

# Springwell Solar Farm

Draft Statement of Common Ground -  
National Grid Electricity Transmission  
plc (NGET)  
(Tracked)

# 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.

1.1.3 1.1.4 The SoCG has been updated at Deadline 3 to reflect the latest situation.

## 1.2 Parties to this Statement of Common Ground

- 1.2.1 This SoCG has been prepared by the Applicant and National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (NGET).
- 1.2.2 ~~National Grid Electricity Transmission~~NGET are a statutory ~~undertaker~~stakeholder defined for the Springwell Solar Farm Development Consent Order application. NGET has apparatus under, in, upon, over, along or across the land within the Order limits and wishes to protect its rights and interests in land and its apparatus during and after construction of the Proposed Development. They are the responding fire and rescue service covering the Proposed Development.
- 1.2.3 Collectively, the Applicant and ~~National Grid Electricity Transmission~~NGET 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').

1.3.3 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 Grid Electricity Transmission 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 Grid Electricity Transmission.

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. 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.
- 2.2. The DCO would, amongst other things, authorise the Applicant to construct, operate and maintain the Proposed Development. 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.

## 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~~~~Table 1~~~~Table 1~~ shows a summary of key engagement that has taken place between the Applicant and ~~National Grid Electricity Transmission~~ NGET in relation to the Application.

**Table 1 – Record of Engagement**

Date	Form of correspondence	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
<b>28 October 2022</b>	Meeting	Introductory meeting to discuss grid connection agreement and approach to working together.
<b>20 January 2023</b>	Meeting	Discussion on the grid connection agreement and proposed National Grid Navenby Substation.
<b>07 March 2023</b>	Phase one consultation	No response received to phase one consultation.
<b>20 March 2023</b>	Meeting	Update on proposed National Grid Navenby Substation.
<b>11 April 2023</b>	Meeting	Introductory meeting to discuss approach to public consultation and stakeholder engagement.
<b>15 May 2023</b>	Meeting	Update on proposed National Grid Navenby Substation.
<b>23 May 2023</b>	Meeting	Meeting to discuss approach to public consultation and stakeholder engagement.
<b>19 July 2023</b>	Meeting	Meeting to discuss approach to public consultation and stakeholder engagement

<b>03 October 2023</b>	Email	Update on proposed National Grid Navenby Substation.
<b>12 October 2023</b>	Meeting	Introductory NGET meeting to discuss interfaces with the Proposed Development and existing assets.
<b>07 November 2023</b>	Webinar	Customer webinar to provide an update on proposed National Grid Navenby Substation (multiple developers).
<b>06 February 2024</b>	Meeting	Customer meeting to provide customer cable entry routes into proposed National Grid Navenby Substation (multiple developers).
<b>22 February 2024</b>	Phase two consultation	Feedback included advice on protective provisions and identified new and existing National Grid assets which should be considered in the design of the Proposed Development.
<b>01 March 2024</b>	Meeting	Discussion around Connection Dates, Connection Stages and National Grid timelines
<b>04 September 2024</b>	Meeting	Discussion on feedback from phase two consultation, update on current parameters and assumptions and introductory discussions on draft protective provisions and draft SoCG.

<b>05 September 2024</b>	Email	NGET issue of profile drawings.
<b>29 October 2024</b>	Meeting	Discussion on progress of the draft SoCG, draft Protective Provisions and Modification Application
<b>13 November 2024</b>	Meeting	Discussion on progress of the draft SoCG and NGET Application to Vary letter.
<u><b>Jan – July 2025</b></u>	<u>Meetings</u>	<u>Regular monthly meetings and ad hoc discussions in relation to the Springwell and Navenby substation schemes as well as DCO hearings and consultation feedback.</u>
<u><b>25 February 2025</b></u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Email from NGET's lawyers sending draft protective provisions.</u>
<u><b>1 May 2025</b></u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Email from the Applicant's lawyers with comments on protective provisions.</u>
<u><b>16 July 2025</b></u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Email from NGET's lawyers with comments on protective provisions, including the agreed principle to reciprocal provisions with respect of the National Grid Navenby substation.</u>
<u><b>June 2025 – Deadline 1</b></u>	<u>Written Rep / Responses to ExQ1</u>	<u>NGET submitted responses at Deadline 1 – [REP1-092] and [REP1-093]</u>

