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Norwich to Tilbury

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Document: 8.3.36 Final Statement of Common Ground - Priory
Farm Airfield - Clean Version

Final Issue C

July 2026

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

national**grid**

Revision History

Version	Date	Submitted at
A	26 February 2026	Deadline 1
B	12 May 2026	Deadline 4
C	21 July 2026	Deadline 7

Priory Farm Airfield

Final Statement of Common Ground

1. Purpose of the Statement of Common Ground

This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to confirm to the Examining Authority where agreement has been reached and where agreement has not been reached between National Grid and Priory Farm Airfield regarding potential aviation impacts in relation to the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project.

This final version of the SoCG has been submitted at Examination Deadline 7

2. Parties to the SoCG

This SoCG has been prepared by National Grid in seeking the agreement of the owner and operators of Priory Farm Airfield (the Stakeholder)

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
6.1	The Stakeholder's position is the Applicant has inadequately considered authoritative aviation guidance and has not fulfilled its 'Agent of Change' responsibilities with regards to mitigation. The Applicant's position is that its approach is consistent with the requirements of EN-1 and EN-5 as the primary determining policies for the application, as well as the NPPF and relevant aviation sector-specific guidance.	Considered unlikely to resolve bilaterally. For the Examining Authority to assess.
6.2	The Stakeholder position is that the Applicant's consultation was not meaningful as concerns raised have not resulted in changes to the Project design. The Applicant position is that consultation undertaken was fully compliant with legislative requirements and the Statement of Community Consultation. The parties differ in their interpretation of consultation requirements with regards to the need for risk-based justification for design changes to be implemented in response to stakeholder feedback.	Considered unlikely to resolve bilaterally. For the Examining Authority to assess.

SoCG ID	Summary of matter under discussion	Deadline for resolution
6.3	The Stakeholder position is that no obstacles greater than 150 ft above the average runway elevation should be within 2,000 m of the runway midpoint and that this view was supported by initial consultation and involvement of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) working group. The Applicant has not interpreted this guidance parameter as an absolute requirement, considering a range of factors within its impact assessments, including obstacle clearances, consistent with advice from the CAA AAT (Airfields Advisory Team).	Considered unlikely to resolve bilaterally. For the Examining Authority to assess.
6.4	The Stakeholder objects to the proposed alignment due to its proximity to the aerodrome and consequential safety impacts on circuit flying (and associated deconfliction with Tibenham aerodrome) as well as EFATO scenarios. The Applicant's impact assessment concludes existing circuits can be flown safely, and that the position of the Project would have minimal impact on aircraft responding to a forced landing event. Following re-assessment of the Stakeholder's published 500ft circuit (as noted in the July 2025 meeting) , the Applicant has recommended mitigation to increase horizontal separation distances from the overhead line in one area.	Considered unlikely to resolve bilaterally. For the Examining Authority to assess.
6.5	The Stakeholder and the Applicant have discussed the use of low height pylons and agreed the consequential increases to overflight clearances are not material. It is jointly agreed that marker balls may provide navigational benefits, but a requirement for their incorporation into the Project's design has not been confirmed by the Stakeholder. The Applicant has suggested an amendment to the 500ft circuit as a potential change to operational procedures, but the Stakeholder's initial view is that this will not be acceptable. The Stakeholder position is that an alternative route alignment to avoid the aerodrome safeguarding zone, or undergrounding within it remain the preferred mitigation options. The Applicant position remains that substantive changes to the Project design are not justified by the assessed aviation impacts.	Considered unlikely to resolve bilaterally. For the Examining Authority to assess.

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 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

The Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) has effect for the decisions by the Secretary of State on applications for energy developments that are nationally significant under the Planning Act 2008. Amongst other impacts, it recognises that all aerodromes can be affected by new energy development and the need, therefore, for NSIPs to be developed collaboratively alongside aerodromes so that safety, operations and capabilities are not adversely affected. Reciprocally, EN-1 states that it is essential for aerodrome operators to work collaboratively with energy infrastructure developers essential for net zero, recognising the need for the important economic and social benefits of aerodromes to be balanced with the urgent need for new energy developments which bring about a wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits.

