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Norwich to Tilbury

Volume 8: Examination Documents

**Document: 8.3.18 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Innova
Renewables**

Final Issue A

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Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

nationalgrid

Innova Renewables

Draft 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 Innova Renewables regarding specific issues arising during construction and/or operation from the interface between the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project and Park Gate Farm Solar Park, Land West Of Park Road, Rivenhall.

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 Innova Renewables.

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 has submitted an application for development consent to the Planning Inspectorate. The Examining Authority (consisting of five examining inspectors), after a period of public examination, will make their recommendation to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, who in turn will 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 and one statutory consultation to inform its proposals, with further targeted consultations.

4. Stakeholder Interests

Innova Renewables has legal interests that have the potential to interact with the Norwich to Tilbury proposals. This has been identified as the Park Gate Farm Solar Park, Land West Of Park Road, Rivenhall. The site represents a consented solar farm, with planning permissions secured via Ref: 21/03735/FUL from Braintree District Council for the: *Installation of solar farm and associated development*.

National Grid is seeking to ensure that the interests of both parties and how they may be affected by the interaction are understood. From this position the aim is for the parties to agree actions to avoid or reduce the implications and for any remedial measures to be agreed. On this basis we seek the input from Innova Renewables to demonstrate how their interests may be affected, how Innova Renewables or National Grid and its contractors can collectively reduce those effects and input to agree the implementation of such measures.

Discussions Held

Teams Meeting Date: 11th September 2024, 23rd September 2025, 14th October 2025, 29th October 2025, 4th November 2025, 18th November 2025, 16th December 2025

5. Matters Agreed

ID	Issue	Agreement reached	Date agreed	Relevant documentation
5.1				

6. Matters Currently Under Discussion

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
6.1	Permanent loss of development footprint	<p>National Grid's internal design process of the Overhead Line route has sought to minimise the location of assets that would result in loss of development footprint. Current design, pylons and oversail are proposed to be located on the Solar Park and designed to have as minimal an impact as possible. A proposed adjustment of pylon TB93 within the LOD has allowed TB94 to be moved outside of the consented solar park.</p> <p>Current design does not anticipate permanent reduction of the extent of solar panels. National Grid will continue</p>		Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	21/03735/FUL planning application with Braintree District Council on behalf of Innova Renewables.

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
		to work with Innova Renewables as the detailed design develops.			
6.2	Temporary Removal of Panels to create space for construction works	In combination with TB94 reposition and subject to confirming haul road access arrangements, potentially with adjustment being made to general two-way design by Norwich to Tilbury, there is no anticipated need for temporary removal or delayed installation of solar panels to support construction. National Grid will continue to work with Innova Renewables as the detailed design develops.		Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	
6.3	Modifications to Existing Equipment	To ensure adequate earthing in response to oversail or close proximity of 400kv infrastructure. National Grid to continue to work with Innova Renewables to confirm any earthing implications as the detailed design progresses.	Innova raised question around implications for earthing on 400kv oversail.	Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	
6.4	Temporary Construction Effects	The extent in which temporary Haul Road Access within the Solar Farm is required will be confirmed at detailed design. Additional maintenance could be required due to net effects such as dust or compensation for damage/repair to operational equipment.		Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
6.5	Operational Effects (excluding reduced panel numbers)	Under current design there is no perceived loss of PV area	Tower TB094 was raised in the meeting as to whether this was far enough away that a 15m clearance around the pylons wont impact the solar panels.	Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	
6.6	Operational Effects (excluding reduced panel numbers)	It has been discussed if there was any potential to utilise space for more panels if 33kv cable re-routeing created a further area free from oversailing the potential space. Concerns are no longer applicable in light of current design.	Innova understood opportunity but identified that their experience was that the relatively small space created and challenges to connect in the additional panels meant it would not be worth their while doing	Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	
6.7	Planning	No National Grid action currently required over and above normal UKPN engagement Concerns are no longer applicable in light of current design.	Discussed potential to create more panel area by diversion of the undergrounded cable around the site. Innova concern about any potential to seek amendments to planning given secured on appeal.	General position that Innova build as per plan and then leave NG and DNO to discuss and confirm any amendments. Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	

7. Signatures

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

For National Grid

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

For Innova Renewables

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

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