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Norwich to Tilbury

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nationalgrid

Barnards Farm Stakeholder Agreement Norwich to Tilbury Statement of Common Ground

1. Purpose of the Statement of Common Ground

This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to outline the areas of agreement and any remaining points of discussion between National Grid and Barnards Farm Airfield regarding potential aviation impacts in relation to the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project.

The aim is to clarify the shared understanding of any issues and facilitate an efficient resolution process.

2. Parties to the SoCG

This SoCG is agreed between National Grid and the owner and operator of Barnards Farm Airfield.

3. Background

3.1 Description of the Project/Development

National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ('National Grid') owns and maintains the national high voltage electricity transmission network throughout England and Wales. The transmission network connects the power from where it is generated to the regional Distribution Network Operators who then supply businesses and homes.

National Grid holds the Transmission Licence for England and Wales, and its statutory duty is to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical system of electricity transmission and to facilitate competition in the generation and supply of electricity, as set out in the Electricity Act 1989.

National Grid has developed plans for Norwich to Tilbury (referred to as the 'Project'). The Project would support the UK's net zero target through the connection of new low carbon energy generation in East Anglia and by reinforcing the transmission network.

The Project comprises reinforcement of the transmission network between the existing Norwich Main Substation in Norfolk and Tilbury Substation in Essex, via Bramford Substation, the new East Anglia Connection Node (EACN) Substation and the new Tilbury North Substation.

The reinforcement is needed because the existing transmission network, even with current upgrading, will not have sufficient capacity for the new renewable energy (a substantial proportion of which would be generated by offshore wind) that is expected to connect to the network over the next 10 years and beyond. Completion of the Project, together with other new reinforcements across the country, will meet this future energy transmission demand both in East Anglia and across the UK.

The Project is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), and National Grid is seeking development consent under statutory procedures set by government. NSIPs are projects of certain types, over a certain size, which are considered by the government to be of national importance, hence permission to build them needs to be given at a national level, by the relevant Secretary of State (in this case the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero). Instead of applying to the local authority for planning permission, the developer must apply to the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order (DCO) that would grant development consent.

National Grid will submit an application for development consent to the Planning Inspectorate. The Examining Authority (consisting of one or more examining inspectors), after a period of public examination, would make their recommendation to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, who in turn would decide on whether development consent should be granted for the Project.

The Project is identified as critical to delivering a network which supports the clean power pathways for 2030 delivery.

The Planning Act 2008 places duties on National Grid as the DCO applicant to consult with prescribed or affected persons as well as to take account of responses to consultation and publicity. In accordance with these statutory requirements, National Grid has undertaken two non-statutory consultations and one statutory consultation to inform its proposals, together with further targeted consultations.

4. Stakeholder Interests

The Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (NPS EN-1) has effect for the decisions by the Secretary of State on applications for energy developments that are nationally significant under the Planning Act 2008. Amongst other impacts, it recognises that all aerodromes can be affected by new energy development and the need, therefore, for NSIPs to be developed collaboratively alongside aerodromes so that safety, operations and capabilities are not adversely affected. Reciprocally, NPS EN-1 states that it is essential for aerodrome operators to work collaboratively with energy infrastructure developers essential for net zero, recognising the need for the important economic and social benefits of aerodromes to be balanced with the urgent need for new energy developments which bring about a wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits.

NPS EN-1 places a requirement on DCO applicants to consult with any aerodrome likely to be affected by the proposed development in preparing an assessment of the proposal on aviation interests. Barnards Farm Airfield was identified and included in the scope for assessment, with its runway end being located within 5 km of the Project's proposed overhead line, recognising the potential for the proximity of the infrastructure to impact aircraft flight patterns and

aerodrome operations. In accordance with NPS EN-1 requirements, the owner and operator of Barnards Farm Airfield was identified as a priority stakeholder for engagement in relation to aviation impact considerations.

The chronology of National Grid's engagement with Barnards Farm Airfield to date, and the evolution of the Project's design is summarised as follows:

- 2022
 - National Grid presented information on how the Project was evolving from the evaluation of strategic options to a preliminary preferred graduated swathe within which new infrastructure (pylons and underground cables) could be located as well as a proposed new substation site on the Tendring Peninsula, as described within the [Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study Report](#) (April 2022)
 - 21 April – 16 June non-statutory consultation
- 2023
 - Development of the 2023 Preferred Draft Alignment, responding to feedback and other studies, as described within the [Design Development Report \(June 2023\)](#)
 - 27 June – 21 August non-statutory consultation on the 2023 Preferred Draft Alignment
 - 20 August telephone correspondence between National Grid's appointed aviation consultants Alan Stratford and Associates (ASA) and the owner of Barnards Farm Airfield.
 - 5 and 6 September 2023 email correspondence between ASA and the owner of Barnards Farm Airfield. Matters raised included:
 - Owner concerns regarding the proximity of the proposed overhead line alignment to the airfield and potential impacts on aviation operations, specifically with regards to approaches from the east.
- 2024
 - Development of the 2024 Preferred Draft Alignment, responding to feedback and other studies, as described within the [Design Development Report \(April 2024\)](#)
 - 10 April – 26 July Statutory Consultation on the 2024 Preferred Draft Alignment
 - 25 April proposed meeting between National Grid, ASA and the owner of Barnards Farm Airfield
- 2025
 - Development of the proposed Project Alignment, responding to feedback and other studies.
 - 25 February to 27 March targeted consultation on proposed changes to the 2024 Preferred Draft Alignment at Essex 12 and 13

