

AENC-NG-CNS-REP-0221

# Norwich to Tilbury

**Volume 8: Examination Documents**

**Document: 8.3.5 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Affinity Water  
- Clean Version**

**Final Issue B**

**May 2026**

**Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027**

**nationalgrid**

# Revision History

Version	Date	Submitted at
A	26 February 2026	Deadline 1
B	12 May 2026	Deadline 4

# Affinity Water

## 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 Affinity Water regarding specific issues arising during construction and/or operation from the interface between the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project and Affinity Water assets.

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 drafted between National Grid and Affinity Water Limited

### 3. Summary of matters under discussion

As requested by the Examining Authority, the below table provides an 'at a glance' summary of matters which are under discussion, together with a deadline by which such matters are expected to be resolved.

SoCG ID	Summary of matter under discussion	Deadline for resolution
7.1	Potential impacts and associated protection/mitigation measures required to Affinity Water assets stemming from overhead line crossings.	Deadline 7
7.2	Potential impacts and associated protection/mitigation measures required to Affinity Water assets stemming from underground cable crossings.	Deadline 7
7.3	Potential impacts and associated protection/mitigation measures required to Affinity Water assets stemming from haul roads.	Deadline 7
7.4	Potential impacts and associated protection/mitigation measures required to Affinity Water assets stemming from bellmouth junctions.	Deadline 7
7.5	Potential impacts and associated protection/mitigation measures required to Affinity Water assets stemming from scaffolded crossing protections.	Deadline 7

<b>SoCG ID</b>	<b>Summary of matter under discussion</b>	<b>Deadline for resolution</b>
7.6	Potential impacts and associated protection/mitigation measures required to Affinity Water assets stemming from UKPN wood pole dismantling.	Deadline 7
7.7	Potential impacts and associated protection/mitigation measures required to Affinity Water assets stemming from UKPN underground cable crossings.	Deadline 7
7.8	Potential impacts to Affinity Water Assets from Alternating Current Interference and any mitigations required as a result.	Deadline 7
7.9	Cost recovery mechanism to be put in place for the benefit of Affinity Water	Deadline 6
7.10	Ongoing protective provisions negotiations for the benefit of Affinity Water to be included in the DCO once agreed.	Deadline 6

## **4. Background**

### **4.1 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.

## **5. Stakeholder Interests**

Affinity Water is a statutory water undertaker appointed under the Water Industry Act 1991. Under this appointment, Affinity provides, on average, 900 million litres of water each day to a population of more than 3.6 million people in parts of Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Surrey, the London Boroughs of Harrow and Hillingdon and parts of the London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Ealing and Enfield. Affinity also supplies water to the Tendring peninsula in Essex and the Folkestone and Dover areas of Kent. Affinity Water is a statutory undertaker for the purposes of sections 127 and 138 of the Planning Act 2008.

Affinity Water maintains a wide range of apparatus within the area of the proposed DCO that are critical to the continuing efficacy of its services. Affinity Water therefore has legitimate interests that interact with the Norwich to Tilbury proposals. This has been identified as the network of Affinity Water assets.

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

National Grid and Affinity Water have identified approximately 25 physical interactions between Norwich to Tilbury and Affinity Water Assets. These interactions and Affinity Water's associated requests for mitigation are categorised below by the nature of the interaction. Any site specific interaction requests are to be detailed further to the below crossing types through continued detailed design and engagement.

## 6. Matters Agreed

ID	Issue	Agreement reached	Date agreed	Relevant documentation
6.1				

## 7. Matters Currently Under Discussion

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
7.1	Overhead Line Crossing	16/2/26 – whilst Affinity agrees that the overhead line proposals should not have an electromagnetic/corrosion impact on our assets, since June 2025 further details have been provided to Affinity which includes the compulsory purchase of rights over our Ardeleigh Reservoir sites. As set out in our Relevant Representation, this is a critical site for Affinity and is jointly owned with Anglian Water, with ARC acting as a joint group of these two parties. Any discussions with regard to the compulsory purchase therefore needs to be carried out jointly with Anglian Water. Whilst Affinity is hopeful an agreement can be reached,	28/04/26 - National Grid have held tri-party discussions with Anglian water and Affinity Water to detail potential impacts to both party's operations. It was determined these impacts are generally considered minimal however further confirmation of any restraints is pending from the joint-operational committee of Ardeleigh Reservoir.	

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		<p>we have yet to have a meeting between all parties.</p> <p>07/05/26 – Meeting held with all parties, no particular concerns but agreed that ARC would need to approve/sign off any approvals.</p>		
7.2	Underground Cabling Interaction	<p>03/06/25 - Each individual crossing is dependent on the separation distance achieved between existing and proposed asset. Further comment will be provided for each crossing when detailed design works are known.</p> <p>Affinity Water will provide further detail on adequate separation distances.</p>	<p>28/04/26 - National Grid’s detailed design partners have engaged with Affinity Water to further define the site-specific crossing conditions with the intention of appending these site-specific conditions to the final SoCG.</p> <p>The Underground Cabling Construction Methodology has since been provided to Affinity Water to facilitate the review of proposed interactions.</p> <p>Crossing of Affinity Water assets will be further governed by clauses within the Protective Provisions under negotiation.</p>	
7.3	Haul Road Crossing	<p>03/06/25 - National Grid to conduct a load assessment where tracking overtop with vehicles, adequate protections to be installed to Affinity Water assets.</p>	<p>28/04/26 - National Grids detailed design partners have engaged with Affinity Water to further define the site-specific crossing conditions with the intention of appending these site-specific conditions to the final SoCG. National Grid agree to adequately</p>	

