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Norwich to Tilbury

Volume 8: Examination Documents

**Document: 8.3.27 Draft Statement of Common Ground -Bradwell
Quarry (Blackwater Aggregates)**

Final Issue A

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Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

nationalgrid

Bradwell Quarry (Blackwater Aggregates) 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 Blackwater Aggregates regarding specific issues arising during construction and/or operation from the interface between the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project and Bradwell Quarry, Church Road, Bradwell, Essex, CM77 8EP. 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 Bradwell Quarry (Blackwater Aggregates).

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 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

Blackwater Aggregates has legal interests that have the potential to interact with the Norwich to Tilbury proposals. This has been identified as Bradwell Quarry, Church Road, Bradwell, Essex, CM77 8EP. The proposals understood as: *"Extraction of 6.5 million tonnes of sand and gravel (from Site A7 as identified in the Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014) including the retention of the existing access onto the A120, the processing plant (including sand and gravel washing plant), office and weighbridge, ready mix concrete plant, bagging unit, DSM plant, water and silt management systems. In addition, extension of the internal haul road into Site A7 and access for private and support vehicles to the Site A7 contractors' compound via Woodhouse Lane and Cuthedge Lane. Restoration of Site A7 to agriculture and biodiversity (species rich grassland and wetland).* This site has been granted permission under reference ESS/12/20/BTE with associated conditions.

Furthermore in due course the Bradwell Quarry will (subject to mineral planning consent being granted) extend into Monk's Farm, Pantling's Lane, Coggeshall Road, Kelvedon, Essex. CO5 9PG for the purposes of extraction of sand and gravel. This will become area A8 (Essex County Council mineral planning department reference site A47). The mineral rights in Monks Farm are owned by Blackwater Aggregates.

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

Discussions Held

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

- Non-statutory consultation April-June 2022 (graduated swathe)
- Non-statutory consultation June – August 2023 (draft alignment)
- Statutory consultation April – July 2024
- Landowner consultation June – July 2025
- Teams Meeting Date: 6th October 2023, 22nd October 2025, 16th January 2026
- Site meeting at Bradwell Quarry, Church Road, Bradwell, Essex: 24th July 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	Route Scenarios	National Grid has identified interface between the Norwich to Tilbury project and the Bradwell Quarry Monks Farm development. As a result, NG identified a design scenario that provides flexibility to respond to ongoing discussions, the potential change in planning status for the Monk's Farm site, and detailed designs between the two projects. A summary of the scenario has been included in the Design Development Report (5.15) and Chapter 4 (Project Description) of the Environmental Statement (6.4) submitted with the DCO application. National Grid welcomes ongoing discussions with	Blackwater Aggregates submitted the area 8 (area A47 Council ref.) for incorporation into the Mineral Local Plan. Consultation closed in July 2024, and BA await the outcome of the submission.	Ongoing discussion with detailed design to be progressed.	ESS/12/20/BTE planning application with Essex County Council on behalf of Blackwater Aggregates. Essex County Council Mineral Local Plan Review – Assessment of Candidate Sand and Gravel Sites –

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
		Blackwater Aggregates to continue to consider the scenario and detailed design.			A47 Bradwell, Monk's Farm Design
6.2	Permanent sterilisation of minerals under electrical infrastructure pillar of support	National Grid notes the potential change in planning status of the Monk's Farm site and the concerns from Blackwater Aggregates in relation to potential mineral sterilisation. As a result, NG identified a design scenario that provides flexibility to respond to ongoing discussions and detailed designs between the two interfaces. A summary of the scenario has been included in the Design Development Report (5.15) and Chapter 4 (Project Description) of the Environmental Statement (6.4) submitted with the DCO application. National Grid welcomes ongoing discussions with Blackwater Aggregates to continue to consider the scenario and detailed design.	1. NG to confirm the extent of the protective area around each pylon base if route on existing plans remains unaltered. BA have made clear, through previous consultations, questionnaires and site meetings with NG of the potential significant mineral sterilisation and consequential financial compensation claim arising if the scheme negatively impacts gravel extraction.	Ongoing discussion with key points to be confirmed. 2 BA have requested the alignment is relocated towards the eastern and southern most point within the route corridor. BA await revised plans from NG showing this re-alignment for further consideration.	Development Report (5.15) Chapter 4 (Project Description) Environmental Statements (6.4)
6.3	Alternative Routeing Scenario at Bradwell Quarry	The alternative scenario modifies the overhead line route between TB084-TB087. From TB087 the alignment back to TB084 would be realigned to be more easterly such that TB086 moves south out	1. BA were informed their suggestion to re-route to an alternative location within the corridor makes little or	Ongoing discussion with key points to be confirmed.	

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
		<p>of the proposed quarry area, TB085 also moves south but remains just within the quarry area at the narrowest point. TB084 moves to the southwest to just within the quarry boundary with an extended overhead line span to TB085. While noting that two pylons remain within the site, National Grid considers that the siting at the edge of the development area will reduce the extent of the sterilisation of minerals. It is anticipated that the timing of construction of each project will continue to allow construction access between TB084-TB085.</p> <p>TB082-TB083 may similarly be within minerals area but have been positioned as close to the boundary as routeing principles allow when considering all relevant factors. Likewise, the construction access has been aligned along the edge of the development area. National Grid considers that the siting at the edge of the development area will reduce the extent of the sterilisation of minerals.</p> <p>National Grid has extended the Limits of Deviation to facilitate a change in the route</p>	<p>no marginal cost difference to the scheme. This would make a portion of the mineral reserve financially viable.</p>	<p>BA await revised plans from NG showing this re-alignment for further consideration.</p>	

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
		should the need arise to enable further extraction.			
6.4	Oversail of Minerals Sites	Site activity would typically be expected to continue unaffected by oversail of electrical conductors as a result of designing to normal clearance standards. The financial impact of any evidenced curtailment of activities will be established on a case by case basis responding to site specific circumstances and the planning position.		Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be discussed/ resolved.	
6.5	Permanent Operational Access	National Grid requires access to installed equipment to be maintained at all times. the Development Consent Order includes a defined route for such access, but the parties agree that by voluntary agreement, alternative arrangements, that better respond to the particular status of site operator activities could be adopted where agreed by the parties.		Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be discussed/ resolved.	
6.6	Temporary Construction Effects	Details will vary by site but may include: positioning of temporary haul roads within site boundaries; the installation of services and utilities diversions; repair / compensation for any damage to existing equipment		Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be discussed/ resolved.	

The parties agree to:

- Commit to engage constructively with other parties in respect of detailed engineering design to facilitate beneficial outcomes for all developments in so far as it relates to overlapping interests
- Commit to update the other parties where material change to their project occurs or is imminently expected

7. Signatures

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

For National Grid

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

For Bradwell Quarry (Blackwater Aggregates)

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

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