



Inception Meeting note

Project name	Eastern Green Link 5
Case reference	EN0210010
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date of meeting	30 July 2025
Meeting with	Meeting with National Grid Electricity Transmission
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed, and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

The Inspectorate explained that the publication of the inception meeting note could be delayed by up to 6 months, or until a formal scoping request had been submitted.

1. The proposed development

- **Detailed description of the proposed development**

The proposed Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Eastern Green Link 5 application will be made by National Grid Energy Transmission (NGET) for the English offshore and onshore area and Scottish Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN-T) for development in Scotland.

The applicant confirmed that by virtue of a request being made to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Energy Security and Net Zero under section 35 of the Planning Act 2008, that the SoS made a direction that the proposed development is to be treated as a development for which development consent is required.

The proposed development will in summary include 415km of offshore cables in English waters (555km total cable length in English and Scottish waters) to enable connection to offshore and onshore underground cables near the proposed cable landfall at Anderby Creek on the Lincolnshire coastline. Underground cables will run approximately 9km from the proposed landfall to a converter station in East Lindsey, Lincolnshire and then approximately 3km to the proposed Lincolnshire

Connection Substation (LCS-B). The LCS-B is being proposed as part of NGET's proposed Grimsby to Walpole project (subject to a separate DCO application). This will then connect onto the transmission network.

- **Consenting programme and introduction to the pre-application programme document**

The Inspectorate asked if the Programme Document has been shared with Local Authorities and relevant statutory parties and highlighted it would be useful for the Programme Document to reflect when Project Update Meetings (PUM) with the Inspectorate and multiparty meetings are planned. The applicant noted that a physical document has not been shared yet but will be sent out in due course.

The Inspectorate advised that it would be beneficial for the main issues within the resolution section of the Programme Document to be refined as pre-application consultation progresses, to ensure that issues identified reflects how the applicant resolved the specific issues associated to the proposed development. This could help to facilitate future discussions during scheduled PUMs and assist in the level of involvement required by the Inspectorate for these meetings for example in evidence planning meetings.

The Inspectorate also highlighted that when providing draft documents for review, it would be useful for a full draft DCO (dDCO) to be included as it is important to see how the DCO is structured with associated developments. The applicant confirmed that the dDCO would include a deemed marine licence (DML).

- **Early engagement with statutory bodies and local authorities, and other stakeholder engagement to date**

The applicant is in the process of negotiating planning performance agreements (PPA) with the Local Authorities, and is in the process of setting up discretionary advisory service (DAS) agreements with key statutory bodies including Historic England, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and Natural England (NE). It will set out the stages of the programme and what is expected at specific points of the pre-application consultation. Initial meetings have taken place and regular meetings are to be set up.

- **Environmental constraints and issues**

The applicant provided an overview of key environmental constraints noting that the offshore area is complex due to several European site designations, existing shipping activity and existing and proposed infrastructure projects. The applicant stated that the proposed development will aim to avoid high vessel traffic areas and environmental constraints with cable burial along most of the route except some specific locations where this would not be achievable at sufficient depth and areas where existing infrastructure must be crossed. The applicant confirmed that the offshore cable would have to route through the Holderness Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), which is designated for broadscale habitat and the Ocean Quahog mollusc. There is currently route optionality with the MCZ, which the applicant continues to explore and discuss with NE and JNCC: one option would route

directly through the MCZ, and the other would go mostly around but clip its border. The applicant confirmed that it is progressing an in-principle measures of equivalent environmental benefit (MEEB) for the Holderness MCZ in discussion with NE and JNCC, which would apply to either route option.

The Inspectorate asked if there were any options for landfall further north to avoid offshore cable in the Holderness MCZ, but the applicant informed that this was not possible, based on work carried out for the Eastern Green Link 3 and 4 projects, the selected landfall location is the most optimal area based on the need case for the project and onshore/offshore constraints to the north and south.

The Inspectorate also asked about environmental constraints onshore, noting the border of Lincolnshire Wolds National Park within the potential zone of visibility of onshore development proposed. The applicant stated that landscape and visual impacts were the main onshore constraint currently identified, with the potential for cumulative effects with other planned infrastructure projects being a main concern. The applicant stated it is discussing this matter with NE and project teams working on the Grimsby to Walpole and Eastern Green Link 3 and 4 projects. The Inspectorate advised that Defra published guidance on the amended duty under s85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) in December 2024, which is available [here](#).