EN-1 places a requirement on DCO applicants to consult with any aerodrome likely to be affected by the proposed development in preparing an assessment of the proposal on aviation interests. Priory Farm Airfield was identified and included in the scope for assessment, with its runway end being located within 5 km of the Project's proposed overhead line alignment, recognising the potential for the proximity of the infrastructure to impact aircraft flight patterns and aerodrome operations. In accordance with EN-1 requirements, the owner and operator of Priory Farm Airfield was identified as a priority stakeholder for engagement in relation to aviation impact considerations.

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

- 2022
 - National Grid presented information on how the Project was evolving from the evaluation of strategic options to a preliminary preferred graduated swathe within which new infrastructure (pylons and underground cables) could be location as well as a proposed new substation site on the Tendring Peninsula, as described **within 7.18 2022 - Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study [APP-356]**
 - 21 April – 16 June non-statutory consultation
- 2023
 - Development of the 2023 Preferred Draft Alignment, responding to feedback and other studies, as described within the **7.20 2023 - Design Development Report for the Project [APP-358]**
 - 27 June – 21 August non-statutory consultation on the 2023 Preferred Draft Alignment
 - 25 July meeting at Tibenham aerodrome between National Grid, its appointed aviation consultants Alan Stratford and Associates (ASA), the owner and operator of Priory Farm Airfield, members of Norfolk Gliding Club (operators of neighbouring Tibenham aerodrome) and representatives from the Civil Aviation Authority Airfield Advisory Team (CAA AAT).

- 2024
 - Development of the 2024 Preferred Draft Alignment, considering feedback and other studies, as described within **the 7.21 2024 - Design Development Report for the Project [APP-359]**
 - 10 April – 26 July Statutory Consultation on the 2024 Preferred Draft Alignment
 - 10 May meeting between National Grid (with ASA) and the Operator. Matters raised included:
 - The CAA's CAP793 guidance recommendation regarding obstacles over 50m not being sited within a radius of 2,000m of the airfield centre point.
 - Aviation impact assessments and calculated overhead line clearance distances, including in instances of engine failure.
 - Residual Operator concerns regarding visibility of the overhead line and ability to fly existing circuits of the aerodrome
- 2025
 - Development of the proposed Project Alignment prior to DCO submission, considering feedback and other studies
 - 16 June 2025 email from National Grid proposing discussion of outstanding matters raised within Operator feedback and development of stakeholder agreement 23 June 2025 letter from National Grid to the Operator regarding proposed SoCG and providing technical drawings with embedded aerodrome assessment summary tables.
 - 26 June letter from the Operator to National Grid in relation to the draft SoCG, stating unable to sign the document in its current form as there remain substantive matters which are not agreed. Specifically:
 - Aviation safety concerns remain unresolved
 - Penetration of Inner Horizontal Surface (CAP 168)
 - Increased risk to aircraft operations
 - Unacceptable burden of mitigation on the airfield
 - 7 July – 25 July emails between National Grid and the Operator regarding the SoCG process, information provision and meeting arrangements
 - 7 August meeting in-person between National Grid (with ASA) and representatives of Tibenham and Priory Farm aerodromes. Matters discussed included:
 - Route development rationale and consideration of Operator, CAA, BGA and GAAC advice therein
 - Aviation safety risk assessments, including consideration of Engine Failure After Take Off (EFATO), information sharing, and cumulative impacts
 - Transmission technologies cost comparisons, including with regards to operator-proposed aviation impact mitigation options

