

AENC-NG-CNS-REP-0282

Norwich to Tilbury

Volume 8: Examination Documents

**Document: 8.5.1 Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions
to the Preliminary Meeting**

Final Issue A

February 2026

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

nationalgrid

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1. About this Document

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document summarises the case put by National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc (the Applicant), at the Preliminary Meeting on 10 February 2026 for the Norwich to Tilbury project (referred to as the Project).
- 1.1.2 The Preliminary Meeting opened at 10am and closed at 12:45pm. The Rule 6 letter containing the agenda (at Annex A) for the meeting was published on the Planning Inspectorate's website on 13 January 2026 **[PD-009]**.
- 1.1.3 The Applicant submitted its Response to the Rule 6 Letter dated 27 January 2026 at Procedural Deadline A **[PDA-001]**.
- 1.1.4 In what follows, the Applicant's submissions on the points raised broadly follow the items set out in the Examining Authority's (ExA) agenda.

1.2 Attendees on Behalf of the Applicant

- 1.2.1 Mr Russell Harris KC, Counsel instructed by Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner (BCLP) appeared on behalf of National Grid, the Applicant.
- 1.2.2 The following representatives were also present:
- Mr Simon Pepper, National Grid
 - Mr Liam Walker, National Grid
 - Mr Christian Drage, BCLP
 - Mr Ian Fletcher, National Grid.

2. Applicant’s Summary of Case on Item 2: The ExA’s Remarks About the Examination Process

2.1 Item 2 (The ExA’s Remarks About the Examination Process)

Table 2.1 Item 2 (The ExA’s remarks about the examination process)

Issue Discussed	Summary of Oral Case
Change process	<p>The Applicant noted that it had notified the ExA of its intention to submit two change requests [AS-049] and [AS-050] and is currently undertaking consultation on these. The Applicant is following the advice provided by the ExA in its letter dated 19 December 2025. Two face-to-face consultation events have been undertaken and as expected, these were sparsely attended.</p> <p>The Applicant is currently reviewing the consultation responses and is anticipating making the application for a change, at Deadline 4 as set out in its letters dated 12 December 2026 [AS-049 and AS-050].</p> <p><i>*(Post-hearing note: the Applicant intends to submit both change applications by 27 March 2026. Following the submissions, it is anticipated that any consequential changes or updates required to be made to other DCO application documents in the event that the changes are accepted into the Examination, would be submitted at Deadline 4.</i></p>

3. Applicant’s Summary of Case on Item 3: Initial Assessment of Principal Issues

3.1 Item 3 (Initial Assessment of Principal Issues)

Table 3.1 Item 3 (Initial assessment of principal issues)

Issue Discussed	Summary of Oral Case
Pylon East Anglia	<p>The ExA noted that it expects the Applicant to respond to the list of questions raised by Pylons East Anglia in their Procedural Deadline A response [PDA-015 and PDA-016] at Deadline 1.</p> <p>The Applicant noted this action and has provided a response to the questions raised by Pylons East Anglia at Deadline 1 (document 8.4.6 Applicant’s comments on submissions received at Procedural Deadline A).</p>
Lower Thames Crossing	<p>The Applicant confirmed that in terms of the interactions with Lower Thames Crossing, that it thinks it is capable of these being encapsulated within the existing Initial Assessment of Principle Issues IAPI and that it expects Lower Thames Crossing matters to be explored fully during the examination process.</p>

4. Applicant’s Summary of Case on Item 4: Draft Examination Timetable

4.1 Item 4 (Draft Examination Timetable)

Table 4.1 Item 4 (Draft examination timetable)

Issue Discussed	Summary of Oral Case
Deadline dates – general	<p>The Applicant has set out its requests and reasons for changes to dates in its Applicant’s Response to the Rule 6 Letter [PDA-001].</p> <p>The Applicant’s main request is in relation to the extension of Deadline 2, where it has requested two additional working days (moving from Thursday 12 March to Monday 16 March). This would allow extra time for the Applicant to respond to the Local Authorities Local Impact Reports, of which it is expecting 12 potentially lengthy documents.</p> <p>The Applicant recognises the constraints that the ExA is under regarding the Examination timetable and the responses received from the different parties, and it will work within the programme set out in the Rule 8 letter.</p>
Proposed new deadline	<p>In terms of the creation of the proposed new Deadline 9, the Applicant confirmed that this is not essential and if the ExA decide to stick broadly with the original timetable, the Applicant will stand ready to present its case as fully and as helpfully as it can within those timescales.</p> <p>In response to Mr Michael Bedford’s proposal of an interim deadline for the Applicant between Deadline 8 and closing of Examination, the Applicant agreed to respond in writing by close of play 10 February 2026*.</p>

