Planning Inspectorate

South Kent Energy Park

Section 51 Advice Log
Version: 19 October 2026

This document comprises a record of the s51 advice that has been given by the Planning Inspectorate to the applicant (South Kent Energy Park 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.

South Kent Energy Park – Applicant meeting index	
Date of meeting	**Meeting overview**
20 May 2026	Emailed advice about feedback in relation to the initial Programme Document submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 19 May 2026
17 July 2026	Advice in relation to amendments to the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008)
19 October 2026	Project Update Meeting
29 October 2026	Post Meeting Note

South Kent Energy Park – Log of s51 given to the applicant		
Email Advice: 20 May 2026		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Initial Programme Document feedback	Overall, the Programme Document provides a helpful high-level overview of the anticipated pre-application process and demonstrates awareness of the key components expected under the Planning Inspectorate's pre-application service. The Inspectorate welcomes the preparation of this document at this stage and recognises that it will continue to evolve as the project progresses. The Inspectorate would encourage the applicant to continue developing the programme so that it more clearly explains how the various workstreams will be coordinated to support the preparation of a robust application for submission. There may be benefit in providing some additional clarity on how environmental assessment, design development, consultation and document preparation will interact and inform one another throughout the pre-application period.	

	The inclusion of an indicative programme is welcomed. As this is refined, the applicant may wish to further explain the purpose and intended outcomes of individual stages within the programme, particularly consultation and stakeholder engagement. Providing some additional detail on how feedback from these activities will be used to inform the evolution of the proposed development could help to demonstrate how the programme supports an iterative and proportionate approach to scheme development. The Inspectorate notes the main issues for resolution section. As the project develops, the applicant may find it useful to focus this section more closely on the principal, project-specific issues and consenting risks that are likely to influence the application, and to outline how these will be taken forward through the pre-application process. It may also be helpful for the applicant to identify those issues likely to be key considerations at examination, such as land use and site selection matters, and ensure these are clearly addressed within the programme. The Inspectorate also welcomes the early engagement with host authorities and other stakeholders. As the programme evolves, it	

	may assist to provide further clarity on how engagement activity is expected to align with the programme to support the timely identification and resolution of key issues, including the anticipated approach to progressing Statements of Common Ground where appropriate. Finally, the Inspectorate notes the assumptions made in relation to emerging legislative changes. The applicant is encouraged to keep these matters under review and to ensure that the programme remains sufficiently flexible and adaptable as the policy and legislative context evolves.	
Advice date: 17 July 2026		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Advice in relation to amendments to the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008)	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 16 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	
Advice Date: 19 October 2026		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Consultation approach and engagement strategy	The Inspectorate sought further information regarding the applicant's proposed approach to consultation, noting that consultation reports would no longer be a statutory requirement under the changes introduced by the Planning & Infrastructure Act 2025. The Inspectorate requested clarification on how the applicant intended to communicate consultation activity and demonstrate how feedback had informed the evolution of the project.	The Applicant agrees there is a need to be clear both to the Inspectorate and to consultees as to how consultation has been undertaken, how issues have been addressed, and the appropriate mechanisms for securing the commitments made. The Applicant agrees to provide a statement to PINS on submission summarising the consultation process. The Applicant has presented the detailed issue tracking protocol used by the project team to engage with key stakeholders. However, the Applicant will also consider how to assist

	The Inspectorate advised that consultation materials should clearly explain proposed mitigation and identify where commitments, mitigation measures and other matters would be secured. It advised that signposting consultees to relevant application documents and supporting information would assist stakeholders in understanding how issues had been considered and where matters would be addressed in the draft Development Consent Order (DCO) or supporting documents. The Inspectorate advised that commitment registers could be a useful mechanism for demonstrating actions taken in response to consultation and stakeholder engagement.	stakeholders and consultees in navigating the application and understand the mechanisms by which commitments have been secured during the consultation exercise and in drafting the Order submission. The applicant agrees this is an important element of the consultation process.
Programme update and key risks	As a point of connection is yet to be formalised with National Grid the Inspectorate highlighted Tween Bridge Solar Farm and Norwich to Tilbury as examples of other projects where connection arrangements had not been fully resolved at submission. It advised that further information on relevant examples and approaches could be signposted if this would assist the applicant.	The Applicant thanks the Inspectorate for this advice. The Applicant hopes to have more meaningful information on the location of the Point of Connection in the coming months, but will keep the Inspectorate informed of this matter as it progresses.

	The Inspectorate advised that further project specific advice could be provided through the advice log, particularly in relation to the programme document and any associated project risks. The applicant was also encouraged to ensure that issues raised throughout the pre-application stage are actively tracked, with clear records of how they have been addressed and resolved within the Issues Tracker. In light of recent legislative changes relating to consultation, the Inspectorate noted that it may be beneficial for the applicant to include reflections on its engagement activities. Given the increased flexibility around consultation requirements, greater emphasis can be placed on identifying key issues and demonstrating how they have been resolved.	
Master planning and design development	The Inspectorate reminded the applicant of previous advice regarding public rights of way and sought an update on how existing routes were being used and considered within the project's design development. The applicant confirmed that it has since visited these pathways to better understand how these routes are used by the community. The findings are being considered and brought into the design to ensure public	The Applicant acknowledges the importance of this element and is preparing a strategy that will outline its approach to public rights of way. This will be informed by public engagement as much as a review of information available, and will take into consideration other upcoming developments in the vicinity to ensure connectivity is retained and, in some cases, enhanced locally.

	rights of way which need to be moved will be done so in the best way possible for the locals.	
Issues Tracker	The Inspectorate welcomed the detailed nature of the Issues Tracker and advised that it should clearly demonstrate how matters raised throughout the pre-application process had influenced the development of the project. The Inspectorate advised that issues identified through consultation and engagement should be tracked throughout the pre-application stage, allowing the future Examining Authority to understand how issues had evolved, how they had been considered by the applicant and how they had informed the drafting of application documents. This will help any future Examining Authority in considering their Initial Assessment of Principal Issues. The Inspectorate emphasised the importance of maintaining a clear audit trail demonstrating engagement with consultees and stakeholders and showing how issues had been progressed towards resolution. It advised that the applicant should clearly evidence efforts undertaken to resolve	The Applicant agrees with this approach as a proactive approach to resolving issues and will continue to use Issues Trackers in its ongoing engagement.

	concerns and areas of disagreement wherever possible.	
Future Project Update Meetings	The Inspectorate advised that the timing of future project update meetings should be aligned with key project milestones and requested that the applicant provide notice of future meetings 6 weeks in advance where possible.	
Post Meeting Note: 29 October 2026		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Programme Document	The Inspectorate welcomes the updates made to the Programme Document and notes that it now provides a more detailed overview of the anticipated pre-application process, including the approach to stakeholder engagement, consultation, issue tracking and risk management. The Programme Document demonstrates how key workstreams are expected to progress through the pre-application stage, and how engagement activities will support the development of the application. The Inspectorate notes the applicant's intention to maintain and update the Programme Document as the project progresses. As the programme evolves, the applicant may wish to continue refining the	The applicant thanks the Inspectorate for this advice and will continue to update the Inspectorate and document at key milestones.

	sections on main issues for resolution and pre-application risks to ensure they remain focused on the key project specific matters that could influence the preparation, submission and examination of the application. The applicant may also find it helpful to continue updating the programme to reflect how engagement outcomes and technical work inform project development and decision-making throughout the pre-application process.	

South Kent Energy Park – Log of s51 advice given to others		
Person s51 advice given to	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**