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
			<p>protect Affinity Water assets where interfacing works occur.</p> <p>The Haul Road Crossing Construction Methodology has since been provided to Affinity Water to facilitate the review of proposed interactions.</p> <p>Crossing of Affinity Waters asset will be further governed by clauses within the Protective Provisions under negotiation.</p>	
7.4	Bellmouth Junction	03/06/25 - National Grid to conduct a load assessment where tracking overtop with vehicles, adequate protections to be installed to Affinity Water assets.	<p>28/04/26 - National Grids detailed design partners have engaged with Affinity Water to further define the site-specific crossing conditions with the intention of appending these site-specific conditions to the final SoCG. National Grid agree to adequately protect Affinity Water assets where interfacing works occur.</p> <p>The Bellmouth Junction Construction Methodology has since been provided to Affinity Water to facilitate the review of proposed interactions.</p> <p>Crossing of Affinity Water assets will be further governed by clauses within the Protective Provisions under negotiation.</p>	

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
7.5	Crossing Protection Interaction	03/06/25 - National Grid to avoid crossing protections being located directly atop of Affinity Water assets in the first instance by utilising a bridging span overtop to ensure maintained access to the asset. National Grid are to follow HSG47 if installing screw anchors to avoid a strike.	28/04/26 - National Grids detailed design partners have engaged with Affinity Water to further define the site-specific crossing conditions with the intention of appending these site-specific conditions to the final SoCG. Where feasible National Grid would commit to a bridge spanning overtop of Affinity Water assets, the opportunity to do so requires a site by site review.  The Crossing Protection Construction Methodology has since been provided to Affinity Water to facilitate the review of proposed interactions.  Crossing of Affinity Water assets will be further governed by clauses within the Protective Provisions under negotiation.	
7.6	UKPN Overhead Line Wood Pole Dismantling	03/06/25 - A trial hole may be required to confirm separation distance when removing wood pole depending on distance from Affinity Water asset. RAMS are to be provided by the contractor prior to conducting trial holes.	28/04/26 - UKPN will engage directly with Affinity Water to agree crossing conditions in relation to the UKPN component of the Norwich to Tilbury DCO.  Crossing of Affinity Water assets will be further governed by clauses within the Protective Provisions under negotiation.	
7.7	UKPN Cable Crossing	03/06/25 - Each individual crossing is dependent on the separation distance	28/04/26 - UKPN will engage directly with Affinity Water to agree crossing conditions in	

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		<p>achieved between existing and proposed asset. Further comment will be provided for each crossing when detailed design works are known.</p> <p>Affinity Water will provide further detail on adequate separation distances.</p>	<p>relation to the UKPN component of the Norwich to Tilbury DCO.</p> <p>Crossing of Affinity Water assets will be further governed by clauses within the Protective Provisions under negotiation.</p>	
7.8	Alternating Current (AC) Interference	<p>From Relevant Representation 26/11/25 - Affinity has some general concerns around the electromagnetic effects from the high-voltage cables on some of Affinity's water mains. However Affinity is working with NGET to understand where these overlaps occur and whether there is any risk to mains. Affinity will continue these discussions with NGET.</p>	<p>11/06/25 - AC Interference studies detailing both AC Corrosion and Impressed Voltages impacts have been conducted and a modelling report provided to Affinity Water for review and comment. Methodology of the modelling has been agreed with Affinity Water in advance of undertaking the studies.</p> <p>Engagement on the AC Interference study is ongoing however results have indicated that all Affinity Water assets impacted are impacted to a level below acceptable and agreed British Standards safety thresholds.</p> <p>28/04/26 - National Grid is conducting a backcheck review of the previously conducted AC Interference studies in respect of the AC Interference impacts seeking to close out this workstream.</p>	
7.9	Cost recovery	<p>From Relevant Representation 26/11/25 -</p>	<p>28/04/26 - National Grid have provided an undertaking to Affinity Waters legal team for</p>	

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		<p>Affinity is also seeking the opportunity to agree the approach to be taken on cost recovery. Affinity needs clarity on when and how engagement on design and delivery of water infrastructure diversions and alterations (as well as works in the vicinity of assets to remain in situ) will take place, and how costs incurred in that process will be met.</p>	<p>costs incurred. National Grid reiterate the opportunity for Affinity Water to claim costs for detailed design engagement incurred. National Grid will hold discussions with Affinity Water to further detail the mechanism for such costs recovery.</p>	
7.10	Protective Provisions	<p>From Relevant Representation 26/11/25 - Affinity notes the “standard” set of protective provisions for the benefit of statutory undertakers contained in Part 1 of Schedule 16 to the draft DCO. However, Affinity considers these to fall short of providing it with the necessary protections.</p> <p>Since the application for the Order has been submitted, Affinity has engaged with NGET and a specific set of draft protective provisions are now under discussion but these have not been included in the application draft of the DCO. Affinity understands that NGET proposes to include those protective provisions and Affinity welcomes the</p>	<p>28/04/26 - National Grid and Affinity Water have continued to engage on agreeing a set of Protective Provisions with substantial progress made since DCO submission. National Grid reiterate the intent to include an agreed set of Protective Provisions with the DCO application at the earliest opportunity to do so and prior to close of examination.</p>	

ID	Issue	Stakeholder position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		<p>agreement in principle to the inclusion of specific protective provisions for Affinity's benefit; however, at present the provisions under discussion still do not include a number of matters which Affinity would expect to be covered for its benefit. As such, Affinity expects further engagement from NGET to agree a version of protective provisions acceptable to Affinity.</p> <p>Affinity is hopeful that the parties will reach agreement swiftly on the correct form of the protective provisions to be included in the proposed DCO.</p>		

## 8. Signatures

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

For National Grid

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

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

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

For Affinity Water

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

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

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

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