

AENC-NG-CNS-REP-0237

Norwich to Tilbury

Volume 8: Examination Documents

Document: 8.3.21 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Verdant Energy

Final Issue A

February 2026

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

nationalgrid

Verdant Energy

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 Verdant Energy regarding specific issues arising during construction and/or operation from the interface between the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project and Bramford 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 Verdant Energy.

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

Verdant Energy has been in correspondence with National Grid over the potential interaction with the Norwich to Tilbury proposals. This has been identified as the Land To The South Of Church Farm, Somersham Road. The proposal represents the: *Installation of renewable led energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with substation, inverter/transformer stations, site accesses, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements including Nature Areas* *Granted planning consent from Mid Suffolk District Council via application DC/23/02118.*

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

Engagement History

Teams Meeting Date: Non-Statutory consultation April-June 2022, Non-Statutory consultation June-Aug 2023, statutory consultation Apr-Jul 2024, 7th May 2025

5. Matters Agreed

ID	Issue	Agreement reached	Date agreed	Relevant documentation
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5.1

6. Matters Currently Under Discussion

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
6.1	Permanent loss of development footprint	National Grid's internal design process of the Overhead Line route has avoided location of assets that would result in loss of development with no perceived impact expected.	Verdant Energy understand that no permanent loss of footprint will arise from NG asset placement design.	Agreed- 7 th May 2025	Main Site: DC/23/02118 planning application with Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council on behalf of Verdant Energy.
6.2	Temporary Removal of Panels to create space for construction works	It is not expected there will be an impact requiring the temporary removal of panels.	The Norwich to Tilbury development will only impact land for Bramford Green's underground 33kV cable.	Ongoing discussion with key points discussed/ resolved.	DC/21/00060 planning application with Babergh Council on behalf of Verdant Energy.
6.3	Modifications to Existing Equipment	National Grid acknowledges Verdant's concerns in relation to earthing of the project. It is not expected there will be	National Grid must ensure their earthing	Ongoing discussion with	Cable Route

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
		any earthing impacts resulting from the works, but National Grid will continue to engage with Verdant as the detailed design develops.	does not impact Verdant Energy's export cable.	key points yet to be confirmed.	
6.4	Temporary Construction Effects	This is linked to temporary Haul Road Access within the Solar Farm which should not be required but confirmation would be given based on final design. A Dust Management Plan will be in place for the works and was included in the DCO submission, refer to EN020027	It is not expected that this will have a material impact, but Verdant Energy do expect National Grid to have a satisfactory dust management plan in effect.	Ongoing discussion with key points resolved.	
6.5	Operational Effects (excluding reduced panel numbers)	National Grid acknowledges Verdant's concerns in relation to the export cable. It is expected the interaction between the Project and their export cable will be limited, however NG will continue to work with Verdant as the detailed design develops to address any potential impacts.	National Grid must ensure there is no impact from their haul road on Verdant Energy's export cable. Typical agricultural cable profile provided, noting the tops of the cable ducts will be below 1,000mm.	Ongoing discussion with the detail 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 Verdant Energy

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

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