



Longfield Solar Farm

Statement of Commonality

Deadline 8

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Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Statement of Commonality

1.1.1 This document has been prepared to provide the Examining Authority (ExA) with the position on Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) between the Applicant and statutory consultees, statutory undertakers and Interested Parties in relation to the proposed Longfield Solar Farm.

1.1.2 The Rule 6 letter states:

“In relation to some of the Principal Issues identified in Annex C [of the Rule 6 letter], I would be assisted by the preparation of SoCGs between the Applicant and certain Interested Parties.”

1.1.3 This document provides the final position on the SoCG at Deadline 8 (18 January 2023).

1.2 Structure of the Statement of Commonality

1.2.1 This Statement of Commonality is structured as follows:

- Section 2 details the structure of each SoCG document and provides a list of the SoCG being produced;
- Section 3 sets out the status of each SoCG;
- Section 4 sets out the main themes of commonality between the parties;
- Section 5 sets out the matters that were not agreed between the parties at Deadline 8.

2. Position

2.1 Structure of SoCG

- 2.1.1 Each SoCG adopts a standard format to ensure consistency in the approach taken to documenting matters agreed, matters subject to ongoing discussion or matters not agreed.
- 2.1.2 Each SoCG is structured in the following way:
- Section 1 provides an introduction to the SoCG, identifying the relevant party and a description of the purpose of the document;
 - Section 2 summarises the engagement undertaken so far; and
 - Section 3 sets out the issues identified in the Rule 6 letter or raised by the relevant party and a summary of the Applicant's position in response.
- 2.1.3 Each SoCG includes estimations as to the likelihood that disagreement on a topic will remain. This approach was guided by the Rule 6 letter in order to assist the ExA in assessing the areas where oral discussions may be beneficial.

2.2 List of SoCGs

- 2.2.1 The Rule 6 letter identified a number of statutory consultees, statutory undertakers and Interested Parties with which SoCG were to be prepared. Accordingly, SoCG have been prepared with the following stakeholders:
- Essex County Council, Braintree District Council and Chelmsford City Council (as a joint SoCG);
 - UK Health Security Agency/Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (as a joint SoCG);
 - Essex Fire and Rescue Service;
 - National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc (NGET);
 - National Grid Electricity Service Operator (NGESO);
 - The Environment Agency (EA);
 - Natural England (NE);
 - East of England Ambulance Service (EEAST);
 - Historic England (HE);
 - National Highways (NH); and
 - Network Rail (NR).
- 2.2.2 Annex E of the Rule 6 letter identifies the matters to be discussed with these parties. Each SoCG corresponds to these topics where identified to be relevant.

3. Status

3.1 Summary of Current Position

3.1.1 This section provides a summary of the current position of each SoCG at Deadline 8, as set below in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1: Status of SoCGs at Deadline 8

Document Reference	Party	Position at Deadline 1B	Position at Deadline 2	Position at Deadline 3	Position at Deadline 4	Position at Deadline 5	Position at Deadline 6	Position at Deadline 7	Position at Deadline 8
8.4(B)	Essex County Council, Braintree District Council, Chelmsford City Council	Draft submitted	Draft submitted	Not submitted	Draft submitted	Draft submitted	Draft submitted	Draft submitted, subject to final edits and signatures for D8 version	Final signed version submitted
8.4	UK Health Security Agency/Office for Health Improvements and Disparities	Draft submitted	Not submitted	The Interested Party wrote to the ExA on 15 September 2022 stating that they are satisfied with the assessment. Therefore, no further updates to the SoCG are required.	-	-	-	-	-
8.4(A)	Essex Fire and Rescue Service	Draft submitted	Not submitted	Final version submitted	-	-	-	-	-

