

AENC-NG-CNS-REP-0236

Norwich to Tilbury

Volume 8: Examination Documents

Document: 8.3.20 Signed Statement of Common Group
Carbon Limited (Crouch Solar Farm) - Clean Version

Final Issue C

July 2026

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

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Revision History

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

Low Carbon Limited (Crouch Solar Farm) 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 Low Carbon Limited regarding specific issues arising during construction and/or operation from the interface between the proposed Norwich to Tilbury Project (the Project) and the Crouch Solar Farm.

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 (the Applicant) and Low Carbon Limited.

3. Summary of Matters

This final SoCG deals with 11 matters in total, of which 5 are agreed and 6 are under discussion.

Discussions between the Applicant and Low Carbon Limited necessarily will continue during detailed design, and for some matters into construction, including on the following matters:

- Final design of the Project, e.g. final pylon design and conductor type information; the final pulling areas at TB222 and TB224; final construction working areas
- Stringing methodology, including extent to which solar panels may need to be removed temporarily
- Permanent access arrangements
- Construction access requirements
- Protective measures for Low Carbon Limited's underground cable
- Compensation to Low Carbon Limited

4. Background

4.1 Description of the Project/Development

National Grid Electricity Transmission pic ('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

Low Carbon Limited has legal interests that interact with the Project. This has been identified as the Crouch Solar Farm, an established solar farm located north-west of Basildon.

6. Discussions Held

- Non-statutory consultation: April - June 2022 (graduated swathe)
- Non-statutory consultation: June – August 2023 (draft alignment)
- Statutory consultation: April – July 2024
- Landowner consultation: June – July 2025
- Teams Meeting Dates:
 - 1 July 2025
 - 19 June 2026
 - 13 July 2026

The parties continued to engage during the examination through regular email correspondence in relation to the matters described in this Statement of Common Ground.

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7. Matters Agreed

ID	Issue	Agreement reached	Date agreed
7.1	Location of pylons (TB222 to TB224)	The siting of pylons TB222 and TB224 cannot be moved to another location as they form part of an integrated design and any changes would have consequential impacts on the wider transmission route.	July 2026
7.2	Construction working group	Both parties agree that ongoing coordination during the construction phase will be required. A construction-phase coordination mechanism, such as a working group, will be established to facilitate communication and to manage interactions between the Project and the solar PV facility, including matters such as access, outages, and maintenance activities. The Applicant will provide a named point of contact for the construction contractor. The detailed scope and operation of this coordination mechanism will be agreed between the parties ahead of construction.	July 2026
7.3	Continued engagement and collaboration to minimise impacts	The parties acknowledge the interfaces between their projects. The parties will continue to engage to coordinate these interfaces, minimise impacts where reasonably practicable, and ensure appropriate mitigation, protection measures, and reinstatement are secured through detailed design and construction.	July 2026
7.4	Heads of Terms leading to a legal agreement	The parties will be negotiating Heads of Terms as the basis of a legal agreement. The legal agreement will secure the commitments and arrangements both parties are agreeing to manage interfaces.	July 2026
7.5	Shading	The Applicant recognises Low Carbon Limited's concerns in relation to potential shading implications of the Project on the stakeholder's solar development. The final pylon design, conductor type and position information is expected to be available in 2027. Once this information is available the Applicant can share this information with Low	July 2026

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ID	Issue	Agreement reached	Date agreed
		Carbon Limited. Provisional information can be also shared ahead of this time but this will be subject to change as the design is finalised. Shading could be a compensation matter according to the Compensation Code or any statutory provisions. Such matters would be assessed on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the Planning Act 2008 and the statutory Compensation Code and are not matters to be determined through the Examination of the DCO.	

8. Matters Currently Under Discussion

ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Low Carbon Limited position	Relevant documentation
8.1	Pulling area around the pylon for stringing	The Applicant recognises that the pulling areas at TB222 and TB224 are of concern to Crouch Farm Solar. The Applicant is confident that the pulling areas at TB222 and TB224 can be omitted to reduce impact on Crouch Farm Solar. The Applicant therefore commits at this stage to seeking these reductions. Whilst the detailed construction methodology will be developed as part of the detailed design process, the Applicant will seek to secure the omission of the pulling areas at TB222 and TB224 through changes to the Application or contractually prior to the making of the Order. It is standard practice for detailed design	Plan showing the revised pulling areas now proposed by the Applicant has not yet been provided to Low Carbon. Once provided, we will review. Commitment to revised areas needs to be secured either through modification of the Application or contractually, prior to the making of the Order.	

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ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Low Carbon Limited position	Relevant documentation
		discussions to progress following the close of Examination, and the Applicant will continue to work with Low Carbon Limited to mitigate impacts of the Project. Updated plans showing the proposed revisions to the pulling areas at TB222 and TB224 will be provided to Low Carbon Limited as they become available. The Applicant will continue to engage with Low Carbon Limited regarding the final extents and the appropriate mechanism for securing any agreed reductions.		
8.2	Stringing methodology (potential temporary removal of panels)	The Applicant will determine the optimal methodology for stringing the overhead line during detailed construction planning, taking into account the impact on Crouch Solar Farm and seeking to minimise the removal (temporary) of solar panels. The Applicant will continue to engage with Low Carbon Limited regarding the methodology and associated access arrangements and will seek to secure any agreed measures through changes to the Application or contractually prior to the making of the Order. Whilst the detailed methodology will continue to be developed through the detailed design and construction planning	Further details on restringing methodology awaited, as NGET have indicated potential use of catenary to avoid panel removal. We will review once provided. Commitment to adopting methodology minimising impact on Crouch SF where possible to be secured either through modification of the Application or contractually, prior to the making of the Order.	

