

## **Fens Reservoir – WA010004**

### **Anglian Water and Cambridge Water**

### **Section 51 Advice Log**

**Version: 24 March 2026**

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 Inspectorate to the applicant (Anglian Water Services Limited and Cambridge Water) and their consultants during the pre-application stage. It will be updated by the 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 Inspectorate's draft record of advice before it is published.

The applicant will use this Advice Log as the basis for demonstrating regard to section 51 advice within the application.

<b>Fens Reservoir s51 Advice Log - Index</b>	
<b>Date of Advice</b>	<b>Advice overview</b>
<a href="#"><u>05 October 2022</u></a>	Inception Meeting
<a href="#"><u>09 May 2023</u></a>	Project Update Meeting
<a href="#"><u>05 March 2024</u></a>	Project Update Meeting
<a href="#"><u>30 July 2024</u></a>	Project Update Meeting
<a href="#"><u>25 October 2024</u></a>	Section 51 advice regarding the Programme Document submitted by Anglian Water and Cambridge Water
<a href="#"><u>27 November 2024</u></a>	Project Update Meeting
<a href="#"><u>04 March 2025</u></a>	Project Update Meeting
<a href="#"><u>30 April 2025</u></a>	Section 51 advice regarding the 2 <sup>nd</sup> iteration of the Programme Document
<a href="#"><u>01 September 2025</u></a>	Project Update Meeting
<a href="#"><u>24 October 2025</u></a>	Section 51 Advice – Pre-application prospectus update
<a href="#"><u>24 March 2026</u></a>	Project Update Meeting

## Fens Reservoir - s51 Advice Library

Topic	Meeting date: 27 November 2024
General	<p>The Inspectorate outlined how s51 advice is given and that the Applicant has a chance to review the advice before it is published. Further interaction with the Inspectorate can highlight the issues that are being discussed and more commercially sensitive issues that may not yet be publicly available.</p>
Issues Tracker	<p>The Inspectorate advised that the Issues Tracker should be available for regular review by the Inspectorate and other statutory bodies. The Inspectorate then highlighted that where positions have been agreed/not agreed that should be noted to try to minimise the risk of issues not being resolved before Examination and to encourage dialogue between those bodies on the key issues.</p> <p>The Inspectorate outlined that the enhanced service allows more time for frank discussions on these issues i.e. how things are going locally, and discussions with statutory consultees, etc.</p> <p>The Inspectorate highlighted that at the moment the issues tracker is showing engagement and that things will be resolved but it needs some more detail i.e. the actual risk assessments and how these might be resolved. Mona Offshore Wind Project is in Examination and has a good example in their submission at Deadline 2.</p> <p>Secondly with regards to water resources and flood management the Inspectorate asked if the Applicant is engaging with all the relevant agencies i.e. the lead council, the lead flood authority for the area and perhaps the affected consultees as these are not currently indicated.</p> <p>With traffic and transport which came out of the statutory consultation that should be evidenced as being considered in the risk assessment within the issues tracker.</p>
Adequacy Of Consultation Milestone (AoCM)	<p>The Inspectorate advised that the Applicant needs to ensure that the Inspectorate has enough time to review the AoCM to ensure valuable feedback can be provided and relevant time is available to the applicant to assess and act on that feedback.</p> <p>The Applicant is reminded of prerequisites pertaining to <u>AoCM</u> under the Statutory Guidance</p>

	<p>and our Prospectus. The Inspectorate would deem 10 working days as sufficient time to provide feedback dependent on the standards of the submitted AoCM. However, the Programme Document, should reflect in advance the applicants perceived position in timetabling this milestone.</p>
<p>Programme Document</p>	<p>The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to update the summary of the case and the programme timetable in the Programme Document to give readers a better idea of what the project is and how the project is progressing.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to consider outlining when to hold meetings offered under the relevant tier. The Applicant is not required to use all meetings, however the Programme Document should include a comprehensive timetable which indicates when they would want any meetings with the Inspectorate.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that the Prospectus lays out all the relevