



## **Great North Road Solar and Biodiversity Park**

Statement of Common Ground with Historic England

Document Reference – EN010162/APP/8.5C

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## Revision History

| <b>Revision</b> | <b>Revision Date</b> | <b>Authorised By</b> | <b>Position</b>  | <b>Comment</b>                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Issue 1         | 17/09/25             | ES                   | Head of Planning | 1 <sup>st</sup> Draft for HE Review |
| Issue 2         | 25/11/25             | ES                   | Head of Planning | Issue 2 for HE Review               |
| Issue 3         | 8/12/25              | ES                   | Head of Planning | D1 Submission draft for agreement   |
| Issue 4         | 12/02/26             | ES                   | Head of Planning | D3 Submission draft for agreement   |
| Issue 5         | 18/03/26             | ES                   | Head of Planning | D4 Submission draft for agreement   |

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to support an application (the Application) for a Development Consent Order (DCO) from the Secretary of State (SoS) for Energy Security and Net Zero under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) for the proposed Great North Road Solar and Biodiversity Park Development (the Development). The Application has been submitted by Elements Green Trent Limited (the Applicant).
- 1.1.2 This SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority (ExA) where agreement has been reached between the Parties, and where agreement has not (yet) been reached.
- 1.1.3 SoCGs are an established means in the planning process of allowing all Parties to identify and focus on specific issues that may need to be addressed during the examination. This SoCG will be revised and updated as discussions between the Parties progress during the Examination.

### **1.2 PARTIES TO THIS STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

- 1.2.1 This SoCG has been prepared by (1) Elements Green Trent Limited as the Applicant and (2) Historic England (collectively, 'the Parties').

### **1.3 TERMINOLOGY**

- 1.3.1 In the table in the Issues section of this SoCG:
- "Agreed" (Green) indicates where the issue has been resolved;
  - "Under discussion" (Amber) indicates where a matter is the subject of ongoing discussion; and
  - "Not Agreed" (Red) indicates a final position.
- 1.3.2 Where Historic England expresses agreement, it does so only in so far as it has considered the issue with regards to its statutory remit and on the basis of the information provided by the Applicant. Agreement is offered without prejudice to the submissions of other interested Parties who may have greater knowledge of technical or site-specific issues.

## 1.4 RECORD OF RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE

- 1.4.1 The Applicant has undertaken consultation and engagement with Historic England throughout the development of the Application. The Applicant consulted Historic England in accordance with Section 42 of the PA 2008, about the Development and environmental impact assessment as part of the formal pre-application consultation and publicity procedures. This process afforded Historic England the opportunity to provide responses to the information provided at various stages of the pre-application process.
- 1.4.2 Table 1-1 identifies the discussions and correspondence that has taken place between the Parties to date.

Table 2-1 Record of Correspondence

| Date       | Type (meeting, etc.) | Topic   |
|------------|----------------------|---|
| 27/09/2024 | Virtual Meeting      | Introduction to the GNR Development   |
| 27/09/2024 | Agenda               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Development Briefing</li> <li>• SoCG</li> <li>• Public Benefits</li> <li>• AOB</li> </ul> |
| 30/09/2024 | Email                | Minutes of meeting held on 27 September with slide deck presented   |
| 20/05/2025 | Virtual meeting      | Update following issue of PEIR  |
| 22/09/2025 | Email                | Issue 1 of the SoCG shared with HE for comment and review.  |
| 25/09/2025 | Email                | Request for meeting to discuss the SoCG   |
| 30/09/2025 | Email                | Follow up request for meeting to discuss the SoCG   |
| 8/12/2025  | Virtual meeting      | Meeting to discuss draft SoCG.  |
| 8/12/2025  | Email                | Applicant issued updated Draft SoCG for sign-off, reflecting HE comments.   |
| 15/01/2026 | Email                | Updates to SoCG issued for sign-off   |
| 12/02/2026 | Email                | D3 draft for sign off   |
| 18/02/2026 | Phone call           | HE signed off draft and confirmed they had no comments.   |
| 10/03/2026 | Email                | Applicant requested a meeting to discuss the ExA questions, and the SoCG  |
| 18/03/2026 | Email                | D4 draft for sign off   |

|            |       |  |
|------------|-------|--|
| 23/03/2026 | Email | Applicant requested comments on the draft SoCG |
| 24/03/2026 | Email | Applicant requested comments on the draft SoCG |

- 1.4.3 It is agreed that this is an accurate record of the key meetings and consultation undertaken between the Parties in relation to the issues addressed in this SoCG.

## 2 CURRENT POSITION OF THE APPLICANT AND HISTORIC ENGLAND

### 2.1 ARCHAEOLOGY

Table 2-1 Archaeology

| Ref   | Document Reference | Description of Matter  | HE's Position   | Applicant's Position  | Status |
|-------|--------------------|------------------------|---|---|--------|
| 2.1.1 | RR                 | Assessment Methodology | <p>Noted and agreed. HE would welcome further engagement in relation to the <b>ES Volume 4, Appendix A11.8: Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS)</b> [EN010162/APP/6.4.11.8] [APP-269].</p> <p>HE have requested further consultation in respect of detailed design, secured by DCO Requirement within the <b>Draft Development Consent Order</b> [EN010162/APP/3.1A] [AS-012].</p> | <p>The Applicant considers the approach to assess the effects to buried archaeological remains, both direct and indirect physical effects, is appropriate.</p> <p>The assessment methodology is provided in Section 11.5.2 of the <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 11: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology</b> [EN010162/APP/6.2.11] [APP-054] with supporting archaeological information provided in <b>ES Volume 4, Appendix 11.1: Archaeological Desk Based Assessment</b> [EN0101/APP/6.4.11.1] [APP-251] [APP-252] [APP-253] [APP-254].</p> <p>Targeted archaeological evaluation (trial trenching) was undertaken in two phases and the results are reported in <b>ES Volume 4, Appendix 11.6: Phase 1 Trial Trenching Results</b> [EN0101/APP/6.4.11.6] [APP-264] [APP-265] and <b>ES Volume 4,</b></p> | Agreed |

| Ref   | Document Reference   | Description of Matter        | HE's Position   | Applicant's Position   | Status |
|-------|--|------------------------------|---|--|--------|
|       |  |                              |   | <b>Appendix 11.7: Phase 2 Trial Trenching Results</b><br><a href="#">[EN0101/APP/6.4.11.7]</a> <a href="#">[APP-266]</a><br><a href="#">[APP-267]</a> <a href="#">[APP-268]</a> . The Applicant considers that the archaeological evaluation is sufficient at this stage to inform the DCO examination.  |        |
| 2.1.2 | Section 42 Statutory Consultation in the Consultation Report | Embedded Mitigation Measures | Noted   | The Parties agree that potential adverse effects have been minimised by designing the development to avoid, as far as possible, the most sensitive archaeological remains, such as sites of former settlements.<br><br>The boundary and location of the Work No.s have been adjusted to avoid sensitive archaeology in the vicinity of Cromwell and North Muskham. Where the probable sites of former settlements remain within the Order Limits the Work Area allocation has been changed to allow preservation in areas assigned to diverse grassland or other uses which is no change from the current situation. | Agreed |
| 2.1.3 | RR, WR   | Further Mitigation (AMS)     | <b>Current Position:</b><br>HE confirmed to the Applicant that HE are content with the approach to post consent mitigation works. | <b>Current Position:</b><br>The Applicant has discussed this matter with HE and understands that HE are content with the measures  | Agreed |

| Ref | Document Reference | Description of Matter | HE's Position  | Applicant's Position   | Status |
|-----|--------------------|-----------------------|--|--|--------|
|     |                    |                       | <p><b>Deadline 2 Position:</b><br/>                     HE have noted that non-intrusive geophysical survey or trial trench evaluation has not been completed; there appears to be a slight incongruousness to the overall approach in the way. It's useful to note that while an application of professional judgement is wholly reasonable, this judgement is based on a somewhat limited understanding of the nature of the archaeological record, on the basis of limited ground-truthing through trial trench evaluation.'</p> <p><b>Deadline 1 Position:</b><br/>                     Noted and agreed. HE welcome the further trial trenching that has been committed to within the <b>ES Volume 4, Appendix 11.8: Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS)</b> [EN010162/APP/6.4.11.8] [APP-269].<br/>                     HE have requested further consultation in respect of detailed</p> | <p>secured by the <b>ES Volume 4, Appendix 11.8: Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS)</b> [EN010162/APP/6.4.11.8] [APP-269].</p> <p>In this context, the Applicant understands that HE are content to leave the detail of the oAMS for NCC and the Applicant to agree.<br/>                     The Applicant therefore understands that HE have no remaining concerns on the approach to post consent mitigation works.</p> <p><b>Deadline 1 Position:</b><br/>                     The requirement for flexibility in the design process to react to and reflect the nature of the archaeology present is noted and agreed.<br/>                     The details of the archaeological fieldwork are set out within the <b>ES Volume 4, Appendix 11.8: Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS)</b> [EN010162/APP/6.4.11.8] [APP-269], which will be secured by Requirement 11 in Schedule 2 of the <b>Draft DCO</b> [EN010162/APP/3.1B] [REP1-005].</p> |        |

| Ref | Document Reference | Description of Matter | HE's Position   | Applicant's Position   | Status |
|-----|--------------------|-----------------------|---|--|--------|
|     |                    |                       | <p>design, secured by DCO Requirement within the <b>Draft Development Consent Order [EN010162/APP/3.1A] [AS-012]</b>.</p> <p>We raised that the approach to exclude substantial archaeological remains is noted and welcomed, however, we would draw attention to the risk associated with non-construction related activities, such as those associated with Biodiversity net Gain (planting, ecological ponds, scrapes, seeding etc). While excluding built form from areas of sensitive archaeology is appropriate, the alternatives must be adequately measured for risk of harm to archaeological deposits also. We raised concerns regarding the completeness of the pre-DCO submission archaeological investigation. While this seemingly is intended to be supplemented post DCO, we would draw attention to whether the completeness of the survey is sufficient to assess the</p> | <p>The impacts from BNG measures will be refined as detailed design develops post-consent. It is intended that the Archaeological Mitigation Strategy will be amended as the design evolves and post-consent evaluation is undertaken. It is anticipated however that only a tiny proportion of BNG measures will involve activities which could have an impact on buried archaeology.</p> <p>In regard to the completeness of survey to date it should be noted that geophysical survey coverage was c.90% and that trenching tested all geologies. This is considered to be proportionate, in line with developing best practice guidelines and characterised by NCC as 'largely sufficient to provide an acceptable level of data to inform the baseline for the Environmental Statement (ES) and an initial phase(s) of trial trench evaluation.</p> |        |

| Ref   | Document Reference | Description of Matter                          | HE's Position                          | Applicant's Position  | Status |
|-------|--------------------|--|--|---|--------|
|       |                    |  | archaeological potential at this time. |   |        |
| 2.1.4 | RR                 | Assessment of Effects (Archaeological remains) | Noted and agreed.                      | <p>As set out in Section 11.8 of the <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 11: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology [EN010162/APP/6.2.11]</b> <a href="#">[APP-054]</a>, five instances of possible minor to moderate effects to buried archaeological remains, therefore potentially significant in EIA terms, have been identified. These effects have been assessed prior to the implementation of the additional mitigation measures.</p> <p>Additional mitigation in the form of preservation in situ or preservation by record, in accordance with the <b>ES Volume 4, Appendix 11.8: Outline AMS [EN010162/APP/6.4.11.8]</b> <a href="#">[APP-269]</a> will reduce the previously reported significant effects to minor adverse or negligible effects, which are considered not significant in EIA terms.</p> <p>The Development is considered to be in accordance with the NPSs, the NPPF and follows the Historic England Guidance.</p> | Agreed |

## 2.2 DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

Table 2-2 Designated Heritage Assets

| Ref   | Document Reference   | Description of Matter  | HE's Position   | Applicant's Position  | Status |
|-------|--|------------------------|---|---|--------|
| 2.2.1 | Section 42 Statutory Consultation in the Consultation Report | Assessment Methodology | Noted and agreed.   | <p>The Applicant considers the approach to assess the effects to heritage significance arising from change within setting is appropriate.</p> <p>The assessment methodology is provided on Section 11.5 of <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 11: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology</b> [EN010162/APP/6.2.11] [APP-054], with supporting information on the setting of heritage assets provided in <b>ES Volume 4, Appendix 11.2: Settings Assessment</b> [EN0101/APP/6.4.11.2A] [REP1-041]. Additionally, some of the assets considered within this assessment have been included due to location within the ZTV as prepared for and used by the <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)</b> [EN0101/APP/6.2.7] [APP-050].</p> | Agreed |
| 2.2.2 | Section 42 Statutory   | Assessment of Effects  | Agreed. Given the range of designated assets that have the potential to be impacted by change | As set out in Section 11.8 of the <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 11: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology</b>   | Agreed |

| Ref | Document Reference  | Description of Matter | HE's Position  | Applicant's Position   | Status |
|-----|---------------------|-----------------------|--|--|--------|
|     | Consultation and RR |                       | <p>in setting, we highlighted that these must be given assessment and consideration proportionate to their significance.</p> <p>HE have requested further consultation in respect of detailed design, secured by DCO Requirement within the <b>Draft Development Consent Order [EN010162/APP/3.1A]</b> <a href="#">[AS-012]</a>. HE have acknowledged that this was updated at Deadline 1, provided in <b>Draft Development Consent Order [EN010162/APP/3.1B]</b> <a href="#">[REP1-005]</a>, and is therefore agreed.</p> | <p><b>[EN010162/APP/6.2.11]</b> <a href="#">[APP-054]</a>, no designated assets will be directly affected by the Development. Indirect effects were assessed for the designated assets, but the assessment has not reported any significant effects to heritage assets following the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures.</p> <p>The Applicant will continue the discussion with Historic England on the detailed design as well as in the development of additional mitigation to be incorporated into the final design and the Heritage Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation.</p> <p>The Development is considered to be in accordance with the NPSs, the NPPF and follows the Historic England Guidance.</p> |        |

