PLANNING ACT 2008

THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (EXAMINATION PROCEDURE) RULES 2010

APPLICATION BY MERIDIAN SOLAR FARM LIMITED FOR A DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER

RESPONSE TO DEADLINE 1 SUBMISSIONS

ON BEHALF OF

NATIONAL GRID ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PLC

6 OCTOBER 2026

1. This response to Deadline 1 submissions is submitted on behalf of National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc (**"NGET"**) in respect of the Development Consent Order (**"DCO"**) application for the proposed Meridian Solar Farm (**"Meridian Solar Project"**) made by Meridian Solar Farms Limited ("**Applicant**").

2. The following table has been extracted from the Applicant's Representations Report [**REP1-074**] with NGET's response in the new righthand column titled *NGET's Response (DL2)*.

Topic	Matter Raised	Applicant's Response	NGET's Response (DL2)
General	Engagement and Co-operation to date NGET and the Applicant have been involved in meaningful engagement throughout the Applicant's pre application period comprising of collaborative design workshops and having regular project team meetings with the Grimsby to Walpole project team. NGET has sought to develop a design option that would secure the successful delivery of both projects. However, as explained further below, this has not been possible.	The Applicant notes NGET's comments but disagrees with the statement that a suitable design option has not been identified. This position is elaborated in the rows below.	NGET's position is set out in the rows below. However, NGET notes that its position is circumscribed by the absence of a formal connection agreement benefiting the Applicant.
Stand-off Distances	NGET's design work has identified that the separation between the two projects is less than the required stand-off distance set out in National Grid's Technical Specification Generic Design Principles for	Across the UK, various 400kV transmission lines have been constructed and currently operate in close parallel at varying separation distances. A few examples of existing 400kV OHLs in parallel	Please refer to paragraph 4 of NGET's Written Representation [REP1-113] which sets out the design work undertaken by it to assess whether the Meridian Solar Project can co-exist with

	Overhead Lines TS2.04 Issue 6 (2021). These stand-off distances are required to allow for asset maintenance and general safety. The required stand-off distance between the two overhead lines is around 92.25 m, based on a 55.5 m tower height. The anticipated separation between the two schemes is only around 75 m. The Meridian Solar Project's current design would therefore result in operations inside the required stand-off distance. This would impede NGET's ability to maintain its assets in a safe manner. The current design would result in a residual hazard that NGET would be left to manage for the operational life of its asset. The Meridian Solar Project's design must therefore be amended so that it complies with the required stand-off distances. Its current design means that the Meridian Solar Project cannot co-exist with Grimsby to Walpole. As such, NGET objects to the Meridian Solar Project in its current form.	(centreline to centreline) are provided below: - The YYJ and ZB OHLs near Tilbury route in ~55m close parallel. - The 4TM and ZDA OHLs south of Keadby route in ~65m close parallel. - The ZDF and ZDA OHLs south of High Marnham route in ~60m close parallel. - The 4KG and 2KN OHL's south of Barton-Upon-Humber route in ~70m close parallel. - The 2AC and 2AD OHL's west of Killingholme route in 50 ~50m close parallel. The applicant appreciates that these OHLs have already been constructed, and since that, health and safety standards have improved, technical specification and designs have evolved and perhaps these traditional stand-off distances are no longer deemed suitable. Despite this, National Grid continue to operate and maintain their	NGET's existing and proposed infrastructure. This concludes that the Application fails to achieve the required design standards – and NGET is not able to ignore current design standards. This is a simple geometrical measurement. In this case, there is a material difference between the instances cited by the Applicant in that (1) the instances are historic, as the Applicant notes; and (2) the instances identified are all overhead lines where both lines are operated and maintained by NGET

		parallel lines in a 'safe manner' whilst overcoming any 'residual hazards' that may exist and need to be managed for the operational life span of their assets. NGET has not explained why any site-specific hazards arising from the proposed close parallel arrangement could not be managed through the same operational, maintenance and safety procedures that are routinely employed elsewhere on the transmission network.	Where NGET does own both overhead lines where close parallelling occurs, additional measures such as proximity outages can be introduced where NGET is required to do so. Such mitigation measures would be materially more difficult to deliver where the line in close parallel to a NGET line is a privately owned, unlicensed transmission line not licensed on the same terms as NGET. This would be prejudicial to the operation of NGET's undertaking. Please refer to paragraph 4.12 of NGET's Written Representation for further commentary on this issue.