8.4	National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc	Draft submitted	Not submitted	Not submitted	Draft submitted	Not submitted	Draft submitted	Final version	-
8.4	National Grid Electricity Services Operator	Draft submitted	Not submitted	Not submitted	Not submitted	Not submitted	Draft submitted	Final version	-
8.4(A)	Environment Agency	Draft submitted	Not submitted	Draft submitted	Draft submitted	Final signed version submitted at Deadline 5	-	-	-
8.4(A)	Natural England	Draft submitted	Draft submitted	. Final version	Final signed version submitted at Deadline 4	-	-	-	-
8.4	East of England Ambulance Service	Draft submitted	Not submitted	Not submitted	Draft submitted	Not submitted	Final version submitted	-	-
8.4(B)	Historic England	Draft submitted	Draft submitted	Not submitted	Final signed version submitted at Deadline 4	-	-	-	-
8.4(B)	National Highways	Draft submitted	Draft submitted	Final version	Final signed version submitted at Deadline 4	-	-	-	-
8.4	Network Rail	Draft submitted	Not submitted	Not submitted	Not submitted	Not submitted	Draft submitted	Final version	-

4. Commonality

4.1 Summary

4.1.1 This section of the Statement of Commonality provides a broad summary of the topics covered in the SoCGs submitted at this deadline (Deadline 8). It demonstrates where there is commonality in the topics or matters discussed between the Applicant and the parties, or where matters have reached a final position of 'Not Agreed' following discussions.

4.1.2 Table 4-1 lists out the topics covered across the SoCGs and the status of that matter at this deadline for that stakeholder. Where a topic is not relevant to a particular stakeholder the cell is greyed out. Where the topic is relevant the status is shown as follows:

Cell	Status
	All matters agreed
	Some matters agreed, some matters ongoing
	All matters outstanding
	Some matters ongoing, some matters not agreed
	All matters not agreed
	Some matters agreed, some matters not agreed
	Matter not relevant for that stakeholder

4.1.3 The colours of each cell correspond to the status table in each individual SoCG.

4.1.4 It should be noted that where a broad topic applies to more than one SoCG party the detailed matters discussed within that topic may not be directly comparable or related. Table 4-1 is only intended as a general guide.

4.1.5 Following the summary in Table 4-1, Section 4.2 outlines the principal outstanding matters which are subject to further discussion before a final position can be reached.

4.2 Positions at Deadline 8

4.2.1 The following section provides a summary of the positions reached in the SoCG at Deadline 8.

4.2.2 The individual SoCG provide further detail of the specific matters of discussion between the Applicant and the relevant stakeholders.

4.3 Essex County Council (ECC), Braintree District Council (BDC) and Chelmsford District Council (CCC)

4.3.1 The document has been updated to reflect the final position, and all parties have signed the final version.

4.4 UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)/Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID)

4.4.1 The UKHSA/OHID wrote to the ExA on 15 September [REP5-020] confirming that they are satisfied with the health assessment. It has been agreed with them that a the SoCG will not be developed further, as the position between the parties is clearly set out in that correspondence.

4.5 Essex Fire and Rescue Service

4.5.1 Significant progress has been made on agreement of common ground between the Applicant and Essex Fire and Rescue Service in discussions, as reflected in the SoCG. Matters agreed primarily relate to the 24/7 access of the site, the plume assessment, minimum firewater capacity, firefighting infrastructure, the Battery Safety Management Plan and details relating to equipment procurement.

4.5.2 A signed version of the SoCG was submitted into the examination at Deadline 3 and so no further update is required.

4.6 National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc (NGET)

4.6.1 Matters have been agreed through productive discussions between the Parties in relation to details concerning the NGET towers such as fencing requirements, CCTV use, minimum conductor clearance distance, maintenance access requirements and the scope of rating and thermal studies required for the cable crossing location south of Bulls Lodge Substation and protective provisions.

