

Final Decision

Powerlink's Designated Network Asset Access
Policy for Kidston DNA

June 2026

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1 Purpose

On 24 November 2025, Powerlink (ACN 078 849 233) submitted its Designated Network Asset Access Policy for the Kidston DNA to us for approval.

Our final decision is to approve the access policy. This decision document sets out our assessment leading to the approval of the access policy.

Copies of approved access policies can be found on our [website](#).

1.1 Background

Privately owned and operated extension lines are commonly required to connect generators and large energy customers to the shared transmission network. These extension lines from generation sources and energy customers to the transmission network are broadly described as connection assets.

‘Designated network assets’ (DNA) are a type of connection asset. The definition of a designated network asset in Chapter 10 of the National Electricity Rules (NER) is as follows:

The apparatus, plant and equipment that:

- (a) are used from the *boundary point* to convey, and control the conveyance of, electricity, for an *identified user group*
- (b) are for the exclusive use of the *identified user group* and may be owned by different persons within that *identified user group*
- (c) include power lines that have a route length of:
 - (1) 30 kilometres or more, or
 - (2) less than 30 kilometres where the owner of those assets has entered into a *network operating agreement* in respect of those assets.

The NER, at clause 11.139.4, allows connecting parties to treat transmission infrastructure as a DNA, even if it would not be classified as a DNA and ‘opt in’ to the DNA framework.

The NER creates a third-party access regime designed to protect DNA owners and access seekers to their network. As part of this access regime, the asset owner is required to develop and publish a DNA access policy, based on the negotiating principles for DNAs. The access policy must be approved by the AER.

DNA access policies provide essential information to access seekers and we will seek further information from asset owners where we do not consider that a policy meets the minimum NER requirements.

Information requests will have the effect of ‘stopping the clock’ until the relevant changes to the access policy are made and submitted to us. DNA owners must address the requirements in the NER in order for us to approve their policies.

The Kidston DNA owned by Powerlink is comprised of:

- A 275kV single circuit transmission line between Guybal Munjan Substation and Aurumfield Switching Station and associated easements
- The 275kV Aurumfield Switching Station and associated access easement
- DNA Component 2 (Shared) – 275kV Aurumfield Switching Station and associated access easement, less the DNA Component 2 (Dedicated) Connection Bays
- DNA Component 2 (Dedicated Connection Bays) – the connection bays used to connect Existing Connected Parties to the Aurumfield Switching Station

2 AER’s decision

2.1 Legal framework

Under 5.2A.8(f) of the Rules, we must, within 60 business days of receiving a Designated Network Asset access policy:

- approve the policy (or a variation of the policy) if we are reasonably satisfied that it complies with the relevant requirements outlined in 5.2A.8(b1) of the Rules; **or**
- notify the owner of the designated network asset of the reasons for not approving the access policy; **or**
- request further information from the owner of the designated network asset.

If the AER does not approve the policy within 6 months of the date of policy submission, the AER must itself develop an access policy.

The framework includes a ‘stop the clock’ mechanism to calculate the 6 month period before the AER must develop the policy. Specifically:

- If we do not consider that a policy meets the minimum NER requirements, we will request further information from the asset owner.
- This request for further information will ‘stop the clock’ until the relevant information is provided as soon as reasonably practicable to us by the asset owner, and in any case within 30 business days of our request.
- If we provide the asset owner with reasons why the submitted access policy cannot be approved and request a change to the access policy in order to comply with cl 5.2A.8(b1), the notification of reasons will likewise ‘stop the clock’ until the relevant changes to the access policy are made and submitted to us. This again should be as soon as reasonably practicable and in any case within 30 business days of our notification.
- For the avoidance of doubt, should the further information or amendment to the access policy not be provided as soon as reasonably practicable and in any case within 30 business days of our request or notification, cl 5.2A.8(f2) operates to ‘stop the clock’ up to a limit of 30 business days after the request for information is issued or the asset owner is notified of reasons for not approving the access policy (as applicable).
- If the AER has not approved the access policy within 6 months of submission (this can include multiple rounds ‘back and forth’ between the asset owner and us which would ‘stop the clock’ each time), then we must ourselves develop an access policy in accordance with 5.2A.8(g), (h), and (i) of the Rules.