		As per Section 5.8.3[1]of the Norwich to Tilbury 'Appraising 'Close Parallel Opportunities' of the 'Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (CPRSS) 2025' 44 , National Grid have stipulated that the "minimum distance between close-parallel lines is determined by technical and safety constraints" and would typically be 80m. The maximum distance at which the benefits of close paralleling might be achieved depends on local factors". The document also notes that "Sizewell and Bramford are only 50m apart" as they were constructed together. This information is available on the National Grid Project website. NGET's representation does not identify any provision of 'Technical Specification Generic Design Principles for Overhead Lines TS2.04 Issue 6 (2021)' which prescribes a	Reference to the Norwich to Tilbury CPRSS should not be treated as justifying the configuration proposed by the Applicant. This relates to assets that are all owned by NGET. It is correct that the minimum distances between close parallel lines is determined by technical and safety constraints. It is also dependent on the height of the towers. As NG TS 2.04 Issue 6, Section 1.1 sets out: "Overhead line designs for National Grid shall enable the conductor or insulator system

[1] We have found this reference in section 4.2.4 of the Norwich to Tilbury the 'Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (CPRSS) 2025'

		mandatory minimum stand-off distance of 92.25 m between transmission lines. Nor has NGET explained how the asserted requirement has been derived from TS2.04.	to be safely maintained or replaced with one circuit live." NGET's Design Assurance team has properly interpreted this in the context of parallel lines to mean an appropriate standoff is necessary – the word "shall" is used. The standoff is based on Design Assurance's guidance, network security, and lessons learned across the network. The assumed distance of this close parallel will follow the following formula which has been determined to be appropriate by National Grid Design Assurance: • The tallest tower in that section plus vertical LoD, multiplied by 150% • (Tower Height + Vertical LoD) * 1.5
		The key consideration is whether National Grid considers a reduced separation acceptable through	As NG TS 2.04 Issue 6, Section 1.1 sets out: "Overhead line designs for National Grid shall enable the

		site-specific assessment. Whilst National Grid advise that the preferred, minimum stand-off is marginally reduced, NGET have not presented any evidence as to why this would impede NGET's ability to maintain its assets in a safe manner, in this specific location. The Applicant's current assessment indicates that Grimsby to Walpole (G2W) and Meridian Projects can co-	conductor or insulator system to be safely maintained or replaced with one circuit live." NGET's Design Assurance team has properly interpreted this in the context of parallel lines to mean an appropriate standoff is necessary – the word "shall" is used. The standoff is based on Design Assurance's guidance, network security, and lessons learned across the network. The assumed distance of this close parallel will follow the following formula which has been determined to be appropriate by National Grid Design Assurance: • The tallest tower in that section plus vertical LoD, multiplied by 150% • (Tower Height + Vertical LoD) * 1.5 NGET's position is that for a 55.5 metre tower as proposed by Meridian, the required standoff distance must be

