



Planning Inspectorate

National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol, BS1 6PN

Customer Services: 0303 444 5000
e-mail: norwichtotilbury@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

To the applicant
(By email only)

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN020027

Date: 26 September 2025

Dear Mr Pepper

Planning Act 2008 – section 51

Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) for an order granting development consent for the Norwich to Tilbury project

Advice following issue of decision to accept the application for examination

On 26 September 2025 the Secretary of State decided that the application for the above project satisfied the acceptance tests under section 55 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). The Planning Inspectorate's acceptance checklist and the application documents have been published and made available on the project page of our website.

In undertaking checks at the acceptance stage, the Planning Inspectorate has made some initial observations in relation to the application. This letter comprises advice to the applicant provided under section 51 of the PA2008 in respect of these observations which are based on an initial review of the application documents.

The applicant should pay attention to the content of this letter and consider how appropriate action might be taken in response, and should note that following appointment of the Examining Authority, further information may be requested by them prior to the start of the examination.

Consultees identified on a precautionary basis

Given the individual circumstances of this case, the Planning Inspectorate advises taking a precautionary approach to consultation under s42(1)(a) of PA2008 to ensure that all persons potentially affected by, or potentially likely to have an interest in the application are given the opportunity to participate fully in the examination of the application. On this basis, the applicant may wish to serve notice on the bodies listed in Box 6 of the section 55 checklist when it serves notice of the accepted application under s56(2)(a) of the

PA2008, unless there is a specific justification why this is not necessary. If this is the case please notify us as soon as possible.

Environmental Statement (ES):

ES Volume 6 Chapter 8 Ecology and Biodiversity (6.8)

Table 8.4 of ES chapter 8 provides details of a number of post-March 2025 biodiversity surveys that either have recently taken place or are still ongoing until September 2025. Paragraph 8.4.6 states that any changes to the assessment will be presented as further environmental information as stated in Table 8.4.

The Planning Inspectorate notes the comments provided by Natural England (dated 4 July 2025) that has been submitted as an appendix to the application cover letter, dated 29 August 2025 (1.2). The Planning Inspectorate notes that the applicant has adopted a worst-case scenario approach of an assumed presence for a species unless proven otherwise.

Table 8.4 of ES Volume 6 Chapter 8 states that the further information will be “*available in November 2025*”. However, it is unclear whether this means that it will be available for consultation with the relevant statutory and local organisations or that it will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in November 2025. The Planning Inspectorate advises the applicant to clarify the timetable of submission of this information

ES Volume 6 Chapter 11 Historic Environment (6.11) and Figure 11.4 Geophysical survey and archaeological trial trenching priority areas (6.11.F4)

The pre-application engagement with Historic England and the relevant Councils since November 2023 regarding archaeological evaluation fieldwork is noted by the Planning Inspectorate, including the agreement of certain areas as ‘priority areas’ where geophysical surveys commenced in summer 2023 and trial trenching since Autumn 2024. The results of this fieldwork are contained within Appendices 11.3, 11.4, and 11.5 and incorporated in Section 11.5 to inform the baseline for assessment. It is noted that archaeological work on these areas and upon ‘phase 2 areas’ is ongoing and will continue into 2026, and that this approach has been agreed with the relevant statutory bodies. Table 11.2 of chapter 11 of the ES details these works to a certain degree, with a map of priority areas included in figure 11.4. It is noted that results from these further works is programmed to be submitted at various times: November 2025 prior to the start of the Examination; shared and agreed with Stakeholders early in 2026; and throughout 2026.

The Planning Inspectorate advises the applicant provides further clarification on such works in terms of details of the nature and location of the further works, and how and when the results will be submitted (see below regarding updates to the ES). It would also be beneficial if the results and analysis were submitted together where possible to avoid the drip feeding of information.

Updates to ES documents

The Planning Inspectorate advises the applicant to clarify how this further environmental information will be incorporated into the information that has already been submitted. For example, updated versions of chapters with each of the relevant ES appendices would be

helpful, with both a 'clean' and a 'tracked changes' version of each revised document submitted at the relevant time.

Consultation on survey works

In addition to the above, the applicant is advised to provide details of its proposed consultation and publicity procedures that would accompany this further environmental information once it is available. Confirmation of the acceptance of the stated key stakeholders of the approach taken for the additional surveys would also be helpful.

Development Consent Order (3.1)

Schedule 9A (Article 21): It is unclear why this schedule is suffixed 'A' rather than given an individual number. Also, the OS grid references are missing; there is no explanation for this. The applicant is advised to check all referencing is correct.

Funding statement (4.2)

The Funding Statement identifies the cost of the scheme based on a 2020-2021 cost base. This is somewhat dated and does not align with the cost of acquiring all the necessary land and rights which is estimated on 2024/2025 figures. The Planning Inspectorate advises that the applicant update the cost base to the latest available figures and align with the costs of acquiring the land which are a constituent part.

Missing land information, minor errors and omissions (Box 30)

There are a number of matters raised in Box 30 of the section 55 acceptance checklist. These include missing information with regard to the special category and crown land plans (2.14) and minor errors relating to primary access route plans (6.16.F1).

It is noted that a shortened version of the land rights tracker (LRT) has been submitted, being the negotiations tracker element. It is also noted that the cover letter (1.2) states that the full, enhanced version of the LRT will be submitted during the pre-examination period. Please ensure that this is submitted at the earliest opportunity and **prior to the commencement of the relevant representation period**.

Please pay close attention to the advice set out in this letter and act on it accordingly. It is requested that you action the matters reflected in Box 30 of the acceptance checklist referred to above **prior to the commencement of the relevant representation period**.

With regard to all other points referred to in this letter, it would be helpful and assist the examination process for you to submit a timetable for submission of the information or amendments to application documents to the Planning Inspectorate, also **prior to the commencement of the relevant representation period**. The latest date for receipt of all information should be at least 10 working days before the preliminary meeting.

We trust you find this advice helpful, however if you have any queries on these matters please do not hesitate to contact our office using the contact details at the head of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Siân Evans
Case Manager

This communication does not constitute legal advice.
Please view our [Privacy Notice](#) before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.