

AENC-NG-CNS-REP-0234

Norwich to Tilbury

Volume 8: Examination Documents

**Document: 8.3.18 Draft Statement of Common Ground - Innova
Renewables (Park Gate Farm Solar Park) - Tracked Changes Version**

Final Issue B

May 2026

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

nationalgrid

Revision History

<u>Version</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Submitted at</u>
<u>A</u>	<u>26 February 2026</u>	<u>Deadline 1</u>
<u>B</u>	<u>12 May 2026</u>	<u>Deadline 4</u>

Innova Renewables (Park Gate Farm Solar Park)

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 Innova Renewables regarding specific issues arising during construction and/or operation from the interface between the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project and Park Gate Farm Solar Park, Land West ~~Of~~of Park Road, Rivenhall.

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 Innova Renewables.

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.

<u>SoCG ID</u>	<u>Summary of matter under discussion</u>	<u>Deadline for resolution</u>
<u>7.1</u>	<u>Whether the final pylon locations and oversail clearances will avoid any permanent loss of solar development area within the consented Solar Park.</u>	<u>To be confirmed at detailed design, likely beyond deadline 7</u>
<u>7.2</u>	<u>Construction access requirements, including haul road arrangements, are still to be confirmed, leaving uncertainty whether temporary panel removal or delayed installation may be required.</u>	<u>To be confirmed at detailed design, likely beyond deadline 7</u>
<u>7.3</u>	<u>The extent, location and impacts of temporary construction work within the Solar Farm particularly temporary haul roads and any resulting reinstatement needs are yet to be defined and confirmed.</u>	<u>To be confirmed at detailed design, likely beyond deadline 7</u>
<u>7.4</u>	<u>Whether the proximity of TB94 and associated clearance requirements will have any operational</u>	<u>To be confirmed at detailed design, likely</u>

<u>SoCG ID</u>	<u>Summary of matter under discussion</u>	<u>Deadline for resolution</u>
	<u>effects on the layout or performance of the Solar Farm.</u>	<u>beyond deadline 7</u>

4. ~~3.~~ Background

4.1 ~~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.

5. ~~4.~~ Stakeholder Interests

Innova Renewables has legal interests that have the potential to interact with the Norwich to Tilbury proposals. This has been identified as the Park Gate Farm Solar Park, Land West ~~Of~~ Park Road, Rivenhall. The site represents a consented solar farm, with planning permissions secured via Ref: 21/03735/FUL from Braintree District Council for the: *Installation of solar farm and associated development*. The proposal was submitted on 30th of October 2025. Variation of Condition 15 (Skylark Mitigation Strategy) of approved application 21/03735/FUL approved at Appeal Ref: APP/Z1510/W/23/3325681 on 15/12/2023 for: Installation of solar farm and associated development. Variation would allow: Skylark mitigation measures for a 10-year period rather than for the lifetime of the Solar Farm. The application has been “Granted” on 25th of March 2026 by Braintree District Council.

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

Discussions Held

Teams Meeting Date: 11th September 2024, 23rd September 2025, 14th October 2025, 29th October 2025, 4th November 2025, 18th November 2025, 16th December 2025, 5th May 2026

- The parties continue to engage through regular email correspondence in relation to the matters described in this Statement of Common Ground.

6. ~~5.~~ Matters Agreed

ID	Issue	Agreement reached	Date agreed	Relevant documentation
5.16.1	<u>Operational Effects (Excluding Reduced Panel Numbers)</u>	<u>The potential opportunity to install additional solar panels through 33 kV cable re-routing is no longer applicable under the current design. Both parties recognise that the space created would be too limited and operationally impractical to support further PV installation.</u>	<u>16th December 2025</u>	
<u>6.2</u>	<u>Planning</u>	<u>No further action is required beyond standard engagement with UKPN, and that the previously discussed potential for additional panel area created through underground cable diversion is no longer relevant under the current design. Both parties acknowledge Innova's intention to construct the Solar Farm as consented and that any future amendments would be addressed between National Grid and the DNO.</u>	<u>16th December 2025</u>	
<u>6.3</u>	<u>Modification to Existing Equipment</u>	<u>The Applicant recognises Park Gate Solar Farm's concerns in relation to potential earthing implications of the Project on the stakeholder's solar development. Where additional earthing is required as a result of the project. The Applicant will work with stakeholders to ensure sites are protected.</u>	<u>5th May 2026</u>	

7. ~~6.~~ Matters Currently Under Discussion

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
6.17.1	Permanent loss of development footprint	<p>National Grid's <u>The Applicant has sought through its internal design process of the Overhead Line route has sought to minimise the location of assets that would result in loss of development footprint. Current design, of infrastructure within the consented Solar Park. The current design positions pylons and oversail are proposed to be located on the Solar Park and designed to have as minimal an impact as possible. A proposed to avoid reducing the area available for solar panels, and the adjustment of pylon-TB93 within the LOD has allowed Limits of Deviation enables TB94 to be moved outside of the consented solar park. Solar Park boundary. The Applicant Current design does not currently anticipate any permanent reduction of the extent of solar panels. National Grid in PV area and</u> will continue to work with Innova Renewables as the detailed design <u>develops progresses.</u></p>		Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	21/03735/FUL planning application with Braintree District Council on behalf of Innova Renewables.

