Planning Inspectorate

Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire

Section 51 Advice Log
Version: 26 August 2026

This document comprises a record of the s51 advice that has been given by the Planning Inspectorate to the applicant (National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (NGET)) during the pre-application stage. It will be updated by the Planning Inspectorate after every interaction with the applicant within which s51 advice has been given.

The applicant will always be given the opportunity to comment on the Planning Inspectorate's draft record of the s51 advice given before it is published on the relevant project page on the Find a National Infrastructure Project website.

The role of the advice log at the acceptance stage

Section 55(4) of the PA2008 requires the Planning Inspectorate to consider, amongst other things, the extent to which the applicant has had regard to the s51 advice given by the Planning Inspectorate in connection with the application when deciding if the application can be accepted for examination. Section 51 advice includes:

- advice given about applying for an order granting development consent
- advice given about making representations about an application for an order granting development consent

The applicant will use this advice log as the tool for demonstrating:

- regard to the s51 advice given to the applicant by the Planning Inspectorate
- regard to any s51 advice given to others by the Planning Inspectorate

The applicant will submit a final version of this advice log which demonstrates regard to all s51 given by the Planning Inspectorate at the pre-application stage as part of the application.

Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire – Applicant meeting index	
Date of meeting	**Meeting overview**
13 June 2025	Inception Meeting
03 September 2025	Project Update Meeting • Stage 1 consultation review • Stakeholder engagement update • EIA Scoping and surveys update • Project timeline update • Next steps and AOB
19 February 2026	Email update on pre-application services
23 February 2026	EIA Scoping Opinion meeting EIA Scoping Opinion queries
25 February 2026	Project Update Meeting • Lands update • Stakeholder engagement update • Programme • Next steps and AOB
16 July 2026	Advice in relation to amendments to the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008)
26 August 2026	Email advice in relation to the Issues Tracker
26 August 2026	Project Update Meeting • Lands update • Stakeholder engagement update • Next steps and AOB

Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire – Log of s51 given to the applicant		
Meeting date: 13 June 2025		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Detailed description of the proposed development	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to clearly justify the need for any associated development and explain how it supports and relates to the NSIP. Consultation materials should clearly describe the proposed reconductoring works using diagrams and visual aids where appropriate and should provide landowners with clear information on likely construction activities, access requirements, timing of works and potential effects on land.	
Consenting programme	The Inspectorate advised that project milestone dates would be presented as specific months on the project webpage to support consistency and resource planning. The applicant was requested to keep the Inspectorate informed of any changes to anticipated programme dates.	
The pre-application programme document	The Inspectorate considered the Programme Document to be a strong example of alignment with government guidance. It advised the applicant to include indicative timescales for future meetings and engagement activities to support stakeholder resource planning. The Inspectorate also	

	recommended identifying any Crown land, special category land or statutory undertaker interests, providing updates on the progress of relevant agreements, and including additional information on emerging environmental issues as these develop through consultation.	
Early engagement with stakeholders	The Inspectorate highlighted the value of the local planning authority network in supporting authorities with limited DCO experience and noted the resources made available by Suffolk County Council, including through its NSIP Centre of Excellence.	
Environmental considerations, EIA scoping and surveys	The Inspectorate emphasised the importance of early engagement with key stakeholders, including Network Rail, to support the development of any required protective provisions. The applicant was advised to take account of the Environment Agency's updated flood risk datasets and guidance when progressing environmental assessment work. In relation to EIA scoping, the Inspectorate advised the applicant to carefully consider the timing of the scoping programme, particularly where activities may coincide with holiday periods. The Inspectorate also highlighted Advice Note 7 as a useful source of technical and procedural guidance for preparing the scoping request. The Inspectorate noted that the proposed three-year survey strategy appeared comprehensive at this	

