

AENC-NG-CNS-REP-0267

# Norwich to Tilbury

**Volume 8: Examination Documents**

**Document: 8.3.51 Draft Statement of Common Ground - ESP Utilities Group**

**Final Issue A**

**February 2026**

**Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027**

**nationalgrid**

# **ESP Utilities Group**

## **Draft Statement of Common Ground**

### **1. Purpose of the Statement of Common Ground**

This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG, which can also be referred to as an interface agreement) has been prepared to outline the areas of agreement and any outstanding points of discussion between National Grid and ESP Utilities Group regarding utilities interfaces in relation to the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project.

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 ESP Utilities Group.

### **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 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**

ESP Utilities Group is an independent multi-utility company providing water, wastewater, electricity, and gas services. Potential interactions between the Norwich to Tilbury Project and ESP Utilities Group assets have been identified. Engagement with ESP Utilities Group is sought to establish the nature of these interactions and any assets or rights potentially impacted by the Project, and to agree the form of any required or recommended mitigations prior to conclusion of the DCO examination.

## 5. Matters Agreed

ID	Issue	Agreement reached	Date agreed	Relevant documentation
5.1				

## 6. Matters Currently Under Discussion

ID	Issue	ESP Utilities Group position (including date)	National Grid position (including date)	Relevant documentation
6.1	Interface Identification and Categorisation	<i>02/02/26 – ESP Utilities Group have been engaged and approach for further comment. The SoCG will be updated as feedback is received.</i>	<p>02/02/26 - Following development of the Project design and the undertaking of utilities searches, to the best of our knowledge no direct interfaces have been identified between the Project and ESP Utilities Group assets.</p> <p>National Grid has identified ESP Utilities Group assets within 3km of the Project but does not anticipate any significant interference impacts on ESP Utilities Group assets.</p> <p>National Grid is seeking to verify this position through engagement with ESP Utilities Group to discuss assets within the vicinity of the</p>	

ID	Issue	ESP Utilities Group position (including date)	National Grid position (including date)	Relevant documentation
6.2	Potential Project Impacts on Stakeholder Assets and Associated Mitigations	<i>02/02/26 – ESP Utilities Group have been engaged and approach for further comment. The SoCG will be updated as feedback is received.</i>	<p>Project and confirm our understanding of any potential impacts.</p> <p>02/02/26 - Subject to confirmation of the nature of interactions, National Grid recognises the potential for the Project to impact ESP Utilities Group assets and their function during construction and/or operational phases.</p> <p>National Grid seeks agreement from ESP Utilities Group that standard construction practices will be adequate to protect and maintain access to their assets but recognises the potential for other additional measures to be sought, dependent on impacts. National Grid anticipates the detail and implementation of such measures will be agreed via proposed engagement between the National Grid construction contractor and ESP Utilities Group.</p> <p>Should ESP Utilities Group have bespoke mitigation requirements, National Grid requests these are shared for early review and mutual agreement, including in relation to associated matters of costs, liability and consents.</p>	

<b>ID</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>ESP Utilities Group position (including date)</b>	<b>National Grid position (including date)</b>	<b>Relevant documentation</b>
6.3	Potential Project Impacts on Stakeholder Land or Rights	<i>02/02/26 – ESP Utilities Group have been engaged and approach for further comment. The SoCG will be updated as feedback is received.</i>	02/02/26 - National Grid has not been able to confirm whether ESP Utilities Group land holdings may be affected by the Project but requests ESP Utilities Group to provide any further information on land or rights matters to be identified and considered.	
6.4	Other Matters	<i>02/02/26 – ESP Utilities Group have been engaged and approach for further comment. The SoCG will be updated as feedback is received.</i>	02/02/26 - TBC	

## 7. Signatures

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

For National Grid

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For ESP Utilities Group

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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