

Chesterfield to Willington – EN0210001

National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) plc

Section 51 Advice Log

Version: 29 April 2026

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 Inspectorate to the applicant (National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) Plc) and their consultants during the pre-application stage. It will be updated by the 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 Inspectorate's draft record of advice before it is published.

The applicant will use this Advice Log as the basis for demonstrating regard to section 51 advice within the application.

Chesterfield to Willington s51 Advice Log - Index	
22 October 2024	Advice on Programme Document
6 March 2025	Engagement Compulsory Acquisition Environment Agency Update Local Authorities Local Authorities Examination Stage Land Rights Tracker Linear Webinar and Good Design Advice Page
6 May 2025	Environmental Statement
23 October 2025	Updated Pre-Application Prospectus
24 November 2025	<u>Project Update Meeting:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Documents • Substations • Surveys • Stakeholder Feedback and Collaboration • Landowner engagement
29 April 2026	<u>Project Update Meeting:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Documents • Substations • Surveys • Stakeholder Feedback and Collaboration • Landowner engagement

Chesterfield to Willington - S51 Advice Library

22 October 2024

Advice on Programme Document

Topic

Programme Document

Good demonstration of compliance with the Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects Guidance. The Applicant will be aware that one of the mandatory components of the new pre-application service (for all service tiers), as set out in the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus, is demonstrating regard to advice. As such this should be clearly reflected in the application documents.

The Applicant must ensure that the Programme Document (PD) is hosted and maintained on the Applicant's website

Whilst the PD sets out that the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) will be developed ahead of Statutory Consultation, it would be helpful if the dates were listed in the table setting out the submission timeframe.

Whilst the Inspectorate acknowledges that key milestones are sometime in the future i.e. statutory consultation in Q4 2025, draft document review in Q2 2026, and submission in Q4 2026, it would be helpful if these timeframes could be narrowed, and the updated PD published, in due course.

It is not clear from the PD whether the Applicant has allowed time for a further period of targeted/full consultation, after the statutory consultation has been undertaken. Given the linear nature of the project the Inspectorate advises the Applicant to consider whether a further consultation period prior to submission would be necessary and if so, add possible timescales to the PD.

It would be helpful if the PD could provide approximate timescales for future project update meetings with the Inspectorate. It would also be helpful to list any meetings with key stakeholders to enable those parties to deploy resources effectively.

Topic

Meeting on 6 March 2025

Engagement

The Inspectorate advised the applicant, when meeting action groups and local individuals, to signpost to published advice pages and guidance, to assist with knowledge of the Planning Act 2008 process. The Inspectorate also highlighted the

	usefulness of having action groups representing communities to assist a smoother examination.
Compulsory Acquisition	The Inspectorate explained that once the red line boundary has been finalised it would be useful to have regular updates on likely amount of compulsory acquisition powers being sought as this can have an impact on the appointment of the Examining Authority.
Environment Agency update	The Inspectorate noted that the Environment Agency has published flood and coastal erosion risk data in 2025 following the release of its "National assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk in England 2024". Further updates are also expected to follow. The applicant should ensure that assessments take account of updated data sets as these become available through Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra) Data Services Platform.
Local Authorities	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to consider whether any Planning Performance Agreements cover the whole process and not just the pre-application stage.
Local Authorities examination stage	The Inspectorate explained that it can be helpful for local authorities to work collaboratively and appoint a representative to lead during the examination, as has been done on previous projects, such as the Southampton to London Pipeline project.
Land Rights Tracker	The Inspectorate explained that the land rights tracker template needs to follow the standard format. However, the Inspectorate would welcome any suggestions or feedback from the applicant on its format. Post meeting note The template is available in the Pre-application Prospectus .
Linear webinar and Good Design advice page	The Inspectorate noted that a linear project webinar was taking place on Thursday 6 March 2025, following the publication of the linear project advice page . The Inspectorate also highlighted the good design advice page and advised the applicant to demonstrate how it has had regard to this advice when preparing the application for submission.
Topic	Meeting on 6 May 2025
Environmental Statement	The applicant set out the proposed alternative corridor. The Inspectorate advised the applicant to discuss any changes to the Environmental Statement scope with relevant consultation bodies and ensure that the decision making was well documented.
Topic	Advice (Email) 23 October 2025