	stage and encouraged ongoing engagement with relevant statutory consultees regarding the scope and timing of surveys. The applicant confirmed that access for survey work would be secured through powers available under section 172 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. As environmental work progresses, the Inspectorate advised that future iterations of the Programme Document should include greater detail on key environmental issues emerging through assessment and consultation.	
Preparing the draft Development Consent Order, including any novel approaches to drafting	The Inspectorate stressed the importance of progressing and agreeing protective provisions as early as possible so they can be incorporated into the draft DCO during the pre-application stage. It also encouraged the applicant to review protective provisions agreed on comparable projects.	
Non-statutory consultation	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to clearly explain to consultees the level of detail currently available, the status of the developing design, and the anticipated timetable for further design development and consultation.	
Other pre-application features	The Inspectorate advised the applicant to provide advance notice of documents intended for draft review under the draft document service. It noted that design approach and policy compliance documents are particularly valuable supporting documents for review.	

Comments on the Programme Document	The Inspectorate considered that the Programme Document demonstrates good alignment with pre-application guidance but reminded the applicant of the requirement to clearly demonstrate regard to advice received. It advised that the Programme Document should be hosted and maintained on the project website and that greater certainty should be provided around key milestones as the programme develops. Adequate time should be allowed for draft document reviews, including a six-week review period and sufficient time to consider feedback before submission. The Inspectorate recommended that draft document and Adequacy of Consultation reviews take place after consultation activities have concluded to allow review of more mature documents. It also encouraged inclusion of indicative timescales for project update meetings and key stakeholder engagement activities. While the Programme Document currently identifies a submission quarter, the Inspectorate recorded March 2028 on the project webpage for planning purposes, noting that this date will remain subject to review throughout the pre-application stage.	
Meeting date: 03 September 2025		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Project update	The Inspectorate queried whether the two new proposed substations, 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 strategy includes both substations in the DCO application and does not envisage separate TCPA1990 applications. The applicant confirmed that stage 1 non-statutory consultation activities concluded on 6 August 2025. Statutory consultation is scheduled to commence in September 2026. The DCO application is programmed for submission between January and March 2028. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2030, with completion targeted for 2034.	
Stage 1 consultation review	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 evaluate and improve accessibility of future events and the applicant confirmed it was doing so, along with analysising the demographic of attendees to encourage a broad range of groups. The Inspectorate encouraged ongoing discussions with emerging action groups. 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. 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.	
Stakeholder engagement update	The Inspectorate queried whether the planning performance agreement (PPA) with the 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 Inspectorate advised the importance of evidencing engagement with local authorities when structuring the consultation report. The Inspectorate also advised that, where no responses are received, it would be helpful to clearly state that engagement was undertaken but no responses were received. 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 compulsory acquisition updates would be provided at future meetings.	
EIA Scoping and surveys update	The applicant confirmed that they are preparing the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping report, and the scoping request is anticipated to be submitted in 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. The Inspectorate advised that justifications should be sufficiently clear and detailed to facilitate agreement to scope out topics, particularly when signposting to other legislation. The applicant confirmed that the scoping boundary is broader than the anticipated draft order limits and will be refined as the project progresses. Initial engagement has taken place with key statutory stakeholders including Natural England (NE), the Environment Agency (EA), Historic England (HE) and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), with introductory meetings held. 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. 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. The Inspectorate strongly advised to avoid submitting the scoping request where the 42 statutory timeframe covered the Christmas period as it will mean that the statutory 28 day period for consultees to respond would fall at least partly over the festive break. The Inspectorate drew on previous experience of scoping consultation requests at this time of year and explained that many of the consultation bodies are unlikely to have the resource to fully respond within the 28 day period which may make the scoping opinion less helpful.	
Project timeline	The applicant confirmed that non-statutory consultation activities were completed in August. Statutory consultation was scheduled to commence in September 2026. The Development Consent Order (DCO) application was programmed for submission between January and March 2028. Construction of the proposed development was anticipated to begin in 2030, with completion targeted for 2034.	