- Engagement next steps, including sharing of assessment information and further development of SoCG
- 10 September email from National Grid providing draft minutes for 7 August meeting for review and updated draft SoCG to reflect matters discussed. Updated aerodrome assessment summary provided also.
- 13-18 September emails between National Grid and the Operators regarding draft meeting meetings, progression of SoCGs and proposed next meeting dates, providing updated aerodrome assessment summary
- 3 October email from National Grid notifying the Operator of Planning Inspectorate acceptance of the Project DCO application, publication of **6.15.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 15.2 - Review of Aviation Impact [APP-267]** and proposal of meeting to progress the SoCG
- 3 October – 27 October emails between National Grid and the Operators regarding technical questions, aerodrome impact assessments, agent of change responsibilities and delays to progression of SoCG discussions
- 31 October email from National Grid responding to technical questions and airfield assessment summary comments (see Annex A) and referencing published **5.15 Design Development Report [APP-122]**
- 3 December to 15 January 2026 emails between the Operators and National Grid regarding provision of information, mitigation proposals and progression of SoCG
- Relevant Representations submitted by the owner and the Operator of Priory Farm aerodrome to the Planning Inspectorate were published on 12 December 2025
- 2026
 - 23 January email from National Grid advising of progress in updating SoCGs to reflect Relevant Representations
 - 6 February email from National Grid requesting review of and comments on draft SoCG (V.07) responding to Operator Relevant Representation, in advance of Examining Authority (ExA) Deadline 1
 - 27 February email from National Grid advising of submission of draft SoCG to Examining Authority
 - 4 March email from Operator noting draft SoCG submission and reiterating concerns re Project approach to aviation safety, particularly in relation to EFATO risk
 - 30 March email from National Grid proposing meeting on 15-17 April to discuss key outstanding matters in relation to aerodrome operations including circuit flying and forced landing risks, as well as associated risk mitigation, in advance of Deadline 4; email from operator considering interest in meeting.
 - 2 April email from Operator making participation in meeting conditional on National's Grid advance provision of written documents perceived to have been withheld, and further requesting meeting focus on deconfliction with Tibenham aerodrome.

- 7 April email from National Grid providing updated draft SoCG, explaining position regarding ‘withheld’ information, and continuing to propose meeting to discuss outstanding matters.
- 26 May email from National Grid requesting meeting to discuss outstanding matters within the SoCG, including impact assessment methodology, conclusions and mitigation measures
- 1 June email from Operator agreeing to meeting to discuss mitigation options, raising concerns regarding proposed alignment overlaying published 500ft circuit and acting as a barrier to incoming and exiting flight paths, and deconfliction matters
- 5 June email from National Grid proposing meeting date and agenda including appropriate mitigation of Operator circuit flying concerns, OLS infringement and forced landing risk
- 8 and 9 June emails between National Grid and Operator confirming meeting date and proposed agenda
- 12 June online meeting between National Grid representatives and the Operator. Matters of discussion included:
 - Operator replotting of 500ft circuit and mutual observation no longer overflies the proposed overhead line but in close horizontal proximity
 - Mitigation options including low height pylons, marker balls and reasonable changes to aerodrome operational procedures
 - Agreement for undertaking of updated impact assessment and further discussion of mitigation measures on 22 June
- 19 June email from National Grid providing updated aviation impact assessment, taking account of the published SkyDemon 500ft circuit (as noted in the June 2025 meeting), requesting clarification of which 500ft circuit is current, and sharing of circuit modification suggestion to mitigate operational impacts.
- 22 June emails between National Grid and Operator regarding Operator non-attendance at meeting and seeking alternative meeting on 23 or 24 June; Operator explanation regarding competing commitments and providing initial feedback that circuit modification will not be acceptable due to turn towards Tibenham aerodrome and reiterating both 500ft and 1000ft circuits are in active use.
- 23 June email from National Grid proposing alternative meeting dates during the week beginning 29 June
- 7 July email from National Grid sharing updated SoCG and requesting meeting before 17 July to discuss Operators initial feedback and on revised impact assessment conclusion and suggested modification to 500ft circuit
- 10 July email from the Operator providing tracked changes amendment to the SoCG and advising of outstanding members’ decision regarding signing