Pre-application prospectus	<p>The Inspectorate has advised that, following a 6-month review of our services, our Pre-Application Prospectus has been updated: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus. The update log at the bottom of the page summaries the changes and clarifications that have been applied.</p> <p>Applicants with a live project at the pre-application stage of the process, please familiarise yourself with the update and consider how it might affect your pre-application programme and interaction with our services.</p> <p>Please note in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of land and rights negotiations tracking as a primary service feature – this means it is now expected for all applicants to develop and share a land and rights negotiations tracker in 1 of 2 available templates, irrespective of the service tier they have subscribed to • Clarified expectations of the applicants when preparing to interact with the Inspectorate at meetings – including clarified rights for the Inspectorate to delay or refuse service where premeeting expectations are not upheld e.g. an update programme document or issues tracker is not provided, on time, to inform meeting agenda.
Topic	Meeting date: 24 November 2025
Draft Documents	<p>The applicant advised that the programme is currently undergoing review and dates are subject to change, which will be communicated with the Inspectorate when the Programme Document is next updated.</p> <p>The applicant stated that it aims to submit draft documents for the Inspectorate’s review in February 2027.</p> <p>In relation to the Environmental Statement (ES), the Inspectorate clarified that the standard service only allows for the project description chapter to be reviewed. The Inspectorate also advised that it is useful for the draft Development Consent Order (DCO) and draft Explanatory Memorandum to be submitted, as it enables a comparison to be made with the project description chapter as part of the review.</p> <p>Where there are no or minimal Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) issues associated with a project, review of the draft HRA report may be substituted for a different document or part-document review, for example a draft topic chapter or specific topic issues in the ES.</p>
Substations	The applicant explained that other related applications were being progressed in parallel to the DCO application:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Brinsworth to High Marnham application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to obtain consent for the new Chesterfield substation; • modification works to the existing Willington Substation, to facilitate new customer connections in the region, it is currently anticipated to be delivered under permitted development rights (design and consenting strategy under development); and • diversion works by Distribution Network Operators, for undergrounding parts of the existing 132kV overhead line that passes through the draft Order Limits. <p>The Inspectorate advised the applicant to clearly distinguish in its consultation material, the DCO application from other related planning applications, to ensure consultees can make informed responses on the proposed development. However, it is also useful to inform parties on how they may comment on these other related developments. The applicant recognised this and said that any cumulative effects arising from the extensions to the Willington substation, for example, would be addressed in the relevant ES chapter.</p>
Surveys	<p>The Inspectorate advised that the ES should set out any survey limitations and resulting assumptions made within the ES, as well as implications to carrying out seasonal surveys (such as for wintering birds), if there were any restrictions to accessing land either by voluntary agreement with landowners or using powers under section 172 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. In reply, the applicant confirmed that 87% of the land needed for surveys had been accessed, with season one wintering birds surveys completed, and season two underway and geophysical surveys to begin shortly, and UK Habitat surveys almost completed. Other surveys are currently being undertaken to support the ES.</p>
Stakeholder Feedback and Collaboration	<p>The Inspectorate advised that joint statements from Local Planning Authorities has occurred on other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project applications, but that it is important to check with the relevant authorities that they have the appropriate procedures and resources in place, as part of its discussions on Planning Performance Agreements, should they need to comment individually on aspects of the proposed development and require specialist advisers. These resources should be secured before examination takes place.</p>
Landowner engagement	<p>The Inspectorate advised that, following statutory consultation and design change review, it would be useful to receive an update on the extent of compulsory acquisition required to deliver the scheme and have relevant information provided in a Land Rights Tracker.</p>

Topic	Meeting date: 29 April 2026
Draft Documents	The Inspectorate reiterated its advice that, as part of the draft document review, it can review the Environmental Impact Assessment methodology chapter and a draft Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) report. Where there are no or minimal HRA issues associated with a project, review of the draft HRA report may be substituted for a different document or part-document review, for example a draft topic chapter or specific topic issues in the environmental statement.
Surveys	The applicant gave an update on its progress on collecting survey data. The Inspectorate reiterated its advice from the last meeting that the Environmental Statement (ES) should set out any survey limitations and resulting assumptions made within the ES. It recommended that the ES clearly identify the specific areas where surveys have not been undertaken. It advised the applicant to seek agreement with relevant consultation bodies that the survey coverage baseline has been established sufficiently for examination.
Issues Tracker	<p>The Inspectorate asked for an update on the development of the issues tracker and, if possible, the land negotiations tracker at the next project update meeting.</p> <p>Post meeting note The issues tracker should include the key issues/themes starting to emerge and how these have been addressed and RAG (red, amber, green) ratings of the progress made in completing assessments and reaching agreements</p>
Local Plans	The Inspectorate, in response to a query about reference to local plans/specific policies of neighbouring authorities, such as landscape and visual policies, advised that this is a matter of judgement. Consideration should be given to the purpose of the relevant landscape and visual policy, and whether the project would have an impact upon it and, if so, it may need to be taken into account. Engagement with the relevant neighbouring local authority may also be required. The Inspectorate suggests Dean Moor Planning Statement as an example.
Programme Document	Post meeting advice: The latest Programme Document continues to contain the expected content as set out in the government's pre-application guidance at paragraph 10. However, while the applicant has provided a list of topics likely to arise from the proposal, it is helpful if applicants can set out a high-level summary of the main landscape, ecological and built heritage constraints across the site and nearby, which may require particular assessment / control documents and where agreements need to be reached with relevant statutory consultees on the scope of surveys to be undertaken, likely mitigation needed, and methodology to be used before the application is submitted.

	<p>This will assist the Inspectorate and other parties to gain a quick understanding of main features and constraints in the area and across the site, and the issues to be addressed.</p> <p>Further detail can then to be added to the Issues Tracker, with the main issues rated 'green', 'amber', and 'red' to indicate the level of progress made in respect of completing assessments and reaching agreements with relevant consultees. The information of which will then form part of the applicant's 'main issues for examination' document.</p>
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