

Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire

Section 51 Advice Log Version: 22 September 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 plc (NGET) 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	
Date of meeting	Meeting overview
03 September 2025	<u>Project Update Meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 consultation review • Stakeholder engagement update • EIA Scoping and surveys update • Project timeline update • Next steps and AOB

Project name - s51 Advice Library	
Topic	Meeting date: 03 September 2025
Project update	<p>The Inspectorate queried whether the two new proposed substations (known as WMEL-A and WMEL-B), which will be included within the Development Consent Order (DCO), will also be pursued separately under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA1990). The applicant confirmed that the current consenting strategy includes both substations in the DCO application and does not envisage separate TCPA1990 applications.</p>
Stage 1 consultation review	<p>The Inspectorate queried whether there had been any comments on the location and geographic spread of the consultation events, and whether any areas were less accessible. The Inspectorate encouraged the applicant to consider the accessibility of future events, and the applicant confirmed it was doing so, along with analysing the demographic of attendees to encourage a broad range of groups.</p> <p>The Inspectorate encouraged the applicant to continue to keep local residents, stakeholders and groups informed.</p> <p>The Inspectorate queried whether any gypsy and traveller sites were identified along the route, noting that the public sector equality duty (PSED) would need to be considered. The applicant confirmed that none had been identified thus far but this will be monitored.</p> <p>The Inspectorate highlighted that where coordinating consultations with other projects, the applicant should consider how to ensure the information presented and responses received clearly differentiate between the two projects.</p>
Stakeholder engagement update	<p>The Inspectorate queried whether planning performance agreements (PPA) with the host local authorities covered the pre-application stage only or extended to subsequent stages. The Inspectorate encouraged the applicant to consider whether the PPA should cover potential post-decision matters to ensure that local authorities have the necessary resources, thereby reducing risk to the applicant's programme. The applicant explained that this is being considered internally.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised the importance of evidencing engagement with local authorities when structuring the consultation report. The Inspectorate also advised that,</p>

	<p>where no responses are received, it would be helpful to clearly state that engagement was undertaken but no responses were received.</p> <p>The Inspectorate queried how many land owners and category 3 persons (C3Ps) had been identified to date and advised that it is useful to have an indication of how many plots are likely to be included. The Inspectorate noted that the extent of compulsory acquisition (CA) can influence the appointment of the Examining Authority (ExA). The applicant confirmed that CA updates would be provided at future meetings.</p>
EIA Scoping and surveys update	<p>The applicant confirmed that they are preparing the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping report, and the scoping request is currently anticipated to be submitted in October or November 2025. The applicant confirmed that the scoping boundary is broader than the anticipated draft order limits and will be refined as the project progresses.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that justifications should be sufficiently clear and detailed to facilitate agreement to scope out topics, particularly when signposting to other legislation.</p> <p>Introductory meetings have been held with key statutory stakeholders including Natural England (NE), the Environment Agency (EA), Historic England (HE) and National Highways (NH). The applicant explained that it will be engaging with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), in due course.</p> <p>The Inspectorate asked whether the applicant had experienced any difficulties with land access for surveys and whether any were anticipated. The applicant confirmed that no access applications had been made to date and that all surveys conducted so far had been on public land. Site access was not expected until January 2026. The Inspectorate advised that any issues with land access should be flagged early, as such concerns may carry through to the examination stage.</p> <p>The Inspectorate also signposted to advice set out in the Inspectorate's Advice Note Seven which sets out that the GIS shapefile should be submitted to the Inspectorate at least 10 working days before the submission of the request for a scoping opinion.</p> <p>The Inspectorate strongly advised the applicant to avoid submitting the scoping request at a time that would mean either the 28 day statutory scoping consultation, or 42 day statutory deadline for adopting the scoping opinion, covers the Christmas period. The Inspectorate drew on previous experience of scoping consultations at this time of year and</p>

	<p>explained that many of the consultation bodies are unlikely to have the resource to fully respond by the 28 day statutory scoping consultation deadline, which may make the scoping opinion less helpful. The applicant's intention is to submit the scoping request in October or November 2025, avoiding the Christmas period.</p>
Project timeline	<p>The applicant confirmed that stage 1 consultation was completed in August, and that stage 2 consultation is scheduled to commence in September 2026.</p> <p>The Development Consent Order (DCO) application is currently programmed for submission between January and March 2028. Construction of the proposed development was anticipated to begin in 2030, with completion targeted for 2034.</p> <p>The Inspectorate welcomed the inclusion of tracked changes within the programme document, noting this as a helpful approach for monitoring updates and progress.</p>
Next steps and AOB	<p>The Inspectorate queried whether any crown land falls within the proposed order limits. The applicant confirmed that a small area of crown land was present but was likely to be avoided due to its limited extent.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised the applicant of the importance of initiating and progressing engagement with The Crown Estate.</p>
Topic	Meeting date: DD Month YYYY