6. Matters Not Agreed

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
6.1	Legislative, Regulatory, Policy and Guidance Context	Ignoring the Civil Aviation Authority's CAP 793 guidance for safe operating practices at unlicensed aerodrome, which recommends that there are no obstacles greater than 150ft [50m] above the average runway elevation within 2,000m of the runway mid-point, will cause or be an adverse factor in an air accident at Priory Farm Airfield. (May 2024) Priory Farm does not agree that the proposed development poses no material increase in aviation risk. Specifically: - The alignment places new tall infrastructure within 2,000 metres of the runway midpoint and exceeds 150ft in height, in direct contradiction of CAP 793 guidance. - The proposed infrastructure penetrates the inner Horizontal Surface as defined in CAP 168, which National Grid acknowledges.	As recognised within Section 4, the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), together with the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) are the primary determining policies for the Project. It is considered that the National Grid's approach is consistent with the instructions and guidance of EN-1 and EN-5, which has involved consulting with and considering the feedback of Priory Farm Airfield as an aerodrome likely to be affected by the Project, as well as relevant aviation stakeholders including the CAA AAT, in preparing and informing impact assessments. Furthermore, the proposal has been designed, where possible, to minimise adverse impacts on the operation and safety of aerodromes. EN-1 recognises aviation safeguarding systems and refers to CAA regulations and guidance for licensed and unlicensed aerodromes, as well as the responsibilities of aerodrome operators therein; in accordance, National Grid has ensured its approach appropriately considers	CAP 793 Safe Operating Practices at Unlicensed Aerodromes, July 2010; NPS EN-1 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy, November 2023 EN-5 Electricity Networks National Policy Statement, March 2023 CAP 168 Licensing of Aerodromes, January 2022 CAP 738 Safeguarding of Aerodromes, October 2020 6.15.A2 Environmental

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		The safety assessments provided are based on idealised conditions and do not reflect actual circuit procedures, emergency contingencies, or microlight and low-performance aircraft operations. National Grid's proposed mitigation measures place responsibility on us as the airfield operator rather than the developer, which is not acceptable. We don't see evidence that your proposal "...has been designed where possible, to minimise adverse impacts on the operation and safety of the aerodrome." Priory Farm Airfield has communicated clearly and in writing that any increase in risk is unacceptable and that this infrastructure presents an unjustified hazard to flight safety. That position remains unchanged. (July 2025)	aerodrome licensing and safeguarding requirements and parameters, including as described within CAP 168 (Licensing of Aerodromes), CAP 738 (Safeguarding of Aerodromes) and CAP 793 (Safe Operating Practices at Unlicensed Aerodromes). This is further explained in relation to the aviation impact assessment methodology and key assumptions below. (March 2025) In response to the Priory Farm Relevant Representation, and as previously stated, National Grid considers its approach to be consistent with the instructions and guidance for an applicant as described within the energy NPSs, and particularly Section 5 of EN-1 (relating to civil aviation), which have taken account of the NPPF and PPG, where appropriate. This is set out within Section 15.2 of 6.15.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 15.2 - Review of Aviation Impact [APP267] which also describes the aviation-specific regulation and guidance National Grid considers relevant to the assessment of aviation impacts in relation to the Project. (January 2026)	Statement Appendix 15.2 - Review of Aviation Impact [APP-267]

