suitable for the surrounding land not just the working width. This must be carried out before any works are carried out.
2. National Grid offered heads of terms and three-month incentive period to agree heads of terms. Other schemes provide much longer than 3 months to agree heads of terms. Usually in excess of 12 months.

This couple with heads of terms that are suitable. It is unreasonable for National Grid to offer an incentive payment when the heads of terms they provide are simply not suitable and are fundamentally damaging for the Landowner, their assets and their businesses. National Grid have now provided SEGL2 heads of terms for us to consider but again provide such a short time to achieve the incentive payment. This coupled with the lack of information coming back from National Grid.

3. In addition to the unsatisfactory heads of terms the compound areas National Grid wish to use have not been properly considered and the value attributable to them.
4. On most other cable schemes and especially with the knowledge of the soil type in the area the cable depth must be more than 900mm. There is a example of where a cable is not dug deep enough on Mr Davidson's land where the electric cable is now on the surface which is prohibiting agricultural processes, and the land is therefore left fallow. The same will happen across the route of the whole scheme if the cable is installed at 900mm, and since the majority of the land is arable land, it will be required to be cultivated and therefore the whole field will be taken out of production since the cable will sever the fields making cultivations impossible.
5. There is not clarity on how access will be taken for the works nor engagement. How access will be taken especially if the schemes access needs to be kept separate from the occupiers may mean extensive impact on the cropping and use of other retained land and indeed some access points are shared.
6. The scheme has tried to limit advisers cost to the extent that the clients cannot take the advice they need without risk and that has prompted delays in the scheme and lack of clarity for the scheme promoters.
7. Unless the above points are not addressed National Grid are putting significant risk on my client's land holding and businesses from the losses which will be incurred from the losses from drainage, productive agricultural areas etc which will affect the budgets and viability of the project. For example, if the drainage is not properly considered and protected it is not only the fields where the cable will be it will be the thousands of acres around the fields where the cable is since the drainage will be damaged. This will be a huge devaluation of many acres of land, and I do not believe National Grid properly understand this since they do not understand the agricultural industry. I would welcome National Grid and their contractors to speak to agricultural drainage and soil experts.

I am happy to discuss the above in more detail.

Yours sincerely



Caroline Horn MRICS FAAV
Partner

For and on behalf of George F. White LLP