	The Inspectorate welcomed the inclusion of tracked changes within the programme document, noting this as a helpful approach for monitoring updates and progress.	
Next steps and AOB	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. The Inspectorate advised the applicant of the importance of initiating and progressing engagement with The Crown Estate.	
Email date: 19 February 2026		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Email	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 summarises the changes and clarifications that have been applied. As an applicant 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. Please note in particular: • 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 right negotiations tracker in 1 of 2 available templates, irrespective of the service tier they have subscribed to • clarified expectations of applicants when preparing to interact with the Inspectorate at meetings – including clarified rights for the Inspectorate to delay or refuse service where pre-meeting expectations are not upheld e.g. an updated programme document or issues tracker is not provided, on time, to inform a meeting agenda. • A new programme document template is available. Whilst there is no current requirement for your project to utilise the template, you may wish to review its content to see if you wish to make any changes to your existing document. Please can I also draw your attention to paragraph 19, which includes “All meetings between the applicant and the Inspectorate must be agreed in advance through the applicant’s programme	

	document. The Inspectorate expects for any materials required to inform discussion at a meeting to be provided to us at least 10 working days before the meeting is programmed to take place. As a minimum, these materials will include: ○ the agenda for the meeting, which has been agreed with the Inspectorate ○ an up-to-date programme document ○ an up-to-date issues tracker (note that this should be a separate document to the programme document ○ an up-to-date land and rights negotiations tracker ○ any other materials required to inform the agenda" Please note that other materials should normally include a slide pack. Should the applicant provide this, please note that it could be subject to Freedom of Information requests and therefore any commercially sensitive information may wish to be removed.	
Advice Given: 23 February 2026		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**

EIA Scoping matters	<u>Decommissioning</u> The applicant proposed to acknowledge decommissioning in chapter 4 of the Environmental Statement (ES) rather than producing a decommissioning specific appendix. The Inspectorate accepted this approach on the basis that reasonable justification is clearly set out. <u>Heritage survey strategy</u> The applicant advised that the survey timeframes of the heritage survey strategy are constrained by the stages of design development, land access and the results of other surveys. The applicant proposed to make effort to agree the timings of the heritage survey strategy with relevant consultation bodies. The Inspectorate advised that details should be clearly set out where agreement has been reached. If disagreement remains, the applicant should evidence their engagement efforts and provide reasoning for their position, as unresolved issues could impact on the smooth running of the examination. <u>Geology/ hydrogeology – sink holes</u> The applicant confirmed that human health impacts related to aquifer effects would be addressed through the groundwater risk assessment, and that any sink holes would be recorded as an engineering risk. Sink holes would not be directly assessed in	

	the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). The Inspectorate advised that any justification for scoping matters out should be related to the likelihood of significant effects and encouraged the applicant to agree the proposed approach with the Environment Agency (EA) and the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) on these matters. <u>Traffic and transport</u> The applicant stated that full understanding of the interface with hazardous loads, rail, and waterways may not be available by PEIR publication. However, further justification and evidence would be provided where possible. The Inspectorate welcomed the approach and advised that agreement should be sought with the relevant consultation bodies and targeted consultation may be considered post PEIR if further information is available. The applicant confirmed they will engage with blue light services as part of the traffic assessment. The Inspectorate advised the applicant to engage with Royal Mail. <u>Climate change</u> The applicant proposed to follow the approach on other National Grid projects, eg Grimsby to Walpole to scope out Climate Change Resilience (CCR)	

	assessment and an In-combination Climate Change Impact (ICCI). The Inspectorate agreed that a standalone CCR and ICCI assessment can be scoped out of the ES. The Inspectorate advised the applicant to continue engagement with Leicestershire County Council on this matter. The Inspectorate also advised that the description of the proposed development in the ES should describe any standards/ measures and processes which would be relied on to exclude likely significant effects and explain how they would be secured and implemented as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO). <u>Electromagnetic field (EMF)</u> The Inspectorate welcomed the inclusion of a summary of the EMF compliance report within the ES. <u>Waste</u> The applicant proposed to provide a summary of the Materials and Waste Management Plan setting out the anticipated types and quantities of waste during construction and operation within the ES project description rather than providing a standalone waste assessment within the ES. The Inspectorate agreed with this approach on the basis that sufficient information is included to understand any potential impacts. <u>Ecology - EMF</u>	

	In relation to the assessment of EMF and impacts on fish species, the applicant confirmed that there is currently no high voltage underground cable proposed which would cross watercourses and will undertake further engagement with the EA to confirm that assessment of these impacts is therefore not required. The Inspectorate noted that optionality of watercourse crossings currently remains. The Inspectorate advised that the applicant should clearly justify the approach and demonstrate no likely significant effects if watercourse crossings are not required. If optionality for watercourse crossings remains at submission an assessment of these matters will be required in the ES. The Inspectorate encourages the applicant to agree the proposed approach with the EA. Generators/Non-Road Mobile Machinery The applicant proposes to scope out an assessment of air quality impacts from generators/ non-road mobile machinery during the operational and maintenance phase of the proposed development. The Inspectorate agreed with this approach.	
Meeting Date: 25 February 2026		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**

Lands update and consultation	The Inspectorate advised that it would be helpful to understand the scale of landownership involved and requested emerging details regarding any land interest groups. Information such as key contacts, geographical coverage and membership size would be useful. The Inspectorate also requested to be kept up to date should other community groups begin to form. The Inspectorate reiterated the importance of clear and consistent communication during the applicant's Stage 2 consultation, particularly where multiple projects overlap. The Inspectorate advised that stakeholders must be able to clearly distinguish between the projects they are being asked to respond to and understand the scope of each consultation. The applicant confirmed it is considering how the new Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 may influence its plans, programme and approach to consultation, which will continue to develop as guidance and further detail becomes available. The Inspectorate requested an update in early 2027 regarding progression of surveys and whether any issues with accessing land for surveys arise. The Inspectorate also requested a progress update on draft protective provisions with statutory undertakers at future meetings (as the applicant	

	should seek to progress and agree such provisions, as much as feasibly possible, before examination starts).	
Stakeholder engagement update	The Inspectorate noted that securing three planning performance agreements (PPAs) at this early stage represented good progress. The Inspectorate queried whether, in the applicant's view, host authorities were likely to experience difficulties in accessing specialist expertise, and whether such support requirements were being reflected within the PPAs. The Inspectorate advised that, where councils are new to the Development Consent Order (DCO) process, reference may be made to Suffolk County Council's NSIP Centre of Excellence guidance, which has been produced to assist local authorities in understanding and engaging effectively with the DCO regime. The Inspectorate highlighted proposed local government reorganisations and consultations ongoing in the area. It advised the applicant to consider potential impacts from the reorganisation proposals on the proposed development.	
Programme Document and pre-application activities	The Inspectorate welcomed the applicant's updated Programme Document, which broadly follows most of the expected content as set out in the government's guidance on the pre-application stage	

	at paragraph 10. However, the applicant should set out its view of the main issues arising from the proposed development and the applicant's plans to resolve them at the outset, rather than a list of potential topics. Additionally, it is helpful for the Inspectorate, members of the public, and statutory parties, if this section can include some high-level information about the main designated sites, heritage assets and sensitive receptors where surveys and assessments will be required and the applicant's plans to reach agreements with relevant statutory bodies on these matters. This assists the Inspectorate to have a good understanding of the landscape features, receptors and constraints along the proposed development corridor, and the type of issues that might require resolution before the application is submitted (the details of which to be included and evolved in the applicant's Issues Tracker). The Inspectorate emphasised that, in relation to draft documentation, it is particularly helpful to hold discussions on the material the applicant intends to submit. The Inspectorate noted that it may request sight of specific documents where doing so would support its understanding and assist in preparing for forthcoming stages of the process.	
Next steps and AOB	The applicant confirmed that it would produce a Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report at Stage 2 consultation stage and detailed that the	

	potential for likely significant effects on European sites and their relevant qualifying features is still being considered. The Inspectorate welcomed the applicant's first draft of its Issues Tracker and the level of detail provided, which appeared to be proportionate and comprehensive. However, the Inspectorate advised the applicant to include additional information in future iterations, namely denoting any specific designated sites and / or heritage assets that require surveys and assessments (and potential mitigation). This will enable the Inspectorate to gain a clear understanding of the progress the applicant has made to date (or risks involved) with agreeing the scope of surveys, methodology and assessments required with relevant statutory bodies and whether these could potentially become significant issues during examination. The Inspectorate commented on the RAG-rating approach, acknowledging that it was appropriate for certain matters to be marked as green at this stage, even where discussions with statutory parties are ongoing. However, the Inspectorate advised that, as the applicant moves closer to submission, the ratings may need to be revisited so that 'green' represents genuinely settled positions rather than matters still subject to dialogue. The Inspectorate said that more detailed section 51 advice would be provided on later iterations, once further information becomes available from relevant parties. The	