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
6.2	Consultation to Date	Priory Farm is concerned that feedback previously provided has not been taken into consideration, concerns raised have not resulted in changes to the Project design, and that the consultation process is therefore unsatisfactory. (August 2025) Also, at the June 2026 meeting it was noticed that the Applicant had not been aware of the existence of the 500' and 1000' circuit – as previously advised both in writing AND picture form (where an overlay of pylon routing was plotted against 500' and 1000' circuit patterns). So to use the term 're plotted' is somewhat disingenuous. (July 2026)	National Grid is confident that the consultation undertaken was fully compliant with the published Statement of Community Consultation and legislative requirements under the Planning Act 2008. Any design changes must be and have been justified by the impact assessment, which has also been informed by stakeholder engagement (6.15.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 15.2 - Review of Aviation Impact refers). The Design Development Reports detail how consultation feedback regarding potential impacts on Priory Farm airfield has been taken into consideration during the evolution of the Project design. An Aerodrome Assessment Summary and technical drawings to inform engagement were shared in June 2025. The key information within these documents was published as part of the Environmental Statement Appendix 15.2 – Review of Aviation Impact [APP-267] in October 2025. National Grid does not consider any key information to be missing or preventing progression of engagement. (January 2026) National Grid was previously aware of the 500ft and the 1000ft circuits. This is evidenced within	5.1 Consultation Report - Appendix E: Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) and supporting evidence [APP-071] 7.20 2023 - Design Development Report for the Project [APP-358] 7.21 2024 - Design Development Report for the Project [APP-359] 5.15 Design Development Report [APP-122]

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
			the Aerodrome Assessment Summary shared in June 2025 (and subsequently published in October 2025 within the Environmental Statement Appendix). This assessment was based on hand-drawn circuits published on the Priory Farm website and shared with National Grid in July 2023, which identified both circuits to overfly the overhead line. Our meeting of 12 June 2026 identified the 500ft circuit as plotted within SkyDemon differs from the previously received information and was not assessed by the Applicant. The SkyDemon circuit does not appear to overfly the overhead line. We have been seeking Operator confirmation if the hand-drawn 500ft circuit is now superseded by the SkyDemon 500ft circuit, or if both tracks are valid, noting both are published on the Operator website (email of 19 and 23 June, and proposed meeting agenda for 22 June refer). (July 2026)	
6.3	Aviation Impact Assessment Methodology and Key Assumptions	There appears to be an overreliance on theoretical modelling: All of your clearance assumptions rely on idealised aircraft performance and standardised circuit behaviour.	National Grid's Aviation Impact Assessment methodology has been developed to enable site-specific impact assessments for aerodromes potentially impacted by the Project. Its primary aim is to evaluate risks of collision,	

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		- But real-world conditions – wind shear, engine issues, human error, bird activity – are NOT factored in. - Your assessment assumed ideal climb-outs and fixed circuits, but light aircraft regularly depart or return using modified paths based on wind, traffic, or emergencies. A model that only covers textbook operations does not address real safety. - There has been no meaningful consultation with the pilots who fly from here every week. The assessments do not reflect the way real flights operate, particularly for microlights or low-performance aircraft. - We would also add that Priory Farm has published procedures both online and through popular navigation aids such as SkyDemon and Pooleys. - Utilising these aids it is difficult to see how the pylons can have anything but a significant adverse effect on both our 500' and 1,000' circuits.	predominantly during take-off and approaches and including forced landing risks, with the proposed overhead line alignment representing a new obstacle within proximity of aerodromes. Operational safety impacts arising from potential increases to risks of bird strike, wind turbulence and electromagnetic forces as a result of the Project are also considered. As previously stated, National Grid's approach recognises and responds to CAP793 recommendations, albeit with the understanding its broad parameters of 150ft/2000m are generalised suggestions for owner and operator consideration in relation to airfield design, rather than absolute requirements to be addressed by prospective developers. The methodology enables a bespoke appraisal, appropriate to each aerodrome, that considers a range of factors in addition to the height and location of the proposed overhead line alignment, including: runway length and orientation in relation to the overhead line; aircraft types, performance, flight paths and operational procedures (determined from published information, as well as from previous engagement) and the surrounding context in terms of topography, existing	

