

Stonestreet Green Solar

Statement of Commonality (Tracked)

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Deadline 6

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Statement of Commonality

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Commonality (the Statement) has been prepared to provide the Examining Authority (ExA) with a summary of the latest position regarding the negotiation of Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs) between the Applicant, relevant statutory consultees and other parties in relation to Stonestreet Green Solar (the Project).
- 1.1.2 The Rule 6 Letter [\[PD-004\]](#) dated 22 October 2024 requires the submission of SoCGs to inform the ExA and all other parties on matters where there is agreement and where differences lie at an early stage in the Examination process. The Rule 6 Letter requests that these are accompanied by an Issues Tracker (this Statement) detailing the progression of discussions.
- 1.1.3 Annex D of the Rule 6 Letter identifies the following parties with which the Applicant has sought to develop SoCGs:
- Ashford Borough Council (ABC) [\[RR-018\]](#);
 - Environment Agency (EA) [\[RR-086\]](#);
 - Historic England (HE) [\[RR-099\]](#);
 - Kent County Council (KCC) [\[RR-156\]](#);
 - National Grid Electricity Transmission PLC (NGET) [\[RR-203\]](#).
 - National Highways (NH) [\[RR-205\]](#);
 - Natural England (NE) [\[RR-206\]](#);
 - Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (NR) [\[RR-207\]](#);
- 1.1.4 This Statement is to be treated as an iterative document throughout the Examination and will be updated and submitted at subsequent deadlines to provide an up to date overview of the latest position on the SoCGs.

1.2 Structure of this Statement

- 1.2.1 This Statement is structured as follows:
- Section 2 sets out the status of each SoCG;
 - Section 3 provides a summary of where agreement has been reached with each party;
 - Section 4 provides details of any steps to be taken to progress outstanding matters towards resolution.

2 Status of the SoCGs

2.1 Overview at Deadline 46

2.1.1 This section provides an overview of the progression of each SoCG at Deadline 46 and will be updated to reflect their current status at each Examination deadline.

2.1.2 Table 2-1 identifies the status of each SoCG, categorised as follows:

- **SoCG in draft** – where a SoCG has been drafted (with matters recorded as agreed, ongoing and not agreed) and is subject to further discussions to resolve any outstanding matters;
- **Final signed SoCG** – where a final position has been reached on all matters, as either agreed or not agreed positions.

Table 2-1: Status of SoCGs at Deadline 46

Party	Status of SoCG at Deadline <u>46</u>
Ashford Borough Council	SoCG in draft
Kent County Council	SoCG in draft
National Grid	SoCG in draft
Network Rail	SoCG in draft
Environment Agency	Final Signed SoCG
Historic England	Final Signed SoCG
Natural England	Final Signed SoCG
National Highways	Final Signed SoCG

3 Commonality

3.1 Summary

- 3.1.1 This section of this Statement provides a summary of the topics covered in the SoCGs submitted at Deadline ~~16~~. It shows where there is commonality in the matters discussed between the Applicant and the various parties, and shows where matters have reached a final agreed position.
- 3.1.2 Table 3-1 lists out the topics covered in each of the SoCGs and the status for each stakeholder, where applicable. Where a topic is not relevant to a particular party the cell has been greyed out.
- 3.1.3 The Rule 6 Letter requests that for areas under discussion, each party flags their estimation as to the likelihood that disagreement will remain by the closure of Examination, as set out below and in each individual SoCG.

Key

	All matters agreed
	Low likelihood that matter will not be resolved
	Medium likelihood that matter will not be resolved
	High likelihood that matter will not be resolved
	Matter not discussed with that party

Table 3-1: Topics Raised by National Grid and Network Rail

Topics	SoCG Party	
	National Grid	Network Rail
Grid connection		
dDCO		
Protective Provisions of assets		
Compulsory acquisition and temporary possession of land		

Table 3-2: Topics Raised by the Environment Agency, National Highways, Historic England and Natural England

Topics		SoCG Party			
		Environment Agency	National Highways	Historic England	Natural England
General	Policy compliance				
	Access to Aldington Flood Storage Area (AFSA)				
	Effects on international and national designated sites				
Water	FRA assessment				
	Outline OSWDS				
	AFSA Risk Assessment				
	Drainage Strategy				
	WFD Assessment				

Biodiversity & Landscape	Environmental permit				
	Outline LEMP and design principles				
	Outline CEMP				
	Impacts on species and woodland				
Air quality	Air Quality Assessment				
Transport	Traffic Assessment				
	Outline CTMP, DTMP, dDCO				
Heritage	Historic Environment Assessment				
	Impact on Designated Heritage Assets				

Table 3-3: Topics Raised by Local Authorities

Topics		SoCG Party	
		Ashford Borough Council	Kent County Council
General	Principle of Development		
	Scale of development		
	Compliance with NPS Policy		
	Consideration of Alternatives		
	Good Design		
	Economic and Social Effects		
	DCO, including Schedule 2 Requirements		
Highway and transportation	Traffic and Assessment		

Topics		SoCG Party	
		Ashford Borough Council	Kent County Council
PRoW	Outline RoWAS		
Landscape	Scope and assessment		
	Landscape Strategy		
	Outline LEMP		
	Outline CEMP, DEMP		
	Cumulative landscape effects		
Water	SuDs		
Cultural Heritage	Built Heritage		
	Archaeology		
Cumulative Assessment	Scope of the assessment, and long list of schemes		

4 Summary of Ongoing Positions

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 This section provides an overview of the matters identified in Table 3-1 that remain unresolved at Deadline ~~16~~ with each of the parties and sets out how the Applicant is intending to progress matters with those parties with the intention of reaching a final agreed position before the close of the Examination.