		exist. Between Long Lane and High Road, both 400kV OHLs can co-exist in close parallel with a stand-off of 85m from centreline to centreline. Two pinch points exist at Broad Gate and Delgate Bank, however the Applicant believes there's sufficient space for both schemes to incorporate the full 50m limits of deviation (LoD). It is believed that the only location where close paralleling needs to reduce to 75m is north of High Road (A151) due to the Anglian Water pipelines in the ground and treatment works site to the east, and the farm complex to the west beyond Lord's Drain. In this area, if both schemes commit to a reduced lateral LoD then both OHLs could be routed through the pinch points to keep all infrastructure together on the approach to Weston Marsh B substation and avoid encircling farms and scattered properties in the area. The Applicant therefore considers there remains a credible	92.25 metres. Meridian cannot meet this requirement and therefore the schemes cannot co-exist without prejudicing NGET's undertaking and would leave it with a residual hazard that it would have to accept and manage for the operational life of the asset – and which it could not itself manage because of the third party ownership. NGET cannot commit to a reduced LoD with a private unlicensed transmission owner (refer to paragraph 4.12 of NGET's Written Representation). This would affect the delivery of the Grimsby to Walpole project, which is not in the public interest and may well have additional impacts remote from Weston Marsh as a result of constraining NGET's project further away. This has not been considered or addressed by the Applicant.

		design solution capable of accommodating both projects through this area, subject to further engagement between the parties.	NGET has never received a design proposal from the Applicant that complies with the technical standard or protects NGET's undertaking. Therefore, it has never received a "credible design solution" from the Applicant.
Connection Agreement	As detailed within the Applicant's Grid Connection Statement [APP-270], following its application to NESO for a connection agreement, the Meridian Solar Project received only a Gate 1 offer status as part of the NESO Connections Reform process. A Gate 1 offer is a provisional, deferred connection agreement issued to power generation projects connections offer status are noted and accepted by the Applicant. that do not meet the readiness or strategic alignment criteria required for immediate connection (Gate 2). The Gate 1 status means that the Meridian Solar Project can remain in the connections process, but it does not reserve capacity, a place in the queue,	NGET's comments in respect of its internal prioritisation of engagement with energy projects in respect of their current connections offer status are noted and accepted by the Applicant. However, with respect it is noted that NGET's internal prioritisation of engagement based on Gate Status does not extend to the relative planning merits of energy projects. This is reflected by: • Paragraph 4.11.6 of EN-1 which recognises that applicants may wish to take a commercial risk where they have not received or accepted a formal offer of a grid connection from the relevant network	Please refer to paragraph 3 of NGET's Written Representation which sets out NGET's position on the Meridian Solar Project's connection agreement. Paragraph 4.11.6 of EN1 indeed acknowledges that an applicant may take a commercial risk where they have not received or accepted a formal offer. However, this does not provide an applicant with carte blanche to intervene in project planning and to select their own grid

	protected status, nor does it guarantee a connection. To progress, the Applicant must submit a Gate 2 application during an allocated application window (typically held every six months) and meet the prescribed evidence requirements. Given the Meridian Solar Project's current Gate 1 status, NGET will not be progressing any works specifically associated with the connection of the Meridian Solar Project, as they are not considered to be required to support wider connections or other network reinforcements. NGET's focus is directed towards Gate 2 projects.	operator at the time of the application. • The nature of the NESO gating process itself, whereby holding relevant planning permissions/consents goes to the readiness criteria used to determine Gate 2 status. This clearly envisages some projects proceeding to seek consents in advance of being identified as "Gate 2". Gate 1 status indicates a connection date beyond 2035, reflecting the outcome of the first Gate 2 assessment round. As noted above, an earlier connection may be possible within the 2031 to 2035 window should the Applicant be successful in reapplying through future Gate 2 application rounds. For the	connection points. That is the situation that the Applicant is seeking to achieve here and it is not supported by NPS EN-1. Regardless of whether the Gate 2 process envisages the consenting of a project in advance of Gate 2, this does not envisage the interference of an applicant with the undertaking of NGET. It may well be possible to obtain permission for the development comprised in a generating station and to identify a possible grid connection. However, NGET again notes that NPS EN-1 does not state a priority for connectees ahead of others or that they should be able to pick and choose their connection points or routes. NGET notes the aspiration of the Applicant to seek a Gate 2 connection offer. However, that is no more than an aspiration and will remain so until the strategic alignment of its project with NESO's