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		It should also be obvious that the proximity of Tibenham leaves zero margin for movement eastwards. (July 2025) Priory Farm raised concerns that details of impact assessments have not been shared with the operator or published. (August 2025) It was also advised, and acknowledged, that Priory's only runway was orientated N/S and so offered less than favourable climb out conditions to all aircraft – usually having a degree of crosswind to contend with thereby reducing climb rate (June 2026)	obstacles (including other overhead lines) and neighbouring aerodromes (recognising operational deconfliction constraints). The assessments consider whether the Project alignment infringes Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) as specified under the CAA's CAP 168 regulations for licensed aerodromes, recognising this to be a best practice measure for obstacle assessment and treatment, whilst not a regulatory requirement for unlicensed aerodromes. If CAP168 measures are met, the proposed overhead line alignment is considered to have an acceptable impact on the aerodrome's operations and no further changes are considered likely to be necessary. (March 2025) National Grid is receptive to feedback regarding the methodology and key assumptions, and welcomes the opportunity to test these using 'real world' data to ensure a robust and objective approach. Notwithstanding National Grid's stated position in relation to CAP 793 parameters, we would be grateful for Operator clarification of what would be an acceptable clearance, and further welcome the sharing of Operator data, including published information to ensure it has been duly considered.	

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
			(August 2025) National Grid has submitted a Review of Aviation Impact as an appendix to the Environmental Statement accompanying the DCO application. This appendix describes National Grid's aviation assessment scope, approach and conclusions, as outlined in relation to Priory Farm within this SoCG. Should the DCO application be accepted for examination, the appendix will be published by the Planning Inspectorate, and National Grid will share the document with operators. (September 2025) 6.15.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 15.2 - Review of Aviation Impact explains how relevant CAA guidance, as well as consultation with aviation bodies and operators, has informed the development of the assessment methodology. (January 2026)	
6.4	Proposed Project Alignment and Impact Assessment Conclusions	Safety concerns regarding the proximity of the overhead line to Priory Farm Airfield, relating to overflight clearances, including in instances of engine failure. Concerns regarding impacts on existing operational	National Grid's Aviation Impact Assessment conclusions for Priory Farm Airfield include that, whilst the Project will represent a new obstacle in the vicinity, CAP168 OLS standards are met, with the exception of a minor penetration of the Inner Horizontal Surface	Technical Overflight Clearance Drawings - 01_220101_92_Priory Airstrip RevA; Airfield Impact Assessment

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		procedures including existing circuits. (May 2024) - We see little evidence that “Deconfliction of interactions in flight procedures between the aerodrome and Tibenham aerodrome has been considered within the assessment”. There is an admitted penetration of protected airspace (Inner Horizontal Surface), however “minor” it may be described; - The guidance of CAP 793, which is directly relevant to unlicensed airfields such as ours, is being sidelined; - The operational margins presented are based on idealised circuits and standardised climb-outs/approaches, and do not reflect real-world variability, especially under emergency conditions; - The proposed mitigation - that we consider altering our operational procedures – places the burden of risk mitigation on the airfield, rather than the developer introducing the hazard.	(IHS). Distances from the runway ends to the proposed overhead line alignment are assessed as sufficient to enable safe clearance margins during take-off and landing. Whilst current circuits would involve overflight of the overhead line, this is assessed to be from a safe height, in accordance with normal practices. Furthermore, it is assessed that the position of the overhead line would have minimal impact on aircraft returning to the airfield in an emergency. Deconfliction of interactions in flight procedures between the aerodrome and Tibenham aerodrome has been considered within the assessment (March 2025) National Grid recognises that, as a result of its presence as an obstacle, the Project would increase risk to aerodrome operations. Through the aerodrome-specific impact assessments, National Grid has detailed and quantified the extent of any impacts, and in the case of Priory Farm, has concluded impacts are not significant as clearances are sufficient to enable safe operational margins. National Grid has sought Operator agreement of risk acceptability. As the Operator has not agreed the impact assessment conclusions,	Summary – Priory Farm v3

