



# Preliminary meeting note

**Application:** Norwich to Tilbury  
**Reference:** EN020027  
**Time and date:** 10:00am Tuesday 10 February 2026  
**Venue:** Sir Bobby Robson Suite at Ipswich Town Football Club, Portman Rd, Ipswich, IP1 2DA

*This meeting note is not a full transcript of the preliminary meeting. It is a summary of the key points discussed.*

## 1. Welcome and Introduction

Susan Hunt (SH) welcomed those present and introduced herself as the lead member of the panel of Examining Inspectors, and Christopher Butler, Jonathan Hockley, Matthew Sims and Kenneth Stone introduced themselves as panel members to examine the Norwich to Tilbury application.

SH explained the appointment was made by delegation from the Secretary of State (SoS) for Housing, Communities and Local Government on 29 September 2025.

SH explained that the ExA would be examining the application made by National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) ('the applicant') before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State who will decide whether an order granting development consent for the proposed project, which is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), should be made.

SH explained the purpose of the preliminary meeting (PM) and noted that the Examination will commence after the PM closes.

The ExA confirmed that all documents and submissions received and accepted during the Examination will be published on the project-specific page of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

## 2. Audio recording

The video recording of this PM is available on the National Infrastructure Planning website and can be accessed [here](#).

## 3. Examination process

The ExA briefly explained the examination process under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008), further info can be found:

- ['Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: What to expect at a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project event'](#)
- ['Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Registering to speak at, or attend, an event'](#)

The ExA asked the applicant to provide an update on its proposed change request. The applicant advised that it had held two face to face consultations, and that it anticipates submitting the change request by deadline 4 as set out in its original notification.

#### **4. Initial assessment of principal issues**

The ExA explained the purpose of the initial assessment of principal issues (IAPI) (section 88 of the PA2008), which can be found in [annex C](#) of the [Rule 6](#) letter of 13 January 2026 and asked for any observations on them.

TLT on behalf of Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) raised the issues of the compatibility between the permanent works for Norwich to Tilbury and location of the works on LTC, the overlap on land powers and the compatibility of construction proposals and programs and the subsequent effects and requested that LTC be given greater prominence in the IAPI.

The British Pipeline Agency submitted comments on the IAPI to the ExA in writing on 10 February 2026 and this was published as [AS-086](#).

#### **5. Examination Timetable**

The ExA noted requests, already received in writing to amend the draft examination timetable contained in [annex D](#) of [Rule 6](#) letter and also welcomed further suggestions from the parties in attendance.

The ExA summarised the timetable changes suggested by the applicant in their procedural deadline A submission. The applicant highlighted the two main changes as moving deadline (D) 2 to Monday 16 March and including a final deadline for the applicant to wrap up issues such as Crown land at the end of the examination.

Suffolk County Council (SCC) stated with regard to the final wrap up deadline, it's important that the other parties are given an opportunity to respond to material submitted at D7. It also suggested that if the timetable is left as it is, an additional deadline could be inserted between D8 and the close of the examination.

Essex County Council (ECC) raised concern with regard to any proposals to bring forward D6. That deadline could include post hearing submissions and if those hearings include topics on which they will be participating, they will not have sufficient time to prepare for an earlier D6. ECC added that they request more time for D3 and D5.

Norfolk County Council supported the comments made by SCC and ECC with regard to D3 and D5.

The applicant advised that it would submit a response in writing with regard to SCC's suggestion of an additional deadline at the end of the examination. This was received on 10 February 2026 and published as [AS-085](#).

Pylons East Anglia asked the ExA to give parties an opportunity to respond to Issue Specific Hearing (ISH) 1 at D1 and leave open the option of having a further ISH on alternatives.

The North-West and South-West of Chelmsford Parishes Group, Ardleigh Parish Council, Little Bromley Parish Council, Tendring District Council and the General

Aviation Council all supported Pylons East Anglia's request for a further ISH on alternatives.

All comments received were duly noted by the ExA and considerations will be reflected in the rule 8 Letter.

## 6. Hearings and site inspections

The ExA clarified the purpose of:

- issue specific hearings
- compulsory acquisition hearings
- open floor hearings
- accompanied site inspections
- unaccompanied and access required site inspections

The ExA sought comments on the arrangements for the above events.

The ExA noted comments had been received at procedural deadline A on the choice of Orsett Hall as a venue location and asked the applicant to comment on this. The applicant explained that it was difficult to find suitable venues for hearings due to the relatively short notice given of hearing dates. Colchester Football Stadium was its first choice of venue, but it was unavailable for the week of the preliminary meeting. The applicant advised that the venue is on hold for the first half of the week commencing 27 April that is reserved for hearings in the draft timetable. Orsett Hall was available and had been used for the LTC hearings and was therefore considered a suitable venue.

Ardleigh Parish Council and Little Bromley Parish Council stated that Colchester Football Stadium would have been their preferred location but they also offered Ardleigh Village Hall as a suitable venue for future hearings. Pylons East Anglia also supported Colchester Football Stadium as a suitable venue.

SCC requested early notice of topics at hearings via a headline agenda as well as detailed, supplementary agendas closer to the hearing.

The comments were duly noted and considered by the ExA.

Further information relating to hearings and site inspections can be found here:

- ['Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: What to expect at a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project event'](#)
- ['Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Registering to speak at, or attend, an event'](#)

## 7. Procedural decisions

The ExA clarified the procedural decisions made under section 89(3) of the PA2008 and asked for any observations.

Procedural decisions can be found in [annex F](#) of the [Rule 6](#) Letter.

No comments were made by any of the parties in attendance.

## 8. Any other matters

The applicant was asked to explain its proposed use of Smart Atlas, a GIS mapping tool, in hearings. The applicant advised that most of the time they will use application drawings and plans however there are occasions where it would make matters clearer for the ExA and public to view an interactive map.

Pylons East Anglia, Lower Thames Crossing, Ardleigh and Little Bromley Parish Councils and Norfolk County Council indicated that they would welcome use of this tool in hearings.

The ExA confirmed that it was content with its use with the caveat that it is understood that it is used as a presentational orientation tool, for information only, and is not evidence before the examination. Its purpose is purely to assist in the understanding and orientation of the application during hearings. The applicant confirmed that the information and data that is used in the platform is accurate.

LTC requested that the maps show the overlap between the projects.

Ardleigh and Little Bromley Parish Council requested the maps show the overlap with the Five Estuaries and North Falls projects.