		avoidance of doubt, the Applicant intends to submit a Gate 2 application in future application rounds. The exact dates for future application rounds will be confirmed by NESO once there is greater clarity on the available connection capacity of the relevant grid infrastructure beyond 2030. Continued progression of the Scheme through the DCO process further demonstrates project maturity and readiness in support of future Gate 2 applications.	objectives. NGET also is clear that the "available connection capacity" is not the issue identified as an issue for the application. This will remain the case and is exacerbated by the Applicant's insistence upon seeking to connect at a substation where NGET is not required to provide it with a connection - and never has been. Finally, NGET notes that a Gate 1 status entails a connection date after 2035, almost ten years from the present. In view of this, the Application is premature.
Weston Marsh Substation	The Meridian Solar Project's proposed connection point at Weston Marsh B has not been accounted for within the design for the Weston Marsh B substation. Separately from the Gate 1 status issue, there is a discrepancy regarding the proposed connection point. The Meridian Solar Project design assumes a point of connection at Weston Marsh B Substation, which forms part of	The Applicant has sought to take into account the latest information released by NGET in respect of this connection infrastructure being delivered by Grimsby to Walpole. The Applicant notes that the detailed design of the Weston Marsh substations remains under development by NGET and therefore considers it reasonable to identify a preferred connection location	Notwithstanding NGET's position on the issues with the Meridian Solar Project's connection agreement, please refer to paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10 of NGET's Written Representation for NGET's position on Weston Marsh A substation.

	the Grimsby to Walpole project, and acknowledges Weston Marsh A Substation as an alternative. However, prior to the Connections Reform process, the Meridian Solar Project was allocated a bay at Weston Marsh A, not Weston Marsh B. Accordingly, even setting aside the Gate 1 issue, the Meridian Solar Project's proposed connection point at Weston Marsh B would not have been accounted for within the design for the Weston Marsh B substation.	based on the best available information at the time of submission. In November 2025, the NGET published the anticipated locations and layouts of the proposed Weston Marsh A and B substations as part of a targeted consultation. The targeted consultation also identified where new overhead line infrastructure could be located and where existing overhead lines would be reconfigured to facilitate the project. Taking into account these designs, and as the Applicant's connection will approach from the south, the connection for the Scheme was therefore designed to the southernmost of the two substations (Weston Marsh B Substation). This approach was adopted to minimise the level of interaction with the other projects in this area, including Grimsby to Walpole, and to avoid approximately 2 km of	NGET does not consider it appropriate or in the interests of good planning that individual developers should unilaterally select connection locations. This attempt to circumvent the Gate 2 offer process has the potential to undermine the proper planning of the NETS. This is because other developers may not be able to access substations or be disadvantaged in doing so if others seek effectively to queue-jump. Facilitating this is not the role of the process under the Planning Act 2008 – a separate connection process exists and must not be circumvented.

		further overhead line or underground cable to connect into the northern substation. The Applicant has included land surrounding the proposed location of Weston Marsh B Substation to provide sufficient working space to connect once the exact location is confirmed by NGET. In respect of the commentary by NGET which suggests there is no consideration of Meridian Solar in its ongoing connection planning, the Applicant does seek clarification from NGET as to the ongoing reference to Meridian Solar in its planning applications for substation infrastructure in the Weston Marsh Area. Specifically, NGET submitted a planning application for its Weston Marsh A Substation [H22-0466-26] in June 2026. The Planning Design and Access Statement for that application assumes a grid connection date of 2033 for the Meridian Solar Farm project (see paragraph 4.2.1) and refers to	For the avoidance of doubt, prior to the NESO connections reform process, the Meridian Solar Project was allocated a bay at Weston Marsh A, not Weston Marsh B based upon system engineering, which Meridien cannot override for its convenience. Therefore, it was appropriate for NGET to account for the Meridian Solar Project in its Weston Marsh A substation planning application. The information was then a consideration. However, there has since then been a material change in circumstances in terms of the Applicant's Gate 1 offer and its attempt to gain access to the proposed Weston Marsh B