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		Priory Farm Airfield is used by low-performance, light and microlight aircraft which operate with far narrower margins than your modelling implies. Emergencies, go arounds, and weather-related deviations are all routine occurrences. Adding tall infrastructure within the CAP 793 safeguarding radius presents an unacceptable elevation in operational risk. We therefore restate our objection to the current alignment and urge a revision that fully avoids CAP 793 breach and eliminates incursion into the IHS. (July 2025)	National Grid has requested feedback on what risk thresholds would be acceptable. (January 2026) An updated impact assessment following notification of the Operator's publishing via SkyDemon of the aerodrome's 500ft circuit confirms this no longer overflies the overhead line, but is in close horizontal proximity (<100m from cross wind to downwind). Take-off and landing OLS clearances continue to meet CAP 168 standards, with the exception of a minor penetration of the Inner Horizontal Surface (IHS). Considering forced landing scenarios for the SkyDemon 500ft circuit, National Grid assesses that an aircraft experiencing engine failure on the downwind is likely to be at an appropriate height to be able to turn over the overhead line to open space beyond to the west, if a return to the runway was not feasible. (July 2026)	

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
6.5	Mitigation Measures	NG are introducing a new obstacle and expecting us to mitigate your risk. That is not acceptable. (July 2025)	The Operator may wish to consider operational procedure changes, including to enhance pilot awareness of the overhead line as an obstacle, especially in relation to climb and descent progress. (March 2025) As reflected within the 'Legislative, Regulatory, Policy and Guidance Context' position above, National Grid recognises its responsibilities as an applicant to include appropriate mitigation measures as an integral part of the proposed development (EN-1 para. 5.5.43 refers), understanding the Secretary of State should be satisfied that the proposal has been designed, where possible, to minimise adverse impacts on the operation and safety of aerodromes (para. 5.5.50 refers). EN-5 makes clear that the Government considers overhead lines to be the strong starting presumption for electricity network development. In considering the need for an alternative, National Grid must fulfil its statutory duties and obligations to balance this with the need to be economic, efficient and to keep costs down in the interests of bill-paying consumers.	

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
			In view of the assessment conclusions, changes to the Project design have not been implemented as are not considered to be appropriately justified by the minimal potential adverse impacts on the operation and safety of the aerodrome. National Grid is keen to support Operator consideration of mitigations, such as changes to operational procedures, as well as subsequent implementation of agreed mitigations, as appropriate. (August 2025) National Grid's position remains that substantial changes to the Project's design as mitigation measures are not justified by the assessed aviation impact. National Grid remains ready to explore alternative mitigations and has previously offered support to the Operator's consideration of reasonable operational measures to address the presence of the Project as an obstacle, such as enhancing pilot situational awareness. In particular, National Grid has raised its willingness to discuss the integration of marker balls to Project infrastructure to address visibility concerns. (January 2026)	

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
			To ensure a 500ft lateral separation distance is maintained between circuit tracks and the overhead line, National Grid has suggested a minor re-design of the aerodrome's latest 500ft circuit, involving a slight turn to the east, which also benefits by increasing the track length to the closest point of the overhead line so aircraft will be higher at this location. In response to initial Operator concerns that the proposed re-designed circuit will not be acceptable due to the proximity of Tibenham air traffic, National Grid suggests that the slight turn will not comprise a material conflict with Tibenham operations, and could be mitigated further by publication of the amended track. We seek to discuss this in more detail, as well as alternative mitigations options including the potential for operation of the 500ft circuit to cease, with just the 1000ft circuit remaining. We understand that the Operator, whilst acknowledging marker balls on the overhead line could provide a visual reference for departure paths and during overhead line overflight within the 1000ft circuit pattern, has not confirmed a requirement for their incorporation into the project detailed design.	

ID	Issue	Priory Farm Airfield position (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
			National Grid and the Operator agree that the use of low height pylons in the vicinity of the aerodrome will not make a material difference to overflight clearances. The benefits of pilot situational briefings as mitigation have also been discussed .	

7. Signatures

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

For National Grid

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

For Priory Farm Airfield

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

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