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
6.2 <u>6.27.2</u>	Temporary Removal of Panels to create space for construction works	In combination with TB94 reposition <u>Following the repositioning of TB94 further south</u> and subject to confirming haul road access arrangements, potentially with adjustment being made to general two-way design by Norwich to Tilbury, there is no anticipated need for <u>the Applicant does not currently expect that</u> temporary removal or delayed installation of solar panels to support <u>will be required to facilitate</u> construction. National Grid <u>The Applicant will confirm construction access requirements once detailed design is complete and</u> will continue to work <u>engage</u> with Innova Renewables as the detailed design develops .		Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	
6.3	Modifications to Existing Equipment	To ensure adequate earthing in response to oversail or close proximity of 400kv infrastructure. National Grid to continue to work with Innova Renewables to confirm any earthing implications as the detailed design progresses.	Innova raised question around implications for earthing on 400kv oversail.	Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	
6.4 <u>6.47.3</u>	Temporary Construction	The extent in which <u>requirement for temporary Haul Road Access</u> <u>haul roads or</u>		Ongoing discussion with key points yet to	

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
	Effects	<p><u>construction access</u> within the Solar Farm is required will be confirmed <u>at</u> through detailed design. Additional maintenance could be required due to net effects such as dust or compensation for damage/repair to The Applicant will plan <u>temporary works to minimise disruption and will ensure that any impacts on operational equipment, including dust or physical damage, are addressed through reinstatement or compensation as appropriate.</u></p>		be confirmed.	
6.57.4	Operational Effects (excluding reduced panel numbers)	<p>Under <u>Based on the</u> current design there is no perceived, <u>the Applicant does not expect any loss of operational PV area. The position of TB94 will be confirmed at detailed design to ensure that required operational clearances do not adversely affect solar panel layout. The Applicant will continue to review this with Innova Renewables as designs are confirmed. 05/06/26 - The Applicant acknowledges the remaining interfaces, including access onto Church Road, temporary impacts to BNG and landscaping for construction activities, the interface between TB94, the</u></p>	<p>Tower TB094 was raised in the meeting as to whether this was far enough away that a 15m clearance around the pylons wont impact the solar panels.</p> <p><u>Interfaces between the projects were discussed in the meeting 5th May 2026 based on the Applicant's proposed scheme revisions</u></p>	Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.	

