

Springwell Solar Farm

Statement of Common Ground – National Highways

EN010149/APP/8.9
Revision 1
Deadline 1
June 2025
Springwell Energyfarm Ltd

Rule 8(1)(e)
Planning Act 2008
Infrastructure Planning (Examination
Procedure) Rules 2010

1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground ('SoCG') has been prepared in respect of the application for the proposed Springwell Solar Farm Development Consent Order ('the Application') made by Springwell Energyfarm Ltd ('the Applicant') to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008¹ ('the 2008 Act').
- 1.1.2 Springwell Solar Farm ("Springwell") is a proposed new solar farm and battery storage facility located in North Kesteven, Lincolnshire. The proposals also include infrastructure to connect Springwell to the National Grid, as well as any necessary supporting site infrastructure and environmental mitigation, including landscaping and ecological planting ("the Proposed Development").
- 1.1.3 The SoCG is being submitted to the Examining Authority as an agreed draft between both parties. It will be amended as the examination progresses in order to enable a final version to be submitted to the Examining Authority.

1.2 Parties to this Statement of Common Ground

- 1.2.1 This SoCG has been prepared by the Applicant and National Highways.
- 1.2.2 National Highways are a statutory stakeholder defined for the Springwell Solar Farm Development Consent Order application. They are the Strategic Road Network operator covering the Proposed Development.
- 1.2.3 Collectively, the Applicant and National Highways are referred to as 'the parties.'

1.3 Purpose of this document

- 1.3.1 This Statement of Common Ground ('SoCG') is being submitted to the Examining Authority as an agreed draft between both parties. This SoCG is a 'live' document and will be amended as the examination progresses in order to enable a final version to be submitted to the Examining Authority.
- 1.3.2 The SoCG has been prepared in accordance with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Guidance on the examination stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects ('DLUHC Guidance')¹.
- 1.3.3 Paragraph 007 of the DLUHC Guidance comments that:

"A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is a written statement prepared jointly by the applicant and another party or parties, setting out any matters on which they agree, or indeed disagree. A SoCG helps to ensure that the evidence at the examination focuses on the material differences between the main parties and therefore makes best use of the lines of questioning pursued by the Examining Authority".
- 1.3.4 The aim of this SoCG is, therefore, to provide a clear position of the progress and agreement met or not yet met between National Highways and the Applicant on matters relating to the Application.
- 1.3.5 The document will be updated as more information becomes available and as a result of ongoing discussions between the Applicant and National Highways.

¹ Planning Act 2008: Examination stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (30 April 2024).

- 1.3.6 The SoCG is intended to provide information for the examination process, facilitate a smooth and efficient examination, and manage the amount of material that needs to be submitted.
- 1.3.7 This SoCG does not seek to replicate information which is available elsewhere within the Application documents. All documents are available in the deposit locations and/or the Planning Inspectorate website.
- 1.3.8 Once finalised, the SoCG will be submitted to the Examining Authority concerning the Application under section 37 of the 2008 Act for an order granting development consent for the construction of the Proposed Development.

1.4 Terminology

- 1.4.1 In the table in the issues chapter of this SoCG:
 - “Agreed” indicates where an issue has been resolved.
 - “Not Agreed” indicates a position where both parties have reached a final position that a matter cannot be agreed between them.
 - “Under Discussion” indicates where points continue to be the subject of on-going discussions between parties.

2. Proposed Development Description

2. Introduction

- 2.1.1. The Proposed Development comprises the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) array electricity generating facility with a total capacity exceeding 50 megawatts (MW), a Battery Energy Storage system (BESS) with an import and export connection to the National Grid.
- 2.1.2. The Proposed Development comprises the installation, construction and decommissioning works, with the details to be defined by the appointed contractor(s) and subject to approval by the Local Authority. All works will be required to be undertaken within the parameters assessed for the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development will be located within the 'Order Limits' (the land shown on the **Works Plans [EN010149/APP/2.3]** [\[APP-007\]](#) within which the Proposed Development can be constructed, operated and decommissioned). The extent of the Order Limits is shown on **ES Volume 2, Figure 1.2: Order Limits** [\[APP-058\]](#).
- 2.1.3. The design of the Proposed Development has evolved throughout the environmental assessment process to avoid or minimise environmental effects and in response to consultation and engagement feedback, where appropriate. The location of the Proposed Development is shown in **ES Volume 2, Figure 1.1: Location Plan** [\[APP-058\]](#) and described in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: Location of the Proposed Development** [\[APP-042\]](#), with the consideration of alternatives and the evolution of the design of the Proposed Development presented in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered** [\[APP-044\]](#).
- 2.1.4. The area subject to the DCO Application (the Order Limits) where the Proposed Development will be carried out is shown as the Order Limits (**ES Volume 2, Figure 1.2: Order Limits** [\[APP-058\]](#)). The principal components of the Proposed Development include:
- Solar PV development including;
 - Ground-mounted Solar PV generating station. The generating station will include Solar PV modules and mounting structures;
 - Balance of Solar System (BoSS), which comprises inverters, transformers, and switchgear;
 - 400kV Grid Connection Corridor to connect the Springwell Substation and proposed National Grid Navenby Substation;
 - Satellite Collector Compounds comprising switchgear, transformers, ancillary equipment and operation, maintenance, security and welfare units;
 - A project substation (the 'Springwell Substation') compound, which will include substation, Main Collector Compound, switching and control equipment, office/control/welfare/security buildings, storage areas, and provisions for vehicular parking and material laydown;
 - Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) compound, including batteries and associated inverters, transformers, switchgear and ancillary equipment and their containers, enclosures, monitoring systems, air conditioning, electrical cables, fire safety infrastructure and operation, maintenance, security and welfare facilities;