		the Scheme when describing the need for substation infrastructure in the Weston Marsh area. It cites at paragraph 3.3.4, *"The recent approval of the ODOW DCO, together with the acceptance of the Meridian Solar Farm DCO application for examination, the forthcoming Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire and Ossian Wind Farm DCO proposals, confirms that the Weston Marsh area is essential in relation to grid connection and substation infrastructure".* The Applicant would welcome clarification as to how the assumptions set out within NGET's Weston Marsh A planning application align with the position presented in this Relevant Representation.	substation. These do not justify the Applicant seeking to attain an access and connection at a completely different substation of its choosing. The position put forward by NGET in both its Relevant Representation [**RR-138**] and Written Representation is correct. It is no longer the case that the Applicant has a connection location at Weston Marsh A. This is a material change in circumstances since the preparation of the documents to which the Applicant refers. It is NGET's position that the grid connection being proposed by the Applicant is entirely presumptive and should not be authorised. NGET reiterates its view that the Applicant is seeking to interfere with NGET's proper planning and management of its undertaking and to undermine NESO's management of connections reform and connection offers. The reference to the "Weston

			Marsh **area"** (emphasis added) is not the same as a statement that the substation is justified in order to connect the specific project. In any case, since the preparation of that document, there has been a material change in circumstances.
		In the event that the Scheme cannot be accommodated at Weston Marsh B Substation, or Weston Marsh B Substation were to move, the Applicant shall seek to obtain further planning permission(s) and/or a material change to the DCO to bridge any gap between the current Order Limits and the final location of the substation for connection. The Applicant does not consider it reasonable to undertake such changes to this application at this time, given the ongoing design development required by NGET, and the lack of clarity as to its connection position, as set out above.	The suggestion that in the event of Weston Marsh B substation connections being unavailable or the substation being relocated demonstrates both that there are potential impediments to the delivery of the Meridien Solar scheme and that the application is premature. NGET reiterates that the problems that Meridien faces in this regard are entirely of its own making - as it notes elsewhere, it is proceeding on risk.

		Given the information made publicly available by NGET at the time of preparing the application, the Applicant considers that it has adopted a proportionate and reasonable approach to identifying a connection strategy. The Scheme has been designed to maintain flexibility whilst avoiding unnecessary infrastructure and minimising direct and cumulative environmental effects.	NGET notes that the Applicant's approach seeks to be proportionate. However, it is entirely speculative; is a proposal pursued (as the Applicant acknowledges) on risk; and it interferes with the undertaking of NGET as the Transmission System Owner and NESO, which is prima facie unreasonable.
Eastern Green Link 3 and Eastern Green Link 4	NGET is considering whether the Meridian Solar Project would adversely affect the above proposed NGET projects in addition to Grimsby to Walpole and reserves the right to make further submissions on this in due course.	The Applicant has sought to engage with NGET regarding the interaction between the Scheme and the Grimsby to Walpole project. NGET has indicated that it does not intend to progress discussions on these matters at this stage in light of the Scheme's Gate 1 status. The Applicant has continued to seek engagement and remains willing to discuss any potential interactions between the projects as further information becomes available.	NGET's overall position, without prejudice to its position on any negotiations, is that the connection sought by the Applicant is speculative and premature, as well as unreasonably interfering with the undertaking of NGET. In relation to projects which benefit only from Gate 1 offers NGET has communicated its position to the Applicant in direct correspondence and this is also clearly set out in the published materials of NESO. NGET will not be carrying out design work associated with

