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Norwich to Tilbury

Volume 8: Examination Documents

**Document: 8.3.20 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Crouch Solar
Farm (Low Carbon Limited)**

Final Issue A

February 2026

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

nationalgrid

Crouch Solar Farm (Low Carbon Limited)

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 Low Carbon Limited regarding specific issues arising during construction and/or operation from the interface between the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project and the Crouch Solar Farm.

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 Low Carbon Limited.

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 for development consent 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

Low Carbon Limited has legitimate interests that interact with the Norwich to Tilbury proposals. This has been identified as the Crouch Solar Farm, an established solar farm located north-west of Basildon.

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 Low Carbon Limited to demonstrate how their interests may be affected, how Low Carbon Limited or National Grid and its contractors can collectively reduce those effects and input to agree the implementation of such measures.

Meetings Held between National Grid and Low Carbon Limited (Crouch Solar Farm)

- 1st July 2025

5. Matters Agreed

ID	Issue	Agreement reached	Date agreed	Relevant documentation
5.1				

6. Matters Currently Under Discussion

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
6.1	Location of pylons (222 to 224)	From Relevant Representation 27/11/25 - Low Carbon Limited seek engagement to reach agreement on the precise location of pylon nos. 222 to 224 (whether within the limits of deviation currently proposed or by modifying the limits), and on the acquisition of associated permanent rights, to seek to minimise the impact of the location of those pylons and the rights acquired under the DCO on the solar farm's operations.	15/02/26 - National Grid and its detailed design partners will engage further with Low Carbon Limited to seek to provide further certainty on the proposed pylon locations 222 to 224 and the permanent rights of access with a view to minimising impacts as best able.	
6.2	Construction impacts	From Relevant Representation 27/11/25 - Low Carbon Limited seek engagement to reach agreement on the conduct of the works, including temporary land and haul routes/construction access, to minimise	15/02/26 - National Grid and its detailed design partners will engage further with Low Carbon Limited to agree conduct of works including temporary land and haul routes/construction access and through	

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		the impact on the solar farm's operations during the construction phase.	committed protections and mitigations measures seek to minimise impacts to the solar farms operations as best able.	
6.3	Protective Provisions	From Relevant Representation 27/11/25 - Low Carbon Limited seek engagement to reach agreement on bespoke protective provisions for the benefit of Crouch to protect its undertaking, including in respect of the grid connection cable.	15/02/26 - National Grid will engage with Low Carbon Limited's legal representatives to seek to agree a set of protective provisions within the order for the benefit of Low Carbon Limited and protection measures for the export cable noted.	
6.4	Comments relating to the draft DCO	From Relevant Representation 27/11/25 - The solar farm exports energy via an underground cable operated by Eastern Power Networks. Article 44 (Statutory undertakers) of the DCO would, inter alia, authorise the relocation of this cable and extinguishment of rights in connection with it. The cable is clearly essential to the operation of the solar farm. Protective provisions are proposed in Schedule 16 of the DCO that would benefit Eastern Power Network's interests in the cable, but no equivalent protection is provided to us (as we are not a statutory undertaker) even though our generation assets would be directly	15/02/26- National Grid will engage with Low Carbon Limited's legal representatives to seek to agree protection measures for the export cable noted.	

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		<p>affected by any interference with the cable.</p> <p>Schedule 16, para. 5(1) prevents apparatus being removed and the rights of a statutory undertaker to maintain that apparatus in land being acquired, until alternative apparatus has been constructed and is in operation to the reasonable satisfaction of the statutory undertaker in question.</p> <p>Paragraph 5(2) and subsequent provisions provide for a statutory undertaker to request the removal of apparatus from land purchased etc under the DCO and to undertake works.</p> <p>Paragraph 7 provides for the repayment of the statutory undertakers reasonable and proper expenses associated with the inspection, removal, alteration or protection of apparatus. While any alternative apparatus must be to Eastern Power Network's satisfaction, there is no equivalent mechanism requiring us to be satisfied that such arrangements are satisfactory for the ongoing solar farm operations. Disruption to the solar farm's</p>		

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		grid connection could result in business losses due to the disruption of renewable electricity export. Any variation or impact to the existing connection must be indemnified appropriately. Solar infrastructure is now designated as critical national priority infrastructure under the UK Government's Energy National Policy, as of January 2024.		

7. Signatures

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

For National Grid

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

For Low Carbon Limited

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

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