THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

The Droves Solar Farm

Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) with National Energy System Operator Limited (Clean)

Prepared by: IGP
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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared as part of the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) (the DCO Application) for The Droves Solar Farm (the Scheme) made by The Droves Solar Farm Limited (the Applicant) to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (SoS) pursuant to the Planning Act 2008.

1.1.2 SoCGs are an established means in the DCO consenting process, of allowing all parties to identify and focus on specific issues that may need to be addressed during the examination.

1.1.3 This SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority (the ExA) where agreement has been reached between the parties, and where agreement has not yet been reached.

1.1.4 This document has been updated at Deadline 5 to reflect ongoing discussions. The document references have not been updated from the original submission. Please refer to the **Guide to the Application [APP/1.3.7]** for the list of current versions of documents.

1.2 Parties to this Statement of Common Ground

1.2.1 This SoCG has been prepared by the Applicant and National Energy System Operator (NESO) Ltd.

1.2.2 Collectively, the Applicant and NESO are referred to as 'the parties.'

1.3 Purpose of this Document

1.3.1 This SoCG is a 'live' document and will be amended as the examination progresses, including as more information becomes available and as a result of ongoing discussions between the Applicant and NESO, in order to enable a final version to be submitted to the ExA.

1.3.2 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.

1.4 Terminology

1.4.1 This SoCG summarises the main topics covered and the status of the matter. The colour coding system used within the table in **Section 4** has been outlined below.

Cell	Status
	Agreed – indicates where an issue has been resolved.
	Under Discussion – indicates where points continue to be the subject of ongoing discussions wherever possible to resolve, or refine, the extent of disagreement between the parties.
	Not Agreed – indicates a position where both parties have reached a final position that a matter cannot be agreed between them.

2 The Scheme

2.1 Scheme Description

2.1.1 The Scheme is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) for the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating station and associated development comprising a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), a Customer Substation and Grid Connection Infrastructure, including a new National Grid Substation. The Scheme would allow for the generation and export of over 50 megawatts (MW) Alternating Current (AC) of renewable energy, connecting into the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) overhead line that passes through the Site.

2.1.2 The **Location Plan [APP-007]** shows the Order Limits for the Scheme, which is approximately 840 hectares (ha) of land within Norfolk (the 'Order limits').

3 Record of Engagement

3.1 Summary of Engagement

3.1.1 The parties have been engaged in consultation since May 2022.

3.1.2 A non-statutory consultation took place between 17 September and 1 October 2024. The statutory consultation process took place between 21 May and 9 July 2025.

3.1.3 The Applicant and NESO have engaged prior to and throughout the pre-application and Environmental Impact Assessment stages of the Scheme. The key engagement has included:

- Prior to the pre-application stage, discussions regarding the potential to connect into Kings Lynn substation where Island Green Power (IGP), parent company of the Applicant, was advised by NESO to apply for, and subsequently connect, directly onto the overhead line (OHL) running between the Walpole and Necton substations
- During the pre-application stage, the Applicant advised by NESO to identify a site for a new substation for the Scheme (the National Grid Substation), alongside obtaining land rights and planning consent for this. A connection offer was made reflecting this requirement by NESO
- During the pre-application stage, the Applicant had regular monthly meetings with representatives from NESO which commenced before the grid connection application was submitted. It is standard practice that these meetings are the primary mechanism by which Users, NESO and National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc (NGET) keep each other updated on progress, including the location of sites and substations. It was during these meetings the Applicant shared options for the proposed location of the National Grid Substation with NESO; and
- Additionally, the Applicant has confirmed the requisite land rights secured to NESO.

3.1.4 **Table 3.1** shows a summary of key engagement that has taken place between the Applicant and NESO in relation to the Application.

