

Shepway Energy Park

Section 51 Advice Log Version: 29 July 2026

This document comprises a record of the s51 advice that has been given by the Planning Inspectorate to the applicant (SSE Newchurch Solar Limited) during the pre-application stage. It will be updated by the Planning Inspectorate after every interaction with the applicant within which s51 advice has been given.

The applicant will always be given the opportunity to comment on the Planning Inspectorate's draft record of the s51 advice given before it is published on the relevant project page on the [Find a National Infrastructure Project website](#).

The role of the advice log at the acceptance stage

Section 55(4) of the PA2008 requires the Planning Inspectorate to consider, amongst other things, the extent to which the applicant has had regard to the s51 advice given by the Planning Inspectorate in connection with the application when deciding if the application can be accepted for examination. Section 51 advice includes:

- advice given about applying for an order granting development consent
- advice given about making representations about an application for an order granting development consent

The applicant will use this advice log as the tool for demonstrating:

- regard to the s51 advice given to the applicant by the Planning Inspectorate
- regard to any s51 advice given to others by the Planning Inspectorate

The applicant will submit a final version of this advice log which demonstrates regard to all s51 given by the Planning Inspectorate at the pre-application stage as part of the application.

Shepway Energy Park – Applicant meeting index

Date of meeting	Meeting overview
13 December 2025	Link to Project Inception Meeting
4 August 2025	Project Update Meeting - Latest Project Update - Draft Document Review - Environmental Update - Non-Statutory Consultation Feedback - EIA Scoping - National Grid Substation Location - AOB Post-meeting advice on the applicant's Programme Document.
28 October 2025	Email pre-application prospectus
11 February 2026	Inspectorate comments on the Programme Document
15 July 2026	Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 updates

Shepway Energy Park – Log of s51 given to the applicant

Meeting date: 13 December 2025

Topic	s51 advice given	Applicant regard to s51 advice given
Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to submit a GIS shapefile at least 10 working days before the Scoping Request and provide an indication of the anticipated submission date to assist with resourcing.	
Consultation and Scoping	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to avoid overlap between non-statutory consultation and the Scoping Review process where possible, to reduce confusion and resource pressures on consultees.	
EIA Guidance	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to have regard to Advice Note 7 and relevant good practice relating to the EIA process.	
Land and Rights	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to engage early with statutory undertakers on protective provisions to minimise the need for detailed discussions during examination.	

Consultation	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to consider capturing views from tourists and visitors during consultation, where relevant to the area.	
Good Design	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to have regard to the Good Design Advice Note and incorporate its principles into project development.	
Meeting date: 4 August 2025		
Topic	s51 advice given	Applicant regard to s51 advice given
Latest Project Update	The Inspectorate advised that an Adequacy of Consultation Milestone (AoCM) statement should be scheduled 3-months before the end of the pre-application period. The AOCM statement should include any comments from relevant local authorities on the adequacy of the applicant's consultation activities at that stage.	
Draft Document Review	The Inspectorate advised that at least 6 weeks notice is required for any draft document submission to ensure that resources can be allocated to carry out effective checks on the documents.	

Environment Update	The Inspectorate advised that the applicant should make sure they differentiate between areas of flood zone 3A and 3B.	
Non-Statutory Consultation Feedback	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to differentiate in its analysis of consultation feedback the issues raised in relation to the stages of development and any differences between similar topics (such as separating 'constructions effects' from 'operational effects').	
EIA Scoping	The Inspectorate advised that any decision not to undertake Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) surveys for the cable route should be supported by evidence and agreement (or recorded disagreement) from relevant statutory bodies, considering context and recent Secretary of State decisions. Contact details for consultees would have been provided with the scoping opinion and would be the most appropriate to use for contact purposes.	
National Grid Substation Location	The Inspectorate advised that sufficient information on the probable location of the proposed National Grid substation should be obtained from National Grid in time for statutory consultation, to ensure members of	

	the public are able to provide informed responses. The applicant responded that its talks with National Grid about its Town and Country Planning Act 1990 application for the new substation were ongoing, with further information on the siting options for the substation expected to be available in November.	
AOB	The Inspectorate requested that an update on statutory undertakers and the progress of draft protective provisions, the number of landowners involved and progress with voluntary agreements, and whether any crown land and special category land is involved, would be welcomed at the next project update meeting The Inspectorate advised that the applicant might find it beneficial to monitor other solar projects currently in examination, to track for example common Examining Authority questions and procedural decisions. For example, Examining Authorities are typically requesting a statement of common ground between applicants and national grid in relation to the siting and consenting of new National Grid substations under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 route.	