5. Matters Agreed

Issue	Barnards Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid position (including date)	Agreement Reached (including date)	Relevant documentation
Impact Assessment Methodology and Key Assumptions	Barnards Farm Airfield is content with the position as articulated by National Grid. (May 2025)	<p>To fulfil its responsibilities to prepare an assessment of the Project on aviation interests, National Grid has developed a methodology to enable site-specific impact assessments for aerodromes within scope (as referred to in Section 4). Its primary aim is to evaluate risks of collision, predominantly during take-off and approaches and including forced landing risks, with the proposed overhead line alignment representing a new obstacle within proximity of aerodromes.</p> <p>Operational safety impacts arising from potential increases to risks of bird strike, wind turbulence and electromagnetic forces as a result of the Project are also considered.</p> <p>The methodology enables a nuanced appraisal that considers a range of factors in addition to the height and location of the proposed overhead line alignment, including: runway length and orientation in relation to the overhead line; aircraft performance, flight paths and operational procedures (determined from published information, as well as via consultation with operators); and the surrounding context in terms of</p>	Yes (12 May 2025)	CAP 168 Licensing of Aerodromes, January 2022

Issue	Barnards Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid position (including date)	Agreement Reached (including date)	Relevant documentation
		<p>topography and existing obstacles (including other overhead lines).</p> <p>The assessment methodology incorporates a range of assumption parameters regarding take-offs and approaches by different aircraft performance classes, including minimum clearance margins (vertical - 30m or 100ft within a 5.5° horizontal spray from the runway centreline; lateral - 150m when the aircraft is at or below the height of the proposed overhead line alignment) and maximum gradient angles (4° and 5°, subject to aircraft). Curved approaches and turns after climb-out to avoid the overhead line are considered in preference to straight-ahead departures and approaches over the Project overhead line alignment.</p> <p>The assessment considers, for all aerodromes in scope, whether the Project alignment infringes Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) as specified under the Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA's) CAP 168 regulations for licensed aerodromes, recognising this to be a best practice measure for obstacle assessment and treatment, albeit not a regulatory requirement for unlicensed aerodromes. If CAP168 standards are met, the proposed overhead line alignment is considered to have an acceptable impact on the aerodrome's</p>		

Issue	Barnards Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid position (including date)	Agreement Reached (including date)	Relevant documentation
		<p>operations and no further changes are considered likely to be necessary.</p> <p>The methodology does not consider visual impact. Where existing lines are relevant to operations at an aerodrome (e.g. they are very close to a runway and/or operations are already amended to take account of a line), the assessment will consider them, due to the potential for an existing obstacle already infringing the OLS to offer shielding, as reflected within CAP 168. (May 2025)</p>		
Proposed Project Alignment and Impact Assessment Conclusions	<p>Requirement for clarity regarding the height and location of proposed pylons in relation to the aerodrome as well as the existing overhead lines in the vicinity.</p> <p>Concern regarding the height of proposed pylons in proximity to the aerodrome and the need to ensure appropriate clearances, recognising pilot reliance on pylons as</p>	<p>The distance from the runway end to the proposed overhead line alignment to the east of the aerodrome is assessed to be sufficient to enable safe clearance margins during take-off and approaches, meeting the CAA's CAP168 measures.</p> <p>The existing PSC 132kV overhead line, in closer proximity to the aerodrome than the proposed overhead line alignment, is to be undergrounded as a consequence of Project. The existing PUB 132kV overhead line directly to the north of the aerodrome will remain in situ. (May 2025)</p>	Yes (12 May 2025)	<p>Aerodrome Assessment Summary – Barnards Farm May25 and Technical Drawing 01_220101_95_Barnards Farm Airstrip – REV A ; Aerodrome Assessment Summary – Barnards Farm Jun25 and 01_220101_95 – RevB</p>

Issue	Barnards Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid position (including date)	Agreement Reached (including date)	Relevant documentation
	a visual reference, accounting for instrument error. (July 2024) Barnards Farm Airfield is content with the position as articulated by National Grid (May 2025)			
Mitigation Measures	Barnards Farm Airfield is content with the position as articulated by National Grid (May 2025)	The stakeholder may wish to consider reasonable and achievable operational procedure changes to address any residual risks. National Grid is willing to support this consideration as necessary. (May 2025)	Yes (12 May 2025)	

6. Signatures

This Statement of Common Ground is agreed upon by the undersigned parties:

For National Grid

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

For Barnards Farm Airfield

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

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