Table 3.1 – Record of Engagement

Date	Form of Correspondence	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
31 May 2023	Grid Connection Agreement	As part of accepting an offer for a Grid Connection, the Applicant agreed to contractual obligations to "obtain land and consent" for the National Grid Substation under the terms of the grid connection offer.
August 2024	Email	The Applicant provided confirmation of its secured requisite land rights to NESO.
September 2024	Meeting (online)	During this meeting between the Applicant and both NGET and NESO, the Applicant: • Provided a summary of programme milestones leading up to submission. • Confirmed that the land needed for the project and the National Grid Substation has been secured by the Applicant. • Confirmed that the only outstanding information requested by the Applicant from NGET as part of progressing the DCO Application was the location of Cable Sealing ends i.e. whether or not this will be adjacent to the OHL and on which side of the National Grid Substation. • Discussed the two siting options for the National Grid substation location • Reiterated that removing the National Grid Substation is not an option and would significantly hold up progress. • Confirmed the transmission line the Scheme is connecting

		to, relative to the nearest large schemes. • Noted NESO's stance in that they were looking at the whole network and doing what was best for bill-paying customers. • Concluded that the Applicant was still committed to the contracted position (to find the land and secure consent for a substation for the project to connect into) and saw no reason why this position would need to change.
September 2025	Letter	• NESO issued a letter to Island Green Power (IGP – the parent company of the Applicant) advising of the requirements that any new substation would need to meet in order to be suitable for the network as well as the need for National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc (NGET) to obtain freehold rights over land and that including the substation in a DCO was not NGET's preferred method to secure land. However, the letter noted that if the Applicant were to include a substation, IGP is required to identify and secure land which meet's NGET's requirements for the required substation. • The Applicant believes they have met the technical requirements set out in the letter, including securing the land as noted in submissions made throughout the examination to date.
October 2026	Email	• Email sent on 8 October 2026 with the latest version of the SoCG where points of clarification requested by NESO were addressed by the Applicant.

		• Email from NESO received on 12 October 2026 advising that nothing had materially changed since NESO's previous comments and that the position reflected in the current draft of the SoCG appears consistent with feedback from earlier review, but confirmation was being sought from the author of the comments.

3.1.5 It is agreed that this is an accurate record of the key meetings and consultation undertaken between the Applicant and NESO in relation to the issues addressed in this SoCG.

4 Matters of Discussion

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The following tables detail, by topic, the matters agreed, under discussion, or not agreed between the Applicant and NESO at the point of this document being published.

Reference	Topic	Consultee's Position	Applicant's Position	Status
GC-01	Location of substation	Whilst NESO is unable to confirm the location for the National Grid Substation at this stage, NESO notes the Applicant's suggested preferred location.	The Applicant has provided its suggested location for the National Grid Substation as part of the DCO Application. This was shared with NESO during pre-application and in accordance with the Applicant's contractual obligation. The Applicant also notes that its site selection methodology for the National Grid Substation was akin to NGET's site selection process and guidance.	Agreed
GC-02	Grid Connection Agreement	The Applicant has an agreement with NESO relating to the Scheme. This agreement has "Gate 1 status", which means it is conditional (and any identified connection point is only indicative at this point) on the Scheme subsequently meeting the Gate 2 requirements with the actual right to connect, and the connection terms then being as set out in the Gate 2 agreement offered at that point.	The Applicant has shared the preferred connection point with NESO and has a legally binding contract to connect in place having found a suitable location as per the terms of the contractual agreement. The Applicant has a grid connection agreement in place which has a confirmed point of connection at proposed location for the National Grid Substation. The Scheme has received a "Gate 1 status" notification, which means upon signing the Gate 1 offer the point of connection will be conditional upon the receipt of a Gate 2 offer. This will remain the status until the Scheme receives "Gate 2 status" and a subsequent Gate 2 offer is signed.	Under discussion

5 Signatories

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 The above SoCG is agreed between The Droves Solar Farm Limited (the Applicant) and National Energy System Operator Limited, as specified below.

5.1.2 Duly authorised for and on behalf of **The Droves Solar Farm Limited**.

Name:	
Job Title:	
Date:	
Signature:	

5.1.3 Duly authorised for and on behalf of **National Energy System Operator Limited**.

Name:	
Job Title:	
Date:	
Signature:	

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