Programme Document feedback (post-meeting advice)	The Inspectorate has undertaken a review of the applicant's Programme Document (July 2025 edition), which broadly follows the government's guidance on the pre-application stage regarding the expected content of Programme Documents at paragraph 10. The Inspectorate considers that it provides enough detail about the proposed development and the identified risks, as well as a comprehensive overview of the applicant's approach to consultation. However, the applicant should seek to include appropriate detail (and update this information at regular intervals) on the progress made against the main issues for resolution and any agreements reached with relevant statutory bodies on its proposed methodologies and assessment outputs. This information will help keep the Inspectorate and other parties informed of the progress of the application. The applicant should also state whether an Issues Tracker will be used and a Potential Main Issues for Examination document to be submitted with its DCO application. It is also helpful to indicate if the Programme Document has or will be shared with relevant statutory bodies for their views on the proposed programme. Additionally, the 'Key Project Stages and Anticipated Milestone Dates' table should	
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	include timescales for consultation on the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) with relevant local authorities, the publication of the SoCC and Preliminary Environmental Information Report, any targeted consultation if needed, likely dates for project update meetings with the Inspectorate, any multiparty meetings or the evidence plans process (if these are being pursued by the applicant), and for submitting the AOCM statement. It would also be helpful if the Programme Document could indicate whether any non-DCO licences or consents need to be sought, as well as whether the applicant intends to submit a Design Approach Document and Policy Compliance Document with its DCO application.	
Email update: 11 February 2025		
Topic	s51 advice given	Applicant regard to s51 advice given
Programme Document	The applicant supplied the Inspectorate with its updated programme document. The Inspectorate considers that it continues to provide a clear and comprehensive programme timetable of the main events and approach to engagement, including a change	

	to the submission date, which is now expected in February 2027. The Inspectorate notes that the applicant intends to provide draft documentation for review in November/December 2026. The applicant should consider the typical 6-week turnaround for a review and how public holidays and resourcing around these holidays could impact this timeframe. The applicant should also consider allowing time for a post review, draft documents feedback meeting, which should be held in good time ahead of the submission date. The applicant should also account for a date for submitting an Adequacy of Consultation Milestone statement to the Planning Inspectorate, to be received three-months before the application is made. In respect of the main issues section, while the applicant has set out a list of topics, it would benefit from some information denoting what the main environmental and/or built heritage constraints are in the area, together with any protected landscapes and the level of Flood Zones, where specific assessment might be needed and / or the methodology and scope of surveys / mitigation to be undertaken, which may need agreement with statutory parties at pre-application. This will	
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	assist the Planning Inspectorate and others to understand the general geography of the site and surrounding area against the planned infrastructure, and the extent of issues requiring resolution before the application is submitted. The applicant may wish to review the Programme Document produced by One Earth Solar as a good example	
Email update: 15 July 2026		
Topic	s51 advice given	Applicant regard to s51 advice given
Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 updates	In light of the amended legal framework which will be introduced from 24 July 2026 by the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, the Planning Inspectorate issued written advice to the applicant on 15 July 2026 requesting for: • evidence within the submitted application in relation to duties under s46 and s48 of the PA2008 to be provided as an appendix to any engagement summary document that the applicant may choose to submit or, where the applicant chooses not to submit such a document, as a discrete document titled 'Section 46 and section 48 information' • evidence within the submitted application in relation to new s55(4)(e) of the PA2008 to be	

	provided in a submission version of this expanded advice log template	
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[Project name] – Log of s51 advice given to others		
Person s51 advice given to	s51 advice given	Applicant regard to s51 advice given
Name and/or organisation	Summary of s51 advice given and link to advice register	Applicant to complete