

AENC-NG-CNS-REP-0259

Norwich to Tilbury

Volume 8: Examination Documents

Document: 8.3.43 Draft Statement of Common Ground - British Pipeline Agency

Final Issue A

February 2026

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

nationalgrid

British Pipeline Agency

Draft Statement of Common Ground

1. Purpose of the Statement of Common Ground

This Statement of Common Ground ("SoCG") has been prepared to reflect the current understanding of the areas of agreement and any remaining points of discussion between National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ("National Grid") and BPA/UKOP regarding specific issues arising during construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project (the "Project") and its interface with UKOP assets. The aim is to clarify the shared understanding of any issues and facilitate an efficient resolution process. The SoCG is intended to be a live document and will be updated as necessary throughout the pre-examination and examination stages of the DCO process. It is without prejudice to any bespoke protective provisions included in the draft DCO for the protection of BPA/UKOP, and to the terms of any related side agreements between the parties.

2. Parties to the SoCG

This SoCG is drafted between National Grid and BPA/UKOP.

3. Background

3.1 Description of the Project/Development

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 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 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 and one statutory consultation to inform its proposals, with further recent targeted consultations.

4. Stakeholder Interests

BPA/UKOP operate the Thames to Buncefield multifuel pipeline, which is a high-pressure mixed fuel line together with all apparatus and equipment ancillary thereto ("the Pipeline") being part of the nationally critical fuel infrastructure network supplying (inter alia) the London airports.

The Pipeline is a key part of the Country's fuel supply system and as such is crucial to National fuel security and must be adequately safeguarded from harm at all times. The Pipeline must continue to operate on a 24/7 basis and at all times remain safe, operational and accessible so that all statutory, regulatory, operational and maintenance requirements can be carried out without interference (both in the short and long term) and any additional land rights needed to ensure that these objectives can be met (due to conflict with the Project) must be granted to UKOP, its agents and successors.

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 interactions and for any remedial measures reasonably to ensure that all necessary safety standards can be met (including but not limited to British Safety Standard BS EN ISO 18086 [2]) are agreed. On this basis National Grid is working with

BPA/UKOP to investigate the potential risks of damage to the Pipeline and how BPA/UKOP or National Grid and its contractors can collectively reduce those effects and input to agree the implementation of such measures. To that end the parties have agreed an outline mitigation design ("the Outline Mitigation Design") to be adopted dated 20/11/2025 with reference ERM TN61_22-0101_011 issue 6 and are looking to agree a framework to consent to the detailed design of the Outline Mitigation Design as part of the protective provisions or agreement to be agreed between the parties.

The chronology of National Grid's engagement with BPA/UKOP to date, and the evolution of the Project's design is set out (up to 1 July 2025) at pages 27-53 of the bundle of documents enclosed with BPA/UKOP's relevant representation (RR-0413).

Since 1 July 2025 the broad summary of interactions can be summarised as follows:

- 2025
 - Further discussion on AC Interference impacts to UKOP assets and mitigation measures including alignment revisions.
 - Legal Agreement Negotiations.
 - Engagement on proposed Norwich to Tilbury: Bulphan Change Application.
- 2026
 - Further legal agreement negotiations.
 - Further change application engagement.

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 position (including date)	Relevant documentation
6.1	Matters set out in RR-0413, AS-086 and PDA-011 including but not limited to the risks of damage to the Pipeline, the adequacy of the Order to allow UKOP and its successors to deliver and retain the necessary Mitigation, the requirement for protective provisions and indemnities for damage caused.	18/02/26 – BPA/UKOP have set out its position in relation to AC Interference in the relevant documentation.	15/02/26 – National Grid, having conducted AC Interference studies in collaboration with BPA/UKOP, have identified the need for AC Mitigation to sections of the Thames to Buncefield multifuel pipeline operated by BPA/UKOP which are outside of the dDCO order limits. National Grid is currently pursuing several approaches, including that of a proposed DCO change application, to secure land and consenting rights to install the required mitigation. Legal and commercial negotiations with BPA in this respect are ongoing. It is National Grids intent to agree a bespoke legal agreement with BPA/UKOP prior to the close of examination.	RR-0413, AS-086, PDA-011

7. Signatures

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

For National Grid

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

For British Pipeline Agency

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

National Grid plc
National Grid House,
Warwick Technology Park,
Gallows Hill, Warwick.
CV34 6DA United Kingdom

Registered in England and Wales
No. 4031152
nationalgrid.com