Planning Inspectorate

Cross Border Connection (England)

Section 51 Advice Log
Version: 21 July 2026

This document comprises a record of the s51 advice that has been given by the Planning Inspectorate to the applicant National Grid 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.

Cross Border Connection (England) – Applicant meeting index	
Date of meeting	**Meeting overview**
20 November 2025	Inception Meeting: • Environmental constraints and issues • Environmental impact assessment scoping • The service tier requested by the applicant, including justification • Feedback on the applicant's initial Programme Document (post-meeting advice) A meeting note is available for this meeting on the National Infrastructure Planning project page, and this can be viewed at: View meeting note.
21 July 2026	Meeting agenda: • Stage 1 Non-Statutory Consultation update • Collaboration with SPEN • Approach to EIA Scoping • Pre-application consultation

Cross Border Connection (England) – Log of s51 given to the applicant		
Meeting date: 20 November 2025		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Environmental constraints and issues	As the Option B overhead line would cross the Hadrian's Wall WHS, early engagement has taken place with Historic England to discuss the methodology for assessing potential impacts. The Inspectorate advised the applicant that specific requirements may be issued by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) on how applicants should assess impacts arising from proposed developments on World Heritage Sites and the methodology to be used. The applicant was advised to seek early engagement with ICOMOS, in addition to Historic England, if required. The Inspectorate referred to ICOMOS' Technical Reviews submitted during the recent examination of the Botley West Solar Farm application (which, for example, ICOMOS specified a need to carry out a Landscape Character Assessment to understand the setting of the asset and broader landscape setting and the precise impacts on the asset's Outstanding Universal Value in that	

	case).The applicant was also advised to review the Secretary of State's decision for the Stonehenge NSIP in relation to the assessments undertaken on heritage assets in that case.	
Environmental impact assessment scoping	The applicant confirmed its intention to scope in Q2 2026. It confirmed that both Options A and B would be presented for scoping, with a decision on the option to be taken forward to application made later in 2026 (prior to Stage 2 consultation). The Inspectorate advised that presenting fewer options at scoping generally results in more focused opinions; however, the applicant intends to seek scoping on both options before determining the preferred route. Statutory consultation and the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) will only be undertaken on the favoured option.	
The service tier requested by the applicant, including justification	The applicant has initially requested a preference for the 'standard' pre-application service tier, based on NGET's experience of DCO applications and the knowledge of its consultants and staff. However, it was also	

	considering the option of using the enhanced tier if any novel transboundary issues are likely to arise. The Inspectorate said it would confirm the service tier shortly following the meeting and referred the applicant to the Inspectorate's 2024 Pre-application Prospectus, which expects applicants to provide the Inspectorate at least 3 months' notice of a request to change tier and the likelihood and timing of such a request which should be set out in the Programme Document.	
Feedback on the applicant's initial Programme Document (post-meeting advice)	The applicant supplied the Inspectorate with its initial Programme Document before the inception meeting, in line with the 2024 Pre-application Prospectus. Having reviewed the document, the Inspectorate considers that it mostly covers the expected content as set out in the government's pre-application guidance at paragraph 10. For example, it is considered that the applicant has provided enough detail about the proposed development, its timetable and activities necessary for the pre-application process, the applicant's approach to early engagement with statutory consultees and other parties, and the risks identified and how these will be managed. However, we advise, even at this early stage, that the applicant should set out a	

	summary of the main issues it has identified arising from the proposed development and the actions it means to take to resolve or mitigate them, rather than a list of topics. It is beneficial to the Inspectorate and others to understand the main environmental or built heritage constraints in or near the Order Limits, and any other significant landscape features and / or infrastructure, the applicant may need to assess and mitigate. It is also helpful if high level information is included as to the progress made on the applicant's surveys and the methodology used for assessments, and any agreements reached with relevant statutory parties on these matters, in future iterations. It is expected that these issues will be developed through the Issues Tracker during pre-application stage. It would also be helpful if the Programme Document could: indicate whether any non-DCO licences or consents might be needed; include a simple plan of the proposed development; add a date for the publication of the PEIR in its programme table; and add any likely dates for multiparty meetings, if these are likely to be pursued. Additionally, it would also be helpful to obtain an indication as to whether the applicant intends to submit a Design Approach Document and a Policy and Compliance	

	Document with its application, as well as how the Local Authorities will input on the Adequacy of Consultation Milestone statement. The Inspectorate refers the applicant to the Programme Document template in the updated 2024 Pre-application Prospectus, which should be used for proposed developments entering the DCO planning system from 1 November 2025.	
Meeting date: 21 July 2026		
Topic	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
Consultation Update	The Inspectorate acknowledged the applicant's intention to provide a form of preliminary environmental information for future consultation stages and continue to adopt best practice in respect of its consultation strategy and taking account of feedback received. The applicant was pointed to the government's new guidance in respect of the changes to consultation under the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, which now provides more flexibility for applicants on how to undertake their consultation and engagement activities appropriate to the scale and nature of their proposals. Save for	Demonstration of regard The applicant notes the advice provided. NGET is currently reviewing and interpreting the recently published pre-application guidance and will consolidate it's approach in due course.

	transitional arrangements for s46 and s48 the government has produced a set of principles for applicants to consider when carrying out their engagement and consultation with different groups (statutory consultees, communities, and other stakeholders), in supporting the identification of issues, impacts and risks at an early stage and in preparation of applications.	
Collaboration with SP Energy Networks (SPEN)	As part of its continued engagement with SP Energy Networks (SPEN), the applicant was advised to maintain a record of any principal issues or impacts arising in relation to co-ordinating the timescales for the consenting process for the applications in Scotland and England, including any particular transboundary issues / risks that may need to be mitigate. These matters should be tracked and managed in the Issues Tracker, where appropriate.	The applicant notes the advice provided. NGET will continue to collaborate with SPEN and will seek agreement on an approach to record key issues or impacts.
Approach to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping	The applicant was advised to provide a preamble to explain the two linked but separate schemes in Scotland and England in its Scoping Report, and any significant cross-border issues, to help statutory parties understand the extent of the boundary and elements of the proposal that are being consulted upon at Scoping. Additionally, the	The applicant notes the advice provided and will endeavour to ensure these matters are included in the EIA Scoping Opinion request.

	applicant should describe any likely significant effects per topic and how mitigation will be secured, providing supporting material and records of previous engagement or agreements, to support the scoping out of matters. The applicant was also advised to set out any engagement or agreements reached with ICOMOS on its approach (or requirements) to assessing and mitigating any effects on Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site. The applicant confirmed that these matters were already being addressed through its consultation activities and in the drafting of its scoping request.	

Cross Border Connection (England) – Log of s51 advice given to others		
Person s51 advice given to	**s51 advice given**	**Applicant regard to s51 advice given**