- **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping**

The EIA scoping request is scheduled for September 2025 and the scoping opinion for October 2025. The Inspectorate referred the applicant to guidance on timing of the scoping report set out in the pre-application prospectus, and the need to allow sufficient time between the inception meeting and request for an invoice to be raised and paid. The Inspectorate also advised that some statutory bodies may not respond to scoping consultation in the absence of agreed charging arrangements.

The Inspectorate asked what the applicant's approach to the environmental statement (ES) would be and if it would produce one ES covering the whole project, or assess components in England and Scotland separately, and what bearing this would have on the scoping request. The applicant confirmed that separate ES will be produced for the components of the project in England and Scotland. The applicant informed that the scoping request will just deal with the English onshore and offshore waters.

The Inspectorate referred the applicant to its advice page for Advice Note Seven: EIA process, preliminary environmental information and ES, which has guidance to support preparation and submission of a scoping request, including the technical specification of the GIS shapefile. The Inspectorate advised that the GIS shapefile should be provided ten working days in advance of the request and the applicant confirmed it would provide it as soon as possible.

- **Environmental surveys**

The applicant informed that marine surveys and engagement with other developers will inform the routing decision around the Holderness Offshore MCZ to inform the desired cable route. Survey data is also being shared between projects where

possible.

- **Preparing the draft development consent order, including any novel approaches to drafting**

The Inspectorate asked about shipping and navigation given the congestion in the offshore area. The applicant informed that this had been a key consideration when doing routing and siting and have onboarded shipping and navigation experts with this project, taking any lessons learned from Eastern Green Link 3 and 4.

The Inspectorate also highlighted that cumulative effects to shipping and navigation was a focus in recent examinations for projects in the Liverpool Bay and asked if the applicant were looking to explore coordination with other Eastern Green Link projects. The applicant informed that although the proposed development was around a year behind in terms of the timeline, they have identified specific parts of the project to co-ordinate to limit impacts upon construction, sharing marine survey data and looking to avoid stakeholder fatigue where possible.

- **Consultation (statutory and non-statutory)**

The applicant noted that non-statutory consultation started in May 2025 and finished in June 2025. Statutory consultation is planned for Q2 2026.

Consultation with host Local Authorities and key stakeholders has commenced and is ongoing with the Statement of Community Consultation submission planned at in Q1 2026.

- **Submission date**

The DCO application submission is planned for Q2/Q3 2027.

2. The pre-application service offer

- **The service tier requested by the applicant, including justification**

The Applicant requested the standard tier which is the most appropriate given the nature of the project and the applicant experience – the Inspectorate agreed that this is the appropriate level of service.

- **The position of affected statutory bodies in relation to the requested service tier**

The applicant has not received any comments from statutory bodies in relation to the requested service level.

- **Primary service features (and availability of templates)**

See pre-application [prospectus](#)

- **Use of supplementary components (and availability of templates)**

Supplementary components are available in the pre-application prospectus and the applicant can email the project mailbox if they plan to interact with any.

- **Draft documents review service**

The Inspectorate advised the applicant to provide a full dDCO Order when submitting which will be key to seeing how the DCO is structured with the associated developments.

- **Risks, including change requests**

See pre-application [prospectus](#)

3. Practical Arrangements

- **Confirming the pre-application tier service and invoicing**

Tier 2: Standard - £128,193 (+ £12,957 VAT) per year of service

- **Updates to project information for find a National Infrastructure Project**

Project webpage expected to be published before the scoping submission

- **Project email account**

EasternGreenLink5@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

- **Statutory instrument template access**

See pre-application [prospectus](#)

- **Contacts**

Case Manager and Case Officer will be assigned as soon as practicable.

4. Next steps

The project website will be active prior to EIA scoping, the first pre-application fee will need to be paid prior to EIA scoping.

5. AOB

The Inspectorate highlighted potential overlap between submissions and subsequent examinations with Local Authorities having to juggle resourcing. Statutory parties and authorities are currently struggling, and the Inspectorate advised the applicant to avoid this with contingencies needing to be taken in-to account – such as the Sea Link project having to reopen the Relevant Representations period.

Annex A

Meeting attendees

Organisation	Role
Planning Inspectorate	Operations Lead
Planning Inspectorate	Operations Manager
Planning Inspectorate	Senior EIA Advisor
Planning Inspectorate	Case Officer
Planning Inspectorate	Case Officer
National Grid (NGET)	Senior Project Manager (Consents)
National Grid (NGET)	Lead Terrestrial Consents Officer
National Grid (NGET)	Senior Lawyer
WSP	Principal Planner