Planning Inspectorate

Inception Meeting note

Project name	**H2East Pipeline: Humber to Nottinghamshire**
Case reference	**EN0610001**
Status	**Final**
Author	**The Planning Inspectorate**
Date of meeting	**10 February 2026**
Meeting with	**Meeting with Cadent Gas Limited**
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 H2East project is part of a wider consortium including National Gas, Northern Gas Networks and Cadent Gas.

  The objective of the project is to identify and deliver the network infrastructure required to support the deployment of low-carbon hydrogen. Cadent Gas will be developing proposals for the H2 East Pipeline south of the Humber and the delivery of hydrogen to existing industrial customers, with an initial focus on those with the highest gas demand. Cadent has around 40,000 gas sites connected to the natural gas network.

  The project will connect to hydrogen production in Immingham and High Marnham.

  The DCO for this project will cover only the route from Immingham to Nottinghamshire, but Cadent Gas may seek further DCO's in future to take advantage of other expansion opportunities in the wider area. These possible extensions would be into South Yorkshire and into Leicestershire, Derbyshire and the Midlands. Currently the proposed route is 150km, generally using 42-inch diameter pipe, but in some areas the pipes are as little as 4-6 inches. While most of

the pipe infrastructure will be underground, the project will include a number of above ground installations.

Demand for Gas in heavy industry i.e. the steel industry in areas such as Scunthorpe has advised the decision to seek the DCO for this route now. Further expansion routes would be part of another DCO or appropriate consenting routes. S35 is for the main backbone of the project and associated development will be used for the “spurs” of the project.

Cadent Gas and Project Union may gain further information from DESNZ in the future on which customers their projects are expected to connect. The applicant c will not include connections to domestic supply. Some overground infrastructure could (subject to discussions) be linked between Cadent Gas and Project Union.

The applicant has been working with the below users to understand their demand profiles. Below is a list of some of the already existing industrial users:

- British Sugar
- British Steel
- Forterra
- Heidelberg Materials
- Knauf
- Singleton Birch
- Tayto

Cadent Gas has partners providing support including, Worley: Engineering design and partner integration, Murphy’s: Construction, Fisher German: Land Rights, Camargue: Communication and Stakeholder Engagement, SLR: Environmental, Planning and Consent.

The applicant confirmed they are waiting for a timescale for the Hydrogen Transport Business Model. They are also waiting for updates to the UK hydrogen strategy.

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

The Applicant confirmed many pre-FEED consultations have been made over the years and further consultations will be conducted on the proposed pipeline corridor.

The Planning Inspectorate advised the applicant not to undertake consultation at the same time as The Inspectorate’ scoping to prevent confusion. EIA views expressed to Applicant can’t be considered with The Inspectorate’s EIA scoping.

The applicant confirmed they have held introductory meetings with LPA’s, NE and EA.

- **EIA scoping**

The Applicant confirmed the EIA surveys will take place in 2026, also confirming relevant Landowners will be contacted.

The applicant was advised not to undertake consultation at the same time as The Inspectorate scoping to prevent confusion – this is because EIA views expressed to Applicant can't be considered with The Inspectorate's EIA scoping. This also prevents other matters being brough up in the consultation responses, as only EIA matters are considered in the Scoping Opinion.

The applicant was advised they need to submit the shapefile which needs to be provided 10 days before – only 13 left days now.

The applicant confirmed the Shapefile is ready to be sent to The Inspectorate.

Both applicant consultations likely to be completed at the same time, due to other consultations on other projects happening in the area.

The Inspectorate advised the MMO needed to be contacted as the River Trent is partially tidal. As the pipeline crossing of the Trent will be trenchless, the applicant believes they will apply for exemption similar to other projects in Lincolnshire**.** The Inspectorate advised the MMO will likely still like to comment.

- **Environmental surveys**

The applicant confirmed EIA surveys will take place in 2026 and confirmed Wintering Bird surveys have started. Geotechnical Investigations will also take place this year. Although the proposed route goes through predominantly rural land, access to highways will still be needed, including some rural roads.

The Inspectorate advised that Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire should be contacted as early as possible regarding archaeology.

The Inspectorate reminded the applicant that noise survey work could be undertaken while atypical noise from other projects being constructed in the area is present, so the applicant should take this into account.

The Planning Inspectorate advised the applicant to provide updates to the Inspectorate regarding progress on the HRA to prevent too much time being taken up in examination.

- **Land and rights: Scope of compulsory acquisition etc powers sought and potential constraints and issues**

The applicant confirmed Land referencing has been completed. They also confirmed they will look for temporary and permanent land rights for the construction and running of the project.

The Inspectorate reminded it is important to explain to landowners how the land needs to be used and why it is needed. It is also important to explain how the red line boundary will shrink over time from the current Scoping boundary. The applicant confirmed leaflets are being drafted to help explain this.

The applicant confirmed Land Agent briefings have been held.

The applicant subsequently confirmed some sites will need temporary construction areas, which will form part of the DCO. The temporary construction areas include compounds, haul roads and crossing works.

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

  January 2026 – Project Launch

  03 March 2026 – Consultation and EIA scoping
  This will include public exhibitions and consultation documents.
  The consultation will also be used to set out the broad corridor preference and investigate the alternatives considered.
  Also included in this consultation is the scope of environmental impact assessment.

  Q2 2026 Onwards - Field surveys, scheme design and EIA assessments

  Q4 2026 to 2027 – Engagement on early findings and mitigation

- **Submission date**
  Q4 2028

2. The pre-application service offer

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

  The intention of Cadent Gas is to begin with Tier 1 Basic. This will be monitored throughout the project and a move to Tier 2 may be required at a later point. Cadent Gas and the Planning Inspectorate agreed placeholder meetings could be worked into the timeline and that a meeting around May-June would be useful.

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

  The applicant has proposed the use of PADSS, Policy Compliance Documents and a Design Approach Document (Design Evaluation Report).

3. AOB

The Planning Inspectorate advised the applicant that documents need to be uploaded to their project website and that the website needs to be updated with any milestones.

The Programme Document is not only handy for The Inspectorate, but also for the applicant to point out key issues during the project.

Annex A

Meeting attendees

Organisation	Role
Planning Inspectorate	Operational Lead
Planning Inspectorate	Operations Manager
Planning Inspectorate	Case Manager
Planning Inspectorate	Case Officer
Planning Inspectorate	EIA Operations Lead
Planning Inspectorate	Senior EIA Advisor
Planning Inspectorate	Senior Environmental Advisor
Cadent Gas Limited	Head of Consents for Major Projects
Cadent Gas Limited	Senior Consent Officer
SLR	Technical Director
Cadent Gas Limited	Partner (Project legal advisor)