4.2 Ashford Borough Council (Doc Ref. 8.3.1(~~AB~~))

- 4.2.1 The Applicant has had a Planning Performance Agreement with ABC since May 2023, which has allowed for extensive engagement during the pre-application stage, and continued engagement in the Examination stage.

- 4.2.2 The Applicant has been in active discussions with ABC and the SoCG has been updated a number of times during the post submission stage. Agreement has been reached on a number of matters, with ~~outstanding matters~~ some areas of disagreement relating to the following topics:

- Need and principle of development (Table 2.1): ABC question the scale and size of the development. The Applicant has responded to these matters and ABC and the Applicant discussed these matters further on the 28 January 2025. ~~It was agreed that ABC would consider the Applicant's response in due course. The Applicant is awaiting a response from ABC on this matter.~~ ABC confirmed their disagreement on 31 March 2025.
- Planning Policy (Table 2.2): ABC considers the Project does not comply with the relevant National Policy Statements (EN-1 and EN-3). ~~The Applicant has responded to these matters and awaits ABC's response.~~ ABC confirmed their disagreement on this matter on 31 March 2025.
- Landscape Character and Visual Amenity (Table 2.3): ABC considers that the Project does not minimise impacts on the landscape as the Project is larger than it considers appropriate. ~~The Applicant has responded to these matters and awaits ABC's response.~~ ABC confirmed their disagreement on this matter on 31 March 2025.
- ~~Cumulative Landscape Effects~~ (Table 2-3) : ABC contend that different effects should have been identified as compared to those which have been identified in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 8: Landscape and Views (Doc Ref. 5.2(A))** [AS-012] and **ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Assessment (Doc Ref. 5.2)** [APP-041]. ~~The Applicant has requested further clarification on this point and await ABC's response.~~
- ~~Schedule 2: Requirements: the Applicant has responded to the feedback provided by ABC, and all but one matters are now agreed. ABC are considering the updates to 19.(2)(d) (timescales) provided by the Applicant at Deadline 1 (10th December 2024).~~ ABC confirmed their disagreement on

this matter on 31 March 2025.

- 4.2.3 The Applicant has sought and continues to seek an opportunity to discuss the outstanding matters with ABC. The Applicant looks forward to discussing the outstanding matters with ABC further.

4.3 Environment Agency (Doc Ref. 8.3.2(C))

- 4.3.1 Agreement has been reached on all matters and the SoCG was signed on 11 March 2025. A signed version of the SoCG has been provided by the Applicant at Deadline 4.

4.4 Historic England (Doc Ref. 8.3.3(C))

- 4.4.1 Agreement has been reached on all matters and the SoCG was signed on 11 March 2025. A signed version of the SoCG has been provided by the Applicant at Deadline 4.

4.5 Kent County Council (Doc Ref. 8.3.4(CD))

- 4.5.1 The Applicant has had a Planning Performance Agreement with KCC since May 2023, which has allowed for extensive engagement during the pre-application stage, and continued engagement in the Examination stage.

- 4.5.2 The Applicant has been in active discussions with KCC and the SoCG has been updated a number of times during the post submission stage. Agreement has been reached on a number of matters, with outstanding matters relating to the following topics:

- Impacts to Public Rights of Way ('PRoW') (Table 2.3): The Parties ~~are making constructive progress in resolving a number of detailed matters. Agreement is anticipated before the end of Examination.~~ have agreed the majority of matters in relation to PRoW, but do not agree on the level of impact.
- Heritage (Table 2.6): The Parties are continuing to discuss archaeological matters and progress will be reported at Deadline ~~57~~.

- 4.5.3 ~~The Applicant will continue to discuss these matters with KCC and progress will be reported at Deadline 4.~~ A signed version of the SoCG is anticipated to be submitted intobefore the end of Examination ~~at Deadline 4.~~

4.6 National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (Doc Ref. 8.3.5(BC))

- 4.6.1 The Applicant has been in active discussions with National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ('NGET') and the outstanding matters are summarised as follows:

- The **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(C)), 3.1(F) [REP5-003]**, including protective provisions: Discussions have been ongoing between the Applicant and NGET regarding the protective provisions since early 2023. The protective

provisions have now been agreed and final discussions are being held in order to formalise the position. The version of the draft protective provisions as at the date of submission of the Application is included in Part 5 of Schedule 13 to the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. ~~3.1(D)~~, 3.1(F)) [REP5-003]**.

- 4.6.2 ~~The Applicant will continue to discuss these matters with NGET and progress will be reported at Deadline 5. A signed version of the SoCG is anticipated to be submitted before the end of Examination.~~

4.7 National Highways (Doc Ref. 8.3.6(B))

- 4.7.1 Agreement has been reached on all matters. A signed version of the SoCG was submitted at Deadline 3.

4.8 Natural England (Doc Ref. 8.3.7(C))

- 4.8.1 Agreement on all matters was reached on 11 March 2025. A signed version of the SoCG has been provided by the Applicant at Deadline 4.

4.9 Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (Doc Ref. 8.3.8(~~CD~~))

- 4.9.1 The Applicant has been in active discussions with Network Rail ('NR') and the SoCG has been reviewed (see Appendix 1 for further details). ~~The outstanding matters are summarised as follows: After further correspondence between the parties, the protective provisions included in Part 7 of Schedule 13 to the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(F)) [REP5-003]** have been agreed.~~

- ~~* The **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1 (D))**, including protective provisions: Discussions have been ongoing between the Applicant and NR regarding the protective provisions since early 2023. The version of the draft protective provisions as at the date of submission of the Application is included in Part 7 of Schedule 13 to the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1 (D))**.~~

- 4.9.2 ~~The Applicant will continue to discuss these matters with NR and progress will be reported at Deadline 5. A signed version of the SoCG is anticipated to be submitted before the end of Examination.~~