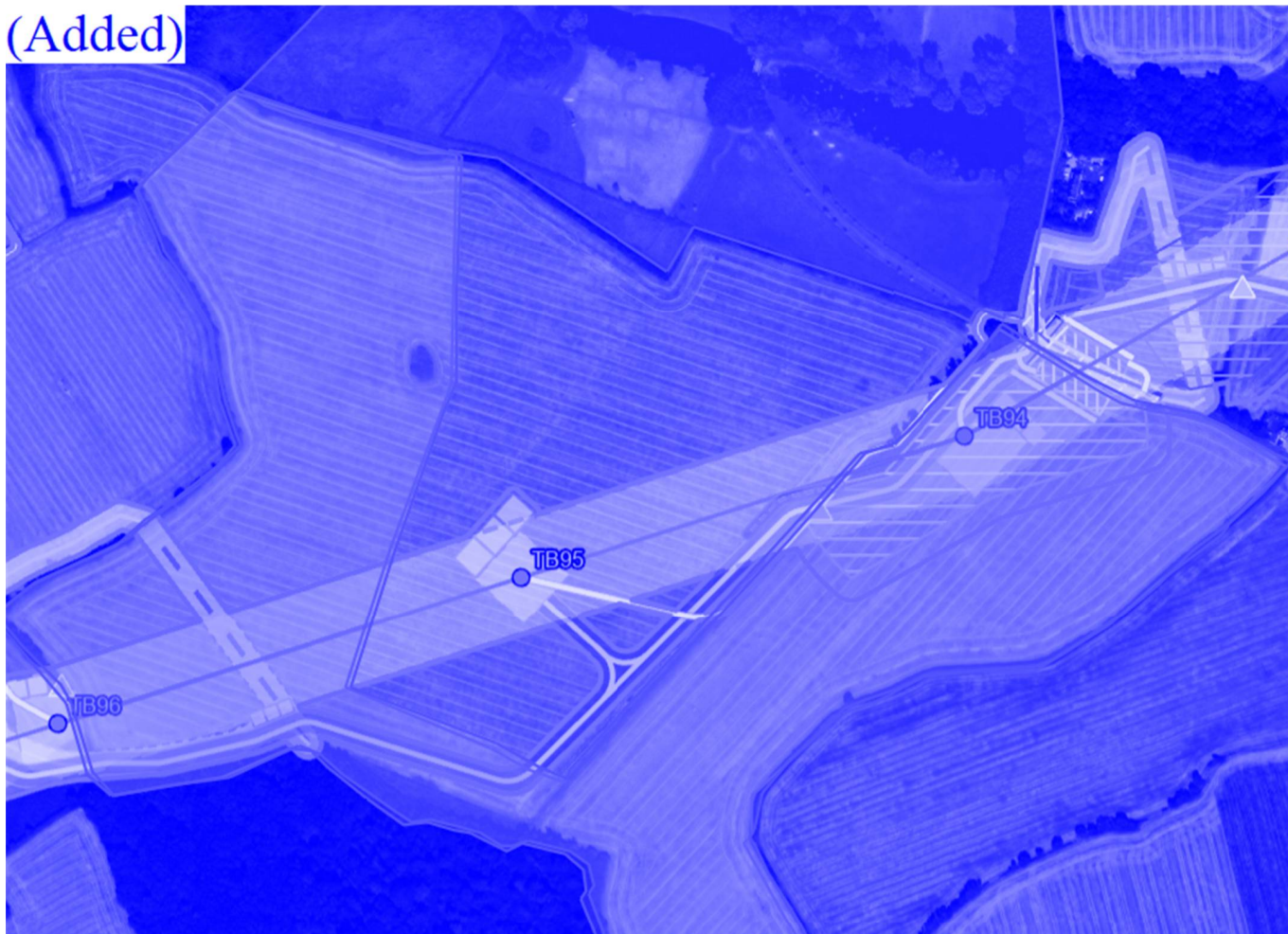
ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
		<p><u>Applicant's haul road and Innova's internal access tracks, the solar farm perimeter infrastructure (fencing and CCTV), and the interaction between the Applicant's haul road and Innova's underground cable system.</u></p> <p><u>The Applicant will continue to engage with Innova to coordinate these interfaces, minimise impacts where reasonably practicable, and ensure appropriate mitigation, protection measures, and reinstatement are secured through detailed design and construction.</u></p>	<p><u>which significantly reduces the impact on the solar panel area.</u></p> <p><u>The remaining aspects of the solar farm impacted by the DCO (based on the plans provided by the Applicant in May 2026) are: the access onto Church Road, the temporary removal of BNG and landscaping areas (for access, haul roads and scaffolding), the interface between TB94 and the Applicant's haul road and Innovas internal access tracks, the solar farm fence line and perimeter CCTV, the Applicant's haul road and Innovas underground cable system.</u></p>		

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
6.66.5	<p>Operational Effects (excluding reduced panel numbers) <u>Installation of panels beneath the overhead lines and minimum clearance area (vertical)</u></p>	<p>It has been discussed if there was any potential to utilise space for more panels if 33kv cable re-routing created a further area free from oversailing the potential space.</p> <p><u>Concerns are no longer applicable in light of current design. The Applicant welcomes agreement in principle to the installation and operation of solar panels beneath the overhead lines. The Applicant acknowledges that further discussion is required in respect of the minimum operational clearance zone and will continue to engage with the relevant parties to agree an appropriate clearance that ensures safety, compliance with relevant standards, and the operational integrity of both assets.</u></p>	<p>Innova understood opportunity but identified that their experience was that the relatively small space created and challenges to connect in the additional panels meant it would not be worth their while doing <u>The principle of installing and operating solar panels beneath the overhead lines has been agreed, with further agreement to follow on the minimum operational clearance zone.</u></p>	<p>Ongoing discussion with key points yet to be confirmed.</p>	
6.7	<p>Planning</p>	<p>No National Grid action currently required over and above normal UKPN engagement</p> <p>Concerns are no longer applicable in light of current design.</p>	<p>Discussed potential to create more panel area by diversion of the undergrounded cable around the site. Innova concern about any potential to seek</p>	<p>General position that Innova build as per plan and then leave NG and DNO to discuss and confirm any amendments. Ongoing discussion</p>	

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Stakeholder Position	Status	Relevant documentation
			amendments to planning given secured on appeal.	with key points yet to be confirmed.	

Figure 1 Interface between Park Gate Solar Farm and the Project Alignment

(Added)



8. ~~7.~~ Signatures

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

For National Grid

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

For Innova Renewables

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

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Changes:	
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Delete	46
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<u>Table Insert</u>	4
Table Delete	2
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Table moves from	0
Embedded Graphics (Visio, ChemDraw, Images etc.)	1
Embedded Excel	0
Format changes	0
Total Changes:	119