## 2.3 CUMULATIVE SCHEMES

Table 2-3 Cumulative Schemes

| Ref   | Document Reference | Description of Matter            | HE's Position     | Applicant's Position  | Status |
|-------|--------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|---|--------|
| 2.3.1 | TBC                | Assessment scope and methodology | Noted and agreed. | The Applicant considers that the long list and short listed cumulative sites are properly scoped, and which are presented in <b>ES Volume 4, Appendix 2.1: Cumulative Assessment Stages 1 and 2 [EN010162/APP/6.4.2.1A]</b> <a href="#">[REP1-024]</a> .  | Agreed |
| 2.3.2 |                    | Assessment of Effects            | Noted and agreed. | As summarised in Section 19.4 of the <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 19: Interrelationships [EN010162/APP/6.2.19]</b> <a href="#">[APP-062]</a> , potential in-combination effects of the Development on local people have been assessed as negligible, in almost all cases, and as a worst-case minor, which is not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations. | Agreed |

## 2.4 SCHEDULE 2 (REQUIREMENTS)

Table 2-4 Schedule 2 (Requirements)

| Ref   | Document Reference | Description of Matter | HE's Position   | Applicant's Position   | Status     |
|-------|--------------------|-----------------------|---|--|------------|
| 2.4.1 | RR                 | Requirement 11        | <p><b>Current Position:</b><br/>As below.</p> <p><b>Deadline 3 Position:</b><br/>Historic England had concerns with the wording in Requirement 11. The use of 'substantially' as a modifier at 11(2) potentially introduces ambiguity and risk of dispute at post-DCO approval stage.</p> | <p><b>Current Position:</b><br/>The Applicant's understanding is that HE agrees with the substance of Requirement 11, and the outstanding and not agreed matter relates to the use of "substantially" in the Requirement.</p> <p>The phrase "substantially in accordance with" is established precedent in a number of DCOs. Both Examining Authorities and Secretary of States have been satisfied that this is an appropriate mechanism to balance:<br/>                     Legal certainty for the decision-maker and affected parties;<br/>                     Practical flexibility for the undertaker to refine the scheme without seeking a full material change approval;<br/>                     Confidence that environmental and design outcomes assessed in the ES will still be delivered.</p> <p>Please refer to requirements in the Stonestreet Green, Fenwick, Helios and Tillbridge DCOs which all use the same wording in DCO requirements.</p> | Not Agreed |

| Ref | Document Reference | Description of Matter | HE's Position | Applicant's Position   | Status |
|-----|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--|--------|
|     |                    |                       |               | <p>The Applicant considers that the term 'substantially' is clear and unambiguous, and allows limited deviation to be permitted where the decision-maker is content.</p> <p>EN-1 recognises the need for flexibility in project design, especially where precise details are not fixed at application stage. The Applicant therefore considers that it is therefore reasonable to seek avoid a situation where a requirement may lock the undertaker into an inflexible control where minor changes do not cause new or different environmental effects. Please see paragraph 1.5.95 – 1.5.99 of the <b>Written Summary of Oral Submissions from Issue Specific Hearing 2 and Response to Action Points [EN010162/APP/8.24]</b> <a href="#">[REP3-099]</a> where the above reasoning is set out.</p> <p><b>Deadline 3 Position:</b></p> <p>The Applicant considers that the use of 'substantially' is used in a number of established DCO precedents, including the Helios DCO. The SoS is therefore</p> |        |

| Ref | Document Reference | Description of Matter | HE's Position | Applicant's Position   | Status |
|-----|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--|--------|
|     |                    |                       |               | <p>content that this is appropriate. The term provides a limited, but useful degree of flexibility in relation to how the <b>ES Volume 4, Appendix A11.8: Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS)</b> <b>[EN010162/APP/6.4.11.8B]</b> <a href="#">[REP3-056]</a> to both HE and NCC.</p> <p>Requirement 11 of <b>Draft Development Consent Order [EN010162/APP/3.1D]</b> <a href="#">[REP3-004]</a> has been updated to respond to further comments shared by NCC, but would welcome views from HE.</p> |        |

### 3 SIGNATURES

3.1.1 The above SoCG is agreed between the Applicant and Historic England, as specified below.

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|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Duly authorised<br>for and on behalf<br>of <b>Elements<br/>Green Trent<br/>Limited</b> | Name      |
|  | Job Title |
|  | Date      |
|  | Signature |

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|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Duly authorised<br>for and on behalf<br>of <b>Historic<br/>England</b> | Name      |
|  | Job Title |
|  | Date      |
|  | Signature |

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