## 4. Current Position

### Position of the Applicant and National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET).

- 4.1.1. The following tables set out the position of the Applicant and National Grid Electricity Transmission, 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	Applicant's Response	Status
1	Appropriate standards and working practices	Use of NGET Technical Guidance Note 287, EN 43 – 8, HSE guidance	Agree to use the appropriate standards and working practices in relation to the type of work being undertaken and in respect to the Nation Grid Electricity Transmission's assets.	Agreed
2	Scope of NGET asset to consider	Assets affected are Overhead Line (OHL) towers ZM505 through ZM524	Interfaces with these assets have been investigated and taken into account within the applicant design.	Agreed
3	Interaction between assets and NGET asset diversions	Minimise interaction between applicant and NGET assets and avoid diversions if possible	Agree to minimise interaction between EDFR and NGET assets. Diversions have been avoided so far within the applicant design.	Agreed
4	Assets underneath OHL	Take into account operation and maintenance of the OHL e.g. sag, swing and restringing	Agree to account for NGET operation and maintenance of the OHL within the design. Appropriate design envelope and measures during construction, operation and decommissioning to be agreed and	Agreed



			put in place. Current applicant concept design has been discussed and no issues have been identified so far.	
5	Interface between Applicant assets and National Grid <u>Navenby</u> substation	<u>Navenby</u> Substation location and design is in progress. <del>Easements and exact interface point to be agreed as NG Navenby project progresses</del>	<p>Cable route to expected substation location has been included the Applicant's design and Application. <u>The Applicant has included flexibility, as currently the exact point of connection location within the substation field is not was not secured.</u></p> <p><u>NGET have now shared pending the bay location with The Applicant and fixed that design is fixed (detailed design stage) and. NGET will be submitting a planning application for approval with that design.</u></p> <p><del>Physical interface point is to be agreed in parallel with the ongoing Connection Agreement Modification Application. Easements are in progress with current landowners, and discussions have commenced on easement rights pending NGET land rights being secured.</del></p> <p><del>The Parties timelines are aligned, following the Applicant modifying their Grid Connection Agreement to an October 2029 Stage 1 connection date. NGET are still projecting the substation will be constructed in time for the Applicants Q4 2029 connection (as per [REP1-092], despite revised timelines for Planning Consent submissions and Consent.</del></p> <p><del>The Parties continue to engage on all matters of design, planning, land, construction interfaces, and will continue to do so for the life of the scheme.</del></p>	In progress <u>Agreed</u>
6	Protective Provisions ( <u>PPs</u> )	<del>PPs are in progress and to be agreed are being negotiated between the parties. NGET require</del>	PPs are in progress and to be agreed	In progress

		<u>sufficient protection for existing apparatus and possible interference with the same from the Proposed Development within the Order limits. The Parties will continue to liaise in the hope to reach agreement prior to the closing of the Examination.</u>		
<u>7</u>	<u>Easements</u>	<u>Easements and exact interface point to be agreed as NG Navenby project progresses</u>	<u>Easements are in progress with current landowners, and discussions have commenced on easement rights pending NGET land rights being secured.</u>	<u>In progress</u>
<u>8</u>	<u>Timescales</u>	<u>NGET are projecting the substation will be constructed in time for the Applicants Q4 2029 connection (as per [REP1-092], despite revised timelines for Planning Consent submissions and Consent,</u>	<u>The Parties timelines are aligned, following the Applicant modifying their Grid Connection Agreement to an October 2029 Stage 1 connection date.</u> <u>The Parties continue to engage on all matters of design, planning, land, construction interfaces, and will continue to do so for the life of the scheme.</u>	<u>Agreed</u>

## Signatures

This statement of Common Ground is agreed upon:

On behalf of National Grid Electricity Transmission.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

On behalf of the Applicant

Name:

Signature:

Date:

