

AENC-NG-CNS-REP-0226

Norwich to Tilbury

Volume 8: Examination Documents

**Document: 8.3.10 Final Statement of Common Ground - Equinor
- Clean Version**

Final Issue C

July 2026

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

nationalgrid

Revision History

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

Equinor

Final 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 and Equinor regarding specific issues arising during construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project (the Project) and its interface with Equinor's Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects (Planning Inspectorate Reference EN010109). The aim is to clarify the shared understanding of any issues and facilitate an efficient resolution process. It is without prejudice to any bespoke protective provisions included in the draft DCO for the protection of Equinor, and to the terms of any related side agreements between the parties.

2. Parties to the SoCG

This SoCG is agreed between National Grid and Equinor New Energy Limited (Equinor) on behalf of Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Extensions ProjCo Limited (SSDE ProjCo Limited) (formerly known as Scira Extension 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	Concerns around environmental areas overlapping with SSDE apparatus have since been resolved in principal and formal plans detailing agreement are being drafted.	Close of Examination
7.2	Ongoing discussions related to access requirements	Close of Examination
7.3	Protective Provision/legal agreement negotiations are progressing but not yet fully agreed	Close of Examination
7.4	Document 8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects corrections requested	Close of Examination

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

5. Stakeholder Interests

Equinor were the applicant for the SSDE DCO which grants development consent to SSDE ProjCo Limited as “undertaker” in relation to SSDE.

SSDE ProjCo Limited is a statutory undertaker by virtue of an Electricity Act 1989 licence and has legitimate interests that have the potential to interact with the Norwich to Tilbury proposals. SSDE is a consented Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, which will deliver construction and operation of an array of up to 53 wind turbines and their foundations and associated onshore infrastructure including onshore cabling and an onshore substation. Onshore works will take place in the vicinity of the Norwich Main substation including the 400kV cable connecting into the Norwich Main substation and an onshore substation to the south of the Norwich Main substation as well as associated works and infrastructure.

National Grid is seeking to ensure that the interests of both parties, and how they may be affected by the interaction, are understood and can be managed. 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.

The chronology of National Grid’s engagement with SSDE ProjCo Limited to date, and the evolution of the Project’s design is summarised as follows:

- 2024
 - Introductory meeting to detail the proposed Norwich to Tilbury scheme and project team members
 - Consultation engagement on early stage design proposals
- 2025
 - Engagement on advanced design solutions ahead of DCO application submission
 - Provision of a draft SoCG and development of content
- 2026
 - Legal engagement to negotiate a bespoke legal agreement relating to the protection of SSDE ProjCo Limited assets
 - Further development of SoCG content

6. Matters Agreed

ID	Issue	Agreement reached	Date agreed
6.1	Collaboration	Both parties welcome the collaborative approach throughout the examination of the Project and post consent with a view to resolving matters. Equinor would welcome the opportunity to meet regularly with National Grid to discuss these concerns and ensure the parties will work together, such that the interactions between the two DCOs are appropriately managed and both can be delivered without detriment to the other. National Grid commit to a delivery stage working group to ensure collaborative engagement throughout the project lifecycle.	09/07/26
6.2	Limits of deviation flexibility	The Applicant has agreed to assign Class 8 land rights to the eastern swathe option. This will also be further committed to in Protective Provisions under discussion between both parties.	15/07/26
6.3	Location of Pylon RG006 within SEP/DEP cable corridor	The Applicant has agreed to not site Pylon RG006 nor it's associated working area within the Equinor SSDE ProjCo underground cable swathe. This will be further committed to in legal agreements currently under discussion between both parties.	15/07/26
6.4	NGET Haul Roads	Parties have agreed in principle that where the SSDE cable interacts with the haul road, the haul road can be ducted in advance to accommodate. This is being reflected in legal agreements currently under discussion between both parties.	15/07/26
6.5	Proposed Overhead Line Pulling Area	Both parties agree this interaction can be successfully managed through appropriate notice, coordination and cooperation arrangements during delivery works.	15/07/26

7. Matters Currently Under Discussion

ID	Issue	Equinor (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
7.1	Environmental areas conflicts	07/05/26 - The Norwich to Tilbury Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [APP-321] and the Norwich to Tilbury Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan Appendix D - Outline Landscape Proposals [APP-325] show land within the “Extent of the Environmental Area” with soft landscape enhancement and environmental proposals identified. Some of these areas of planting overlap with SSDE’s Order limits, including the SSDE permanent access road to its substation and the 400kV underground cable route consented for connecting into the Norwich Main substation. Further information has been provided by SSDE ProjCo Limited within its response to ExAQ1 [REP3-120] . SSDE ProjCo Limited would welcome a meeting to discuss a solution to this conflict.	24/04/26 – The Applicant commits to planting environmental areas in such a manner that would not obstruct the SSDE permanent access road to its substation. A meeting is proposed between project ecologists to align on planting restrictions. 09/07/26 – Both parties ecology teams have discussed and agreed a resolution to Environmental Areas Conflicts. 15/07/26 – A revised OLEMP is being drafted to reflect commitments made.	
7.2	Access Issues for SSDE	07/05/26 - SSDE ProjCo Limited has concerns regarding restrictions on access to its development areas. This is due to the significant overlap of the two projects around the north, west and southern sides of the Norwich Main substation. Should the projects be constructing	09/07/26 – National Grid is reviewing the additional context provided regarding required junction	

ID	Issue	Equinor (including date)	National Grid response (including date)	Relevant documentation
		simultaneously, there is a risk that insufficient access will be available to SSDE for construction of the 400kV connection and substation works to the south of the Norwich Main substation, including ancillary works and landscaping. SSDE ProjCo Limited await further clarity from National Grid on this and would welcome further discussion.	improvement works and will revert back with comments once complete 21/07/26 – Further commentary requested from SSDE ProjCo as to what is required from the Applicant to satisfy access concerns.	
7.3	Protective provisions	07/05/26 - Protective provisions are required within the Norwich to Tilbury DCO to avoid serious detriment to the SSDE DCO. SSDE ProjCo Limited have provided heads of terms for a side agreement. The parties met to discuss these on 07/05/26 and a further meeting is being arranged to progress matters.	15/07/26 - Protective Provisions remain under discussion between the parties. The Applicant will continue discussions to seek to reach agreement and will reflect its position on those matters still remaining in dispute in the Statutory Undertaker Tracker at Deadline 7.	
7.4	Document 8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects	Document 8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with Other Infrastructure Projects [REP1-134] includes some incorrect statements which SSDE ProjCo Limited have clarified in its response to ExAQ1 [REP3-120] . SSDE ProjCo Limited requests further updates to REP1-134 are made to correct these at the earliest opportunity.	21/07/26 – REP3-120 has been addressed in the Applicants follow up response to ExAQ1.	[REP3-120] [REP1-134]

8. Signatures

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

For National Grid

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

For Equinor

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

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