

Sea Link

Section 51 Advice Log Version: 28 October 2025

There is a statutory duty under ['section 51 \(s51\) of the Planning Act 2008'](#) for The Planning Inspectorate to record the advice that it gives in relation to an application or potential application, and to make this publicly available.

This document comprises a record of the advice that has been provided by The Planning Inspectorate to the applicant (National Grid Electricity Transmission) and their consultants during the pre-application stage. It will be updated by The Planning Inspectorate after every interaction with the applicant during which s51 has been provided. The applicant will always be given the opportunity to comment on The Planning Inspectorate's draft record of advice before it is published.

The applicant will use this advice log as the basis for demonstrating regard to s51 advice within the application.

| Project name s51 Advice Log - Index | |
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| Date of meeting | Meeting overview |
| 24 July 2025 | Land Rights Tracker discussion – to discuss the expectations and discuss data structure that meets both Inspectorates and Applicants needs |
| 19 August 2025 | Land Rights Tracker follow up meeting |
| 08 September 2025 | Land Rights Tracker follow up meeting |
| 11 September 2025 | Change request meeting |
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| Project name - s51 Advice Library | |
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| Topic | Meeting date: 24 July 2025 |
| Land Rights Tracker | The Inspectorate explained its expectations and the requirement for having a land rights tracker. The Inspectorate advised this is an explicit effort to integrate different elements of an application in one location to assist efficient and effective examination for all parties. |
| Format and functionality of the tracker | The Inspectorate advised that the tracker needs to be dynamic, searchable and sortable database, preferably in Excel due to widespread use and functionality. It is open to different formats if there is more effective format for the Applicant. The Inspectorate advised to have one party per row per plot and use of separate tabs for e.g. landowners, statutory undertakers, etc to simplify the structure and to reduce unnecessary columns per tab. |
| Updates and submission of tracker at deadlines | The Applicant asked whether it needs to submit the updated versions of tracker at each deadline to which the Inspectorate advised that Excel and pdf versions are expected at each deadline. The Inspectorate advised to provide fewer, well-timed updates rather than at each deadline and clarified that track changes in Excel are not desired, instead used of consistent keywords or update tags will be appreciated. The Inspectorate advised that the updated Book of Reference will still be required at the final deadline. |
| Previous formats and templates | The Inspectorate provided references to previous projects where land rights tracker was used e.g. Immingham Green, Rampion and Gatwick. The Inspectorate suggested to review the Applicants sample submission when it is submitted and would be happy to have a follow up meeting if required. |
| Topic | Meeting date: 19 August 2025 |
| Land Rights Tracker | <p>The Inspectorate advised that where the tracker terminology refers to 'status of objection', this reflects the terminology used in compulsory acquisition guidance and does not imply an adversarial stance. Applicants may wish to clarify through explanatory notes that this term equates to 'status of negotiations' for plain English purposes.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that applicants should provide the header row and an example blank row from the Land Rights Tracker, along with details of any enhanced drop-down</p> |

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| | <p>menus (such as those for statutory undertakers), so the Examining Authority can review and align expectations.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that handling of land rights data must remain consistent with data protection requirements. Sensitive information will eventually be removed after the judicial review period, but applicants should still ensure clear structuring of data to allow for redaction if necessary.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that applicants should focus on efficient handling of information in the short term. Although future regulatory changes may simplify compulsory acquisition processes, the current regulations must be followed until updated. Any material change applications should be handled in line with existing statutory requirements, even if no new parties are affected.</p> |
| Format and functionality of the tracker | <p>The Inspectorate advised that the applicant may choose to provide additional subdivisions in the tracker, such as separating statutory undertakers, Crown land, and special category land, to make the document more manageable. However, this is at the applicant's discretion, provided the legal tests are still met.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that it is acceptable to submit the Land Rights Tracker in Excel format rather than as a PDF, since this format allows for filtering and searching while meeting publication requirements.</p> |
| Updates and submission of tracker at deadlines | <p>The Inspectorate advised that updates to the Land Rights Tracker should be proportionate. Applicants are not expected to update the tracker at every deadline, but only at compulsory acquisition-specific deadlines or where significant progress, such as agreements with major landowners, has been reached.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that the applicant should keep the traditional, simplified tracker for snapshot progress updates, and use the more detailed version for major deadlines. This dual approach would assist the Examining Authority in monitoring progress efficiently.</p> |
| Future Meeting | <p>The Inspectorate advised that a further meeting in September would provide an opportunity to review the fully populated tracker and confirm whether the agreed structure and presentation meets expectations.</p> |

| Topic | Meeting date:08 September 2025 |
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| Deadline for Land Rights Tracker (LRT) | The Inspectorate confirmed the deadline for LRT submission is 08 October 2025 as per Examining Authority's letter s89(3) letter dated 05 September 2025. |
| Size of Excel file | The applicant raised concerns on the size of the Excel document to which the Inspectorate advised that the size of the Excel file is not a concern. |
| Updates to LRT | The Inspectorate advised the applicant the number of LRT updates will be indicated in the Rule 6 letter but is roughly going to be every two months. No tracked changes versions will be required to be submitted. The negotiating annex will need to be updated more frequently. |
| Book of reference updates | The Inspectorate advised that the Book of Reference (BoR) will be used less going forward and LRT will be main document used by the Examining Authority during the Examination. The applicant to indicate their preference on the updates to the BoR, whether it be updating the BoR with every LRT update. The Inspectorate reiterated that the final version of BoR will be required at the final deadline. |
| Rule 6 letter | The applicant asked when the Rule 6 letter will be issued to which the Inspectorate confirmed that Rule 6 letter will go out after the relevant representation period is complete on 18 September 2025. |
| Topic | Meeting date: 11 September 2025 |
| Timing of Change request | The Inspectorate advised the applicant to consider the risk associated with submitting the change request later in the Examination and advised to submit the change request early to reduce the risk of non-acceptance. The applicant is planning to submit the change request in November 2025. |
| Revised cable route around the henge | The applicant confirmed that geophysical surveys would be carried out during September/ October 2025, and it proposes to submit these with the change application. The Inspectorate advised that where optionality remains, the ES addendum should assess the worst case for all remaining options. The applicant agreed that the addendum would assess the worst case scenario, including assessment of both the direct and indirect (setting) effects on the asset. It was noted that some stakeholders had identified the remains as being potentially |

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| | of schedulable quality. Ongoing archaeological works may provide more clarity on the extent and value of the asset. |
| Access at Hoverport, Kent | The applicant confirmed that whilst it proposed to extend the Order limits it would not be seeking optionality to use both existing access ramps and would provide a commitment in the register of environmental actions and commitments (REAC) restricting it to use of one ramp. |
| Engagement with Examining authority | The Inspectorate advised the applicant to set out clearly what information it can provide, what cannot be provided and when the information can be provided when responding to Examining authority's (ExA) request for information letters. The applicant should include estimated timescales to manage expectations which will help ExA understand the progress and reduces uncertainty. Where applicant is having ongoing stakeholder discussions, it would be helpful to explain its position transparently. |