Table Notes: * The written response was set out in a letter submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 10 February 2026; see [AS-085]

5. Applicant’s Summary of Case on Item 5: Procedural Decisions Taken by the ExA

5.1 Item 5 (Procedural Decisions Taken by the ExA)

Table 5.1 Item 5 (Procedural decisions taken by the ExA)

Issue Discussed	Summary of Oral Case
Interrelationships with other projects	The Applicant made no oral submission in relation to this item but has submitted 8.4.3 Report on Interrelationship with other Projects [Revision A] at Deadline 1. This will be updated at future deadlines, as requested in the Rule 6 letter [PD-009]
Land rights tracker	The Applicant made no oral submission in relation to this item but has submitted an update in both formats to 4.4 Pre-application Land and Rights Negotiations Tracker [Revision B] at Deadline 1, meeting the ExA’s request in the Rule 6 letter for this deadline.
Policy compliance document tracker	The Applicant made no oral submission in relation to this item but has submitted 8.4.2 Policy Compliance Tracker [Revision A] at Deadline 1, which provides the further policy documents requested.

6. Applicant’s Summary of Case on Item 6: Format of Future Hearings and Accompanied Site Inspection

6.1 Item 6 (Format of Future Hearings and Accompanied Site Inspection)

Table 6.1 Item 6 (Format of future hearings and accompanied site inspection)

Issue Discussed	Summary of Oral Case
Venues for hearings	<p>The Applicant noted that a well-known issue with booking hearings for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects is that the booking can only be made a few weeks before the venue is required. Others competing for venues book many months in advance.</p> <p>The Applicant tried to secure Colchester Football Stadium, as its preferred venue for the February hearings but it was not available for the dates requested by the Planning Inspectorate, i.e. week commencing 9 February. This was confirmed on 6 February by Colchester Football Stadium as the previously booked events were still taking place.</p> <p>Colchester Football Stadium is the Applicant’s preferred venue for future rounds of hearings, and the Applicant has currently got a non-contractual hold on this venue for the first three days of the April hearings (week commencing 27 April as set out in the Rule 6 letter [PD-009]). Colchester Football Stadium is not available for the Thursday and Friday of that week.</p> <p>In terms of Orsett Hall, this was used on Lower Thames Crossing, where the Applicant is not aware of any issues being raised regarding access.</p>

7. Applicant’s Summary of Case on Item 7: Any Remaining Questions or Submissions Regarding Procedural Matters That Have Been Submitted in Writing by Procedural Deadline A (27 January 2026)

7.1 Item 7 (Any Remaining Questions or Submissions Regarding Procedural Matters That Have Been Submitted in Writing by Procedural Deadline A (27 January 2026))

Table 7.1 Item 7 (Any remaining questions or submissions regarding procedural matters that have been submitted in writing by Procedural Deadline A (27 January 2026))

Issue Discussed	Summary of Oral Case
Any remaining questions or submissions regarding procedural matters that have been submitted in writing by Procedural Deadline A (27 January 2026)	The Applicant made no oral submissions in relation to Item 7.

8. Applicant’s Summary of Case on Item 8: Any Other Matters

8.1 Item 8 (Any Other Matters)

Table 8.1 Item 8 (Any other matters)

Issue Discussed	Summary of Oral Case
Request by the Applicant for using Smart Atlas	<p>The Applicant proposes the use of Smart Atlas to aid the display of geographical information during hearings quickly and efficiently. The same information is available in the application, for example on the Environmental Statement plans. A simplified version of Smart Atlas is also available as an interactive map on the Project website.</p> <p>Smart Atlas uses an OS base and provides a quicker and more efficient means of displaying data already in Examination rather than having to flick between perhaps two or three separate application maps.</p> <p>The Applicant noted the ExA’s comment about using this platform as a presentational visualisation or orientation tool for information purposes only, and that this is not evidence before Examination.</p>

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