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ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Low Carbon Limited position	Relevant documentation
		process, the Applicant will continue to engage with Low Carbon Limited to mitigate impacts of the Project. A plan of the proposed methodology will be shared with Low Carbon Limited as it becomes available. The Applicant will continue to engage with Low Carbon Limited regarding the final methodology and the appropriate mechanism for securing any agreed measures through changes to the Application or contractually prior to the making of the Order.		
8.3	Pylon construction and maintenance areas	The Applicant acknowledges that the proposed construction area at TB224 overlaps onto the first rows of Low Carbon Limited's solar panels. The Applicant, with their construction partners, will review mitigation measures during the detailed design process, including opportunities to reposition the working area further south in relation to the tower base where reasonably practicable. Whilst the detailed design and construction planning process will continue to refine the final construction requirements, the Applicant will continue to engage with Low Carbon Limited regarding potential mitigation measures and will seek to secure any agreed	We have not yet received the plan showing revised working area proposed by the Applicant. We will review once provided. A Commitment to this revised area will need to be secured either through modification of the Application or contractually, prior to the making of the Order. Applicant also to provide plan showing maintenance area of 30m required around TB222 and TB224 has no impact within fenceline/ on Crouch SF apparatus.	

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ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Low Carbon Limited position	Relevant documentation
		measures through changes to the Application or contractually prior to the making of the Order. It is standard practice for these matters to be refined following the close of Examination, and the Applicant will continue to engage with Low Carbon Limited to identify opportunities to minimise impacts of the Project.		
8.4	Permanent access route	The Applicant acknowledges that dual access provisions may be required in relation to the two gate locations following the permanent access track. The Applicant will continue to engage with Low Carbon Limited to negotiate this as part of the anticipated Heads of Terms agreement between the two parties and will seek to secure any agreed provisions through changes to the Application or contractually prior to the making of the Order.	Approach agreed, but Heads of Terms not yet received. As discussed, Applicant to commit (a) to making use of existing access tracks; and (b) to revise location of proposed new access track to immediate east of Crouch SF outside offenceline, in both cases to avoid disruption to operation of Crouch SF and impact on Crouch SF apparatus. Commitment in this regard to be secured contractually, prior to the making of the Order.	
8.5	Haul Roads	The Applicant acknowledges that the haul roads are located around the site perimeter and away from the solar panels. This represents a temporary impact, and the haul roads will be removed upon completion of the Project.	Haul road to the east of TB222 to be aligned outside of Crouch SF fenceline. Please confirm.	

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		The Applicant notes that, where the haul road crosses into the solar farm, this is in areas away from the solar panels and is therefore not expected to require the removal of any panels. The Applicant acknowledges Low Carbon Limited's request for the haul road to be repositioned outside of the solar farm. However, this is not feasible due to constraints associated with the Order Limits (red line boundary) and the road to the north. Where existing security fencing is required to be temporarily removed, appropriate fencing will be installed to ensure that site security is maintained throughout the construction period.		
8.6	Comments relating legal protections	The Applicant recognises Low Carbon Limited's position and concern that since they are not a Statutory Undertaker they do not directly benefit from the proposed Protective Provisions. The Applicant has engaged its legal representatives to prepare Heads of Terms (HoT) with Low Carbon Limited in relation to project interfaces. The Applicant also requests Low Carbon Limited's input as to what they propose is addressed in the HoTs.	Low Carbon Limited Senior Development Manager (Legal) to be contacted by Applicant's legal representative in this regard. Low Carbon's position remains as set out in Relevant Representation 27/11/25 - The solar farm exports energy via an underground cable operated by Eastern Power Networks. Article 44 (Statutory undertakers) of the DCO would, inter alia, authorise the relocation of this cable and	

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ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Low Carbon Limited position	Relevant documentation
			extinguishment of rights in connection with it. The cable is clearly essential to the operation of the solar farm. Protective provisions are proposed in Schedule 16 of the DCO that would benefit Eastern Power Network's interests in the cable, but no equivalent protection is provided to us (as we are not a statutory undertaker) even though our generation assets would be directly affected by any interference with the cable. Schedule 16, para. 5(1) prevents apparatus being removed and the rights of a statutory undertaker to maintain that apparatus in land being acquired, until alternative apparatus has been constructed and is in operation to the reasonable satisfaction of the statutory undertaker in question. Paragraph 5(2) and subsequent provisions provide for a statutory undertaker to request the removal of apparatus from land purchased etc under the DCO and to undertake works. Paragraph 7 provides for the repayment of the statutory undertakers reasonable and proper expenses associated with the inspection, removal, alteration or protection of apparatus.	

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ID	Issue	National Grid Position	Low Carbon Limited position	Relevant documentation
			While any alternative apparatus must be to Eastern Power Network’s satisfaction, there is no equivalent mechanism requiring us to be satisfied that such arrangements are satisfactory for the ongoing solar farm operations. Disruption to the solar farm’s grid connection could result in business losses due to the disruption of renewable electricity export. Any variation or impact to the existing connection must be indemnified appropriately. Solar infrastructure is now designated as critical national priority infrastructure under the UK Government’s Energy National Policy, as of January 2024.	

Figure 1 Interface between Crouch Solar Farm and the Project alignment



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9. Signatures

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

For National Grid

x----- DocuSigned by:

Name: [redacted]

Position: Project Director

Date: 17/07/2026

For Low Carbon Limited

Signed by:

Name: [redacted]

Position: Director

Date: 21/07/26

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