	Inspectorate emphasised that its interest is in understanding how issues are being responded to, mitigated and resolved ahead of the application being submitted, to enable an efficient examination. The Inspectorate confirmed that the transboundary screening would be published on the project page shortly. [Post meeting advice: in answer to a question from the applicant, the Inspectorate advises to review the Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statements (PADSS) on the 'Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind' NSIP application, which provides a useful example. The Inspectorate is currently reviewing the use of PADSS in the DCO process and may update its published advice and online good example documents page at a later date] [Post meeting comment: the issue of Inspector involvement in 'standard' tier pre-application cases was discussed at the meeting. The applicant is pointed to the wording in the 2024 Pre-application Prospectus, which states that "Examining Inspector involvement in some elements of pre-application" might be possible for the standard tier. The Inspectorate will determine what advice, if any, is needed from an Examining Inspector outside of reviewing a draft DCO, explanatory memorandum and / or a planning statement, depending on the specific nature of the issue. However, any s51	

	advice comes from the Inspectorate and is not attributed to individuals.]	
Advice date: 16 July 2026		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Advice in relation to amendments to the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008)	In light of the amended legal framework which will be introduced from 24 July 2026 by the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, the Planning Inspectorate issued written advice to the applicant on 16 July 2026 requesting for: • evidence within the submitted application in relation to duties under s46 and s48 of the PA2008 to be provided as an appendix to any engagement summary document that the applicant may choose to submit or, where the applicant chooses not to submit such a document, as a discrete document titled 'Section 46 and section 48 information' • evidence within the submitted application in relation to new s55(4)(e) of the PA2008 to be provided in a submission version of this expanded advice log template	
Advice date: 26 August 2026		

Topic	s51 advice given	Applicant regard to s51 advice given
Email advice in relation to the Issues Tracker	The Planning Inspectorate has reviewed the applicant's Issues Tracker, which has been prepared taking account of the advice in the Inspectorate's published 2024 Pre-application Prospectus. The Inspectorate considers that overall, the Issues Tracker has adopted a sensible structure that is easy to follow. The Inspectorate makes the following comments: • In relation to the issues 'Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)' (Ref 1.1) and 'National Landscape Character Areas' (Ref 1.2), the applicant is urged to resolve these issues before submission, as these will significantly affect the overall landscape assessment. These topics are likely to cause some of the most significant effects from the proposed development. As such, submission without agreement of such important components of the methodology used in an Environmental Statement is likely to cause a potential risk to the acceptance and examination stages. • For 'Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) Study Area outside 150m' (Ref 2.1), the scope of the RVAA should be agreed by all host authorities and the applicant in line with the advice provided by the Inspectorate in its Scoping Opinion. If the applicant does not include an assessment of effects on	The Applicant is grateful for this advice, which will be considered as the project evolves throughout the pre-application stage. Our regard to s51 advice will be demonstrated clearly with the application.

	visual receptors beyond 150m, as detailed in the Issues Tracker, the applicant will need to justify why it believes that significant effects are unlikely to occur and open to the fact that this conclusion may be challenged. • In relation to 'View of Towers' (Ref 2.2), the applicant should state whether any views from towers have been considered and 'how', and what consideration to this issue has been given at this stage (and if none, why not?). • On 'land access for viewpoint photography' (Ref 2.6), the applicant should report this matter separately, somewhere within the ES documents, if the situation cannot be resolved (as anticipated in the Issues Tracker) so that the Inspectorate and the Examining Authority (if the application is accepted for examination) can consider relevant matters as part of an Accompanied Site Inspection or an Access Required Site Inspection. • In relation to 'Cultural Heritage', the applicant is encouraged to consider and distinguish between non-significant effects and no effect, while recognising that a non-significant effect in Environmental Statement terms does not equate to 'no effect'. • In terms of 'Archaeology' (Ref 4.4) and 'Survey Strategy' (Ref 4.6), the Inspectorate has some reservations about the applicant's	