4.6.2 A final signed version of the SoCG was submitted at Deadline 7.

4.7 National Grid Electricity Services Operator (NGESO)

4.7.1 A final signed SoCG was submitted at Deadline 7, with all matters agreed between the parties.

4.8 Environment Agency (EA)

4.8.1 All matters have now been agreed between the Parties including water, soils, required consents, matters relating to groundwater and contaminated land, as well as details relating to fisheries, biodiversity and ecology, battery safety and

pollution, the control of potential spills, pollution prevention, disapplication of consents, biodiversity enhancement, habitat connectivity and severance. The SoCG submitted at Deadline 2 reflected this.

4.8.2 A final signed SoCG was submitted at Deadline 5.

4.9 Natural England

4.9.1 Matters agreed through discussions between the Applicant and Natural England include environmental enhancements and biodiversity net gain, mechanisms to prevent interference with the River Ter, designated sites, embedded mitigation, EIA methodology, the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), bat roost appraisal, invertebrates, the scope of the Environmental Statement, climate change, landscape and character visual amenity and soil quality, as well as protected species and habitats, protected species licensing, badger setts, otter and water vole, great crested newts have been agreed.

4.9.2 A final signed version of the SoCG was submitted at Deadline 4.

4.10 East of England Ambulance Service

4.10.1 All matters (means of transport and access, major accidents and disasters, and considerations relating to demand on EEAST's services) have been agreed and this is reflected in the final signed version of the SoCG submitted at Deadline 6.

4.11 Historic England (HE)

4.11.1 Matters agreed through discussions between the Applicant and Historic England include the cultural heritage methodology, the scope of consultation, drainage details, the setting of heritage assets and the assessment of potential impact relating to construction, operation and decommissioning. Additional agreed matters include the scope of deposit modelling required to establish the potential for buried archaeological remains, the assessment of the significance of Parks and Gardens, the need for a closer link between the cultural heritage and landscape / visual impact assessment, the choice of the LVIA viewpoints, and the positioning of ZTV.

4.11.2 A final signed SoCG was submitted at Deadline 4.

4.12 National Highways (NH)

4.12.1 Significant progress has been made on agreement of common ground between the Applicant and National Highways in discussions as reflected in the SoCG. The key matters agreed between the Parties relate to consultation and engagement, the Transport Assessment and Glint & Glare Assessment, access and routing, details relating to the construction phase and impact on surrounding road network, as well as in relation to sustainable travel modes, traffic impact relating to the proposed A12 Chelmsford to A120 construction, the A12 (T) and Boreham Interchange, the proposed use of the private road to/from Bulls Lodge Substation and the overall acceptability of the application.

4.12.2 A final signed SoCG was submitted at Deadline 4 in track change form. Both clean and track change versions have been included in the Deadline 8 submission for completeness.

4.13 Network Rail (NR)

4.13.1 All matters have now been resolved between the parties and the document.

4.13.2 A final signed version was submitted at Deadline 7.

5. Final Position

Table 5.1 sets out the matters that were not agreed between the parties at Deadline 8.

Table 5.1: Final Position Between the Parties

Stakeholders	Scope of Matters	Specific Matters Not Agreed
Essex County Council, Braintree District Council, Chelmsford County Council	Cultural heritage	There are specific matters relating to the scale of effect and extent of mitigation that are not agreed (Ref. CC-04 to CC-07 in the SoCG).
	Landscape and visual	There are specific matters relating to the scale of effect in relation to PDA1 that are not agreed (refer to LAN-05.01 in the SoCG).
	Minerals and waste	There is a specific matter relating to minerals and waste that is not agreed (OT-06).
	DCO drafting	Refer to Appendix 1 of the SoCG for details of the few matters where agreement could not be reached.
UK Health Security Agency	All matters agreed.	
Essex Fire and Rescue Service	All matters agreed.	
NGET	All matters agreed	
NGESO	All matters agreed	
Environment Agency	All matters agreed.	
Natural England	All matters agreed.	
EEAST	All matters agreed.	
Historic England	All matters agreed.	
National Highways	All matters agreed.	
Network Rail	All matters agreed.	