			this connection as a result. However, so far as necessary it will engage in negotiations on matters such as protective provisions.
Existing Infrastructure	As a responsible statutory undertaker, NGET's primary concern is to meet its statutory obligations and to ensure that any development does not adversely affect those statutory obligations. NGET has a duty to protect its position in relation to apparatus and land which is within or in close proximity to the Meridian Solar Project's draft Order Limits. Additionally, NGET must protect its ability to deliver, operate and maintain its future proposed infrastructure. NGET will therefore require appropriate protection for retained or proposed infrastructure, including compliance with relevant standards for works proposed within close proximity of its apparatus or proposed apparatus. NGET's rights of access to inspect, maintain, renew and repair its	The Applicant is engaging with NGET in relation to the scope and wording of bespoke Protective Provisions, including provisions governing the exercise of powers affecting NGET's land, rights and apparatus. The latest position on those discussions is set out in the Land Rights Tracker (Doc Ref. 4.4 Rev 2).	Without prejudice to NGET's overall position, Protective Provisions are being negotiated to ensure adequate protections for NGET's existing and proposed infrastructure. Please refer to paragraph 6 of NGET's Written Representation for full details.

	retained apparatus must be maintained at all times and access to inspect and maintain such apparatus must not be restricted. Similarly, the Applicant must have regard to such reasonable requirements as NGET may articulate in order to ensure the safe, economic and efficient construction, commissioning, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of any future proposed apparatus, including that which may be required in order to facilitate the Meridian Solar Project's connection to the National Electricity Transmission System. Further, where the Applicant intends to acquire land or rights, or interfere with any of NGET's interests in land or NGET's existing and/or future proposed apparatus, NGET will require appropriate protection. The Applicant is seeking the permanent freehold acquisition of land, and the acquisition of temporary and permanent rights over a number of plots containing NGET rights and		

	assets for NGET's existing 2WS and 4ZM 400 kilovolt (kV) overhead line routes, including parcels B4-56, B4-77, B4-79, B4-80, B4-81, B4-84, B4 85, B4-86, B4-87, B5-5, B5-6, B5-8, B5-9, B5-12, B5-14, B5-15, B5-16, and B5-20. NGET also notes land has been included within the Order Limits for the purposes of Work Nos. 14 and 15 (works in connection with a new National Grid substation), Work Nos. 9 to 13 (works in connection with a connection to the existing overhead transmission electric line) and potentially Work No. 6, as noted in Work Plans [APP-010].		
Protection of NGET Assets	NGET requires protective provisions to be included within the Order to ensure that its existing and future assets and interests are adequately protected, as well as to ensure compliance with relevant safety standards. A copy of NGET's required protective provisions appears in the Appendix to this document.	The Draft DCO (Doc Ref 3.1 Rev 2) includes standard protective provisions for electricity undertakers whose apparatus may be affected by the Scheme. In addition, the Applicant is engaging with NGET to agree bespoke protective provisions to appropriately protect NGET's assets and rights. The latest position on those negotiations	Without prejudice to NGET's overall position, Protective Provisions are being negotiated to ensure adequate protections for NGET's existing and proposed infrastructure. Please refer to paragraph 6 of NGET's Written Representation for full details.

		is set out in the Land Rights Tracker (Doc Ref. 4.4 Rev 2), which identifies the current status of engagement with NGET, including discussions relating to protective provisions. The Applicant continues to engage with NGET following submission of the DCO Application to ensure that disruption is minimised as far as reasonably practicable.	
Compulsory Acquisition Powers in Respect of the Meridian Solar Project	Where the Applicant seeks powers of compulsory acquisition over NGET land, or land in which NGET holds rights or apparatus or that may be required for future NGET projects, the Protective Provisions must require the Applicant to obtain NGET's prior written consent to the exercise of such powers.	The Applicant acknowledges NGET's position. The Applicant is engaging with NGET in relation to the scope and wording of bespoke Protective Provisions, including provisions governing the exercise of powers affecting NGET's land, rights and apparatus. The latest position on those discussions is set out in the Land Rights Tracker (Doc Ref. 4.4 Rev 2). Discussions between the parties remain ongoing and the Applicant will continue to work constructively with NGET throughout the Examination with a view to agreeing an appropriate package of	Please refer to paragraphs 6 and 7 of NGET's Written Representation. The restriction proposed by NGET is well precedented and appears in almost all DCOs, as well as in protective provisions in favour of other statutory undertakers such as Network Rail. NGET's approach to protecting its future projects is supported in policy and there is clear precedent for this approach.