	approach to archaeology which appears to not have been agreed with Lincolnshire County Council. If there is a difference of opinion between the parties regarding the approach to assessment and agreement cannot be reached, it is recommended that the applicant provide clear assurances to the Inspectorate (at acceptance) and the Examining Authority (if the application is accepted for examination) that supplementary geophysical and geoarchaeological investigations will be carried out if needed and clearly set out how those processes will be adequately and appropriately secured. The applicant will also need to define what measures will be implemented if archaeological assets are found (for example, will the works stop?) • In respect of 'Water Environment', several projects have experienced delays during examination owing to a lack of sign-off in relation to the methodology used on flooding and water environment issues. The Inspectorate strongly advises the applicant to resolve the methodology and scope of assessments needed before acceptance. • For 'Impact of loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land' (Ref. 7.4), the applicant is advised to address and acknowledge recent	

	changes brought forward by the National Planning Policy Framework. • For 'Health and Wellbeing', the applicant should provide consideration of community wide effects and how any impacts on community cohesion and mental health are assessed and mitigated. • In relation to the 'Summary of Recommendation' (Ref 12.3), it is noted that the applicant is not proposing a separate Health Impact Assessment (HIA). Considering the geographical extent of the proposal and the fact that is not going to match that of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs), the applicant will need to assure that the information provided on the JSNA will be sufficient and appropriately integrated in the assessment. • In relation to 'Electricity Transmission Design Principles' (Ref 18.3), the reference to Electricity Design Principles is noted and the Inspectorate's overall observation is that the 'Issue Tracker' appears to be light on covering design principles, consideration of good design and any alternatives considered. The applicant is advised to provide some content on the consultation discussions undertaken with Local Planning Authorities on these matters, whether a Design Approach Document will be used, what design options	

	have been considered as part of the proposed development's evolution, and what the feedback has been given (and regard undertaken).	
Meeting date: 26 August 2026		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Lands update	The applicant explained that it is working with the Inspectorate to establish standardised templates for a number of key land-related documents, including Land Plans, Work Plans and the Land Rights and Negotiations Tracker, with the aim of promoting consistency and clarity in the presentation of application documents. The Inspectorate reiterated its previous advice that Crown land interests should be identified and engaged with as early as possible during the pre-application stage. The Inspectorate noted that early identification and engagement can help to reduce the likelihood of issues arising during examination and advised that, where possible, the applicant should seek to secure a draft Statement of Common Ground prior to the examination stage to support the efficient consideration of land and rights matters. The Inspectorate encouraged the applicant to review documentation submitted and examined on other projects currently in examination, particularly where questions have been raised by Examining	The Applicant is grateful for this advice, which will be considered as the project evolves throughout the pre-application stage. Our regard to s51 advice will be demonstrated clearly with the application.

	Authorities regarding the format and presentation of information. The Inspectorate advised that understanding how information is being requested, organised and referenced in examinations may assist the applicant in developing documents that are clear, accessible and easy to navigate. The applicant queried whether Examining Authorities have any preference regarding the format of Land Plans, including the presentation of keys and legends. The Inspectorate advised that it would seek further views from inspectors on this matter. In the interim, the Inspectorate emphasised the importance of ensuring that plot categories, land interests and associated plan references are presented as clearly as possible to aid interpretation and usability throughout the examination process.	
Stakeholder engagement update	The applicant explained that proposals for local government reorganisation in Greater Lincolnshire and Leicestershire are progressing, with the current Lincolnshire district authorities anticipated to be restructured into four unitary authorities and Leicestershire expected to be covered by two unitary authorities. The applicant noted that these changes are currently expected to take effect from April 2028. The Inspectorate advised that this matter should remain under review as the project progresses and encouraged the applicant to continue discussions on the implications of local government reorganisation as further information becomes available. The	The Applicant is grateful for this advice, which will be considered as the project evolves throughout the pre-application stage. Our regard to s51 advice will be demonstrated clearly with the application.