- Underground cabling will connect the Solar PV modules and BESS compound to the BoSS, Collector Compounds, and the Springwell Substation;
- Ancillary infrastructure works, including boundary treatments, security equipment, earthing devices, fencing, lighting, earthworks, surface water management, internal tracks and any other works identified as necessary to enable the development;
- Landscaping, habitat management, biodiversity enhancement and amenity improvements; and
- Works to facilitate vehicular access to the Site.

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3. Record of Engagement

3.1. Summary of consultation

- 3.1.1. The parties have been engaged in consultation throughout the early stages of the project. Table 1 shows a summary of key engagement that has taken place between the Applicant and National Highways (NH) in relation to the Application.

Table 1 – Record of Engagement²

Date	Form of correspondence	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
06/05/2025	Telephone conversation and follow up email	<p>Discussion on the impact of construction works on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and the Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) route.</p> <p>The shift pattern and proposed staff embargo period are unlikely to represent a significant impact on the operation of the SRN.</p> <p>NH invited to provide written agreement on staff movements.</p> <p>NH to confirm position in relation to AIL movements on the SRN.</p>

² This table is not intended to be a record of every call or email exchanged between the parties (for example emails organising meetings), but should record the key exchanges of information and meetings

4. Current Position

4.1 Position of the Applicant and National Highways.

- 4.1.1. The following tables set out the position of the Applicant and National Highways, following a series of meetings and discussions with respect to the key areas of the Proposed Development. This includes matters where discussions are ongoing.
- 4.1.2. As noted above, this is a 'live' document, and some aspects have yet to be agreed upon between both parties. The intention is to provide a final position in subsequent versions of the SoCG, addressing and identifying where changes have been made, and ultimately, documenting agreement by both parties on relevant points.

Table 2 - Topics Discussed

Ref.	Description of Matter	Stakeholder Comment ³	Applicant's Response	Status
1	Effects on the SRN	NH is content with the impact of HGV traffic on the SRN. A query relating to the assignment of construction staff on the SRN has been made.	<p>The Applicant has agreed to the following measures to address capacity issues related to traffic passing through the junction of the A15 / B1202:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Enhanced Staff Travel Plan measures to be included in the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to suppress single car occupancy levels, including a greater reliance on car sharing and staff mini-buses; 2) A staff travel embargo between the hours of 0700-0900hrs and 1600-1800hrs. The staff working hours at the site are 0700hrs – 1900hrs during weekdays and as such, staff movements on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) will all occur outside the peak hours for the A1 or A46; and 	Agreed

Ref.	Description of Matter	Stakeholder Comment ³	Applicant's Response	Status
			<p>3) Measures to suppress HGV movements during the same peak hours at the A15 / B1202 junction.</p> <p>The travel times of staff (to arrive by 0700hrs and to depart after 1900hrs) would occur outwith the peak periods of the SRN. Given that the SRN is remote to the development site, the impact on the operation of the NH network by construction traffic will be limited. The provision of an enhanced staff travel plan will help suppress single occupancy car trips and will further reduce vehicle movements on the SRN.</p>	Agreed
2	Adequacy of assessment	NH have reviewed the assumptions noted in the assessment. With the exception of a query relating to construction staff assignment assumptions, NH is content with the adequacy of the assessment.	The remaining query has been addressed and there remain no further concerns relating to the adequacy of the assessment.	
3	Protective provisions	NH note that there are no protective provisions relating to the SRN.	The Applicant agrees that there are no protective provisions relating to the SRN	

Ref.	Description of Matter	Stakeholder Comment ³	Applicant's Response	Status
4	Construction worker trip generation methodology	The construction worker trip generation has been completed using MSOA journey to work census data within a 60-minute drive time of the proposed site to establish the construction workers' direction of travel and compared to LSOA journey to work census data within a 30-minute drive time to conclude the use of LSOA 30-minute drive time data and establish a more robust approach. NH requests that the applicant provide further information, regarding the methodology for calculating the number of peak hour workers on the SRN (A1/ A46) to allow NH to complete their review.	The travel times of staff (to arrive by 0700hrs and to depart after 1900hrs) would occur outwith the peak periods of the SRN. Given that the SRN is remote to the development site, the impact on the operation of the NH network by construction traffic will be limited. The provision of an enhanced staff travel plan will help suppress single occupancy car trips and will further reduce vehicle movements on the SRN.	Agreed
5	Abnormal Load Movements on the SRN	NH are to provide details of the suitability of AIL movements on the SRN.	NH have been invited to provide any further comment on the suitability of their network from Immingham to the A15 junction.	Under discussion
6	All remaining transport and access matters	National Highways confirm that there are no further transport matters relating to the SRN of concern	NH to confirm that there are no further queries and that NH is content with the transport and access elements of the Proposed Development, in respect to the SRN	Agreed

Signatures

This statement of Common Ground is agreed upon:

On behalf of National Highways.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

On behalf of the Applicant

Name:

Signature:

Date:

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