Under clause 5.2A.8(o) Schedule 2 of the NER we must publish a [register](#) of DNAs, the identity of DNA owners and a copy of each DNA owner’s access policy. This provides a source of information for access seekers on all DNAs.

2.2 AER assessment

On 25 November 2025, Powerlink (ACN 078 849 233) submitted its Designated Network Asset Access Policy for the Kidston DNA for AER approval.

The AER’s role in approving access policies is limited to assessing whether DNA access policies comply with clause 5.2A.8 of the NER.

We have undertaken a review of Powerlink’s Kidston DNA access policy in accordance with the NER, so that we can be reasonably satisfied that it complies with the requirements of the NER.

In undertaking our assessment we came to the initial view that not all requirements had been fully satisfied. As permitted under the NER, we sought further information from Powerlink throughout the assessment process, which resulted in the ‘clock being stopped’ on the assessment. Powerlink subsequently provided all requested information so that we could complete our assessment process.

We assessed the Kidston DNA access policy against a framework based on the requirements of clause 5.2A.8 of the NER.

Table 1 provides an overview of the broad categories against which we assessed Powerlink’s Kidston DNA access policy. Although our assessment was in greater detail, Table 1 provides an overview of the nature of the assessment.

Table 1: AER assessment of Powerlink’s Kidston DNA Access Policy

Category and corresponding NER references	Where addressed in the Kidston access policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information requirements: description of the asset, capacity and other limitations Clauses 5.2A.8(b1) (1); 5.2A.8(b1) (2) 	<p>Clause 5.2A.8(b1) (1); 5.2A.8(b1) (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APPENDIX A – Description of Route of Kidston DNA APPENDIX B –Tenure Arrangements for the Kidston DNA APPENDIX C – Description of main components of Kidston DNA APPENDIX D – Network Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency with the schedule 5.12 in respect of costs, revenues, contractual rights and obligations Clause 5.2A.8(b1) (3) 	<p>Clause 5.2A.8(b1) (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APPENDIX E – Key terms which apply to the provision of DNA Services APPENDIX H – Negotiating Principles for DNA Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and requirements regarding pricing, cost sharing, timeframes and good faith negotiations Clauses 5.2A.8(b1) (4), 5.2A.8(b1) (5), 5.2A.8 (b2), 5.2A.8 (b3), 5.2A.8 (b4) 	<p>Clause 5.2A.8(b1) (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APPENDIX F – Pricing Methodology <p>Clause 5.2A.8(b1) (5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APPENDIX G – DNA Access Process <p>Clause 5.2A.8 (b2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APPENDIX F – Pricing Methodology <p>Clause 5.2A.8 (b3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 4, Main DNA related obligations <p>5.2A.8 (b4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 4, Main DNA related obligations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of commercial arbitration. Clause 5.2A.8(b1) (6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 6, Dispute resolution

2.3 Consultation

Under clause 5.2A.8(h) of the NER, we may decide to consult on a DNA access policy.

To assist our decision on this matter, as permitted under the NER, we sent Powerlink information requests seeking further information on Powerlink’s engagement with its foundation parties and with potential future access seekers. Each information request ‘stopped the clock’ on the assessment timeline.

We were satisfied with Powerlink’s responses and decided not to consult on Powerlink’s Kidston DNA access policy because the proposed Kidston DNA foundation parties were actively involved in the development of the Kidston DNA access policy.

However, in future DNA access policy assessments, there may be cases where we may determine consultation is beneficial.

2.4 Conclusion

In accordance with clause 5.2A.8(f) of the NER, on 12 June 2026 we decided to approve Powerlink’s Kidston DNA access policy.

Glossary

Term	Definition
DNA	Designated Network Asset
NER/the Rules	National Electricity Rules