	Inspectorate noted that a clearer understanding of the future governance arrangements will be important as the project moves closer to submission and examination. The Inspectorate also highlighted that an Examining Authority may wish to understand the implications of any local authority restructuring on the discharge of Development Consent Order requirements. In particular, the Inspectorate noted that clarity would be required regarding which authorities would assume responsibility for discharging requirements where existing authorities are merged or replaced as part of the reorganisation process. Post meeting note: In September 2026 (following the meeting), the Government paused Local Government Reorganisation in areas including Lincolnshire and Leicestershire. The Applicant will provide any updates at the next meeting.	
Next steps and AOB	The Inspectorate highlighted its recently launched mapping facility, which provides a more detailed view of projects, including red line boundaries. The Inspectorate noted that the tool may assist the applicant in identifying other proposed developments that could overlap with, or be located in proximity to, the project. The Inspectorate encouraged the applicant to report any anomalies or inaccuracies identified within the mapping system so that they can be investigated and, where necessary, corrected to improve the accuracy of the resource.	The Applicant is grateful for this advice, which will be considered as the project evolves throughout the pre-application stage. Our regard to s51 advice will be demonstrated clearly with the application.

	The Inspectorate advised that agreement on survey methodologies and the quality of supporting evidence will be important considerations as the application progresses towards submission. The Inspectorate noted that where concerns raised regarding assessment methodologies remain unresolved, or where there are concerns regarding the robustness of the evidence base, this could potentially raise issues at the acceptance stage. By way of example, the Inspectorate referred to advice previously provided on another NSIP project, where concerns arose during the acceptance process and ultimately led to the application being withdrawn. The Inspectorate therefore emphasised the importance of securing agreement, where possible, with relevant authorities on baseline information and assessment methodologies, and ensuring that sufficient evidence is provided to demonstrate that the relevant statutory tests can be satisfactorily met. The Inspectorate sought an indication of when the applicant may be able to provide more specific dates for the submission of any draft application documents and queried whether a draft Habitats Regulations Assessment Report would form part of any suite of documents to be submitted for review. The applicant confirmed that it would consider this matter internally and provide further information in due course. The Inspectorate reminded the applicant that Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) will become a mandatory requirement for Nationally Significant	

	Infrastructure Project applications from 2 November 2026. The Inspectorate noted that compliance with the relevant BNG requirements will form part of the acceptance test for all applications submitted for acceptance on or after that date and advised the applicant to ensure that these requirements are appropriately considered as part of the ongoing application programme.	
Post-meeting note	Following queries of clarification raised by the applicant in relation to feedback on the Issues Tracker, the Inspectorate clarified the purpose of the comments and the information sought. **Ref 2.2 - View of Towers** The applicant should briefly confirm that it has not considered appropriate to carry out an assessment from the top of the towers in light of the nature of the proposed development and the assessment methodology applied. **Ref 12.3 - Summary of Recommendation / Health Assessment** The applicant should explain how health and wellbeing considerations have been assessed in the absence of a standalone Health Impact Assessment (HIA). Where reliance is placed on Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs), the applicant should explain how relevant information from each local authority area affected by the proposed development has been identified, incorporated and	**Ref 2.2 – View of Towers** Views of towers are considered in Chapter 7 of the Draft ES. This provides a preliminary assessment of effects on views and visual amenity of receptors from representative viewpoints. A detailed assessment will be provided in the ES. In line with the standard LVIA approach, effects are being assessed from representative viewpoints, selected to represent the experience of receptors in a given area (eg from the edge of a village or from a PRoW) - rather than from towers, where there is no receptor for an assessment.

	applied within the assessment, and why this approach provides a sufficient and proportionate basis for assessing potential health impacts. If the decision not to undertake a standalone HIA is based on the anticipated significance of effects, this should be clearly explained and justified.	

Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire – Log of s51 advice given to others		
Person s51 advice given to	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**