		protections for NGET's assets and operational interests. Any agreed position will be reflected in the draft DCO as appropriate. However, the Applicant does not accept the position that compulsory acquisition powers for the Scheme should be restricted in respect of land required for future NGET projects which NGET does not currently own. This extends beyond the scope of the protections under s 127 of the Planning Act 2008, which relates to land or rights in land already held by a statutory undertaker. Restricting the Scheme from acquiring land remains subject to future design, consenting and acquisition processes of NGET is unduly and inappropriately restrictive.	
General	NGET reserves the right to make further representations as part of the Examination process in relation to specific interactions with any NGET projects identified during the Examination process, and as negotiations continue, but in	The Applicant notes NGET's statement that it will continue to liaise with the Scheme and keep the Examining Authority updated on discussions. The Applicant has sought to engage with NGET regarding potential interactions between	Please refer to paragraph 3.4 of NGET's Written Representation which states that in line with NESO guidance that where a Gate 1 notification is received in substitution for a connection agreement, the relevant

	the meantime will continue to liaise with the Meridian Solar Project with a view to reaching a satisfactory agreement during the Examination process and will keep the Examining Authority updated in relation to these discussions.	the Scheme and NGET's proposed projects in the Weston Marsh area. Whilst NGET has indicated that it does not wish to progress detailed discussions at this stage due to the Scheme's Gate 1 status, the Applicant has continued to seek engagement and remains committed to working collaboratively to understand and address any potential interactions. The Applicant would welcome the opportunity to progress these discussions during the Examination.	transmission owner for a project - in this case NGET for the Meridian Solar Project - will stop progressing any applicable transmission works where those works are no longer required. NGET will continue to liaise with the Meridian Solar Project with a view to concluding appropriate protective provisions for existing and proposed NGET assets.

3. The Applicant submitted the *Connection to the National Grid Weston Marsh Substation Note* [**REP1-094**] ("**Note**") at Deadline 1. The Note was prepared by the Applicant in response to the Examining Authority's request for further information in relation to the connection of the Project to the National Grid Weston Marsh substation. The request refers to two scenarios for this area, one being a new overhead electric line (scenario one) and the second being a new underground transmission electrical cable with associated permanent cable sealing end compounds (scenario two). Both scenarios envisage a connection into the Weston Marsh B substation. The Note states that scenario one is the Applicant's preferred alignment. As set out above and in NGET's Relevant Representation and Written Representation, the Applicant has not yet secured a connection agreement.

   NGET has been clear in its submissions to date that prior to the NESO connections reform process, the Meridian Solar Project was allocated a bay at Weston Marsh A, not Weston Marsh B. Accordingly, even setting aside the Gate 1 issue, the Meridian Solar Project's proposed connection point at Weston Marsh B would not have been accounted for within the design for the Weston Marsh B substation[2]. Even were it the case (which it is not) that the Meridian Solar Project was to have grandfathered a connection

[2] NGET Written Representation paragraph 3.9

location, it would not have been at the proposed Weston Marsh B substation and the Applicant is seeking to interfere with NGET's proper planning and management of its undertaking and to undermine NESO's management of connections reform and connection offers.[3]

The Applicant is seeking to interfere with NGET's proper planning and management of its undertaking and to undermine NESO's management of connections reform and connection offers. The Note is fundamentally flawed in its assumption that the Project will connect to the Weston Marsh B substation. NGET maintains its position that the grid connection proposed by the Applicant is entirely presumptive and should not be authorised[4].

DLA Piper UK LLP

6 October 2026

[3] NGET Written Representation paragraph 3.10
[4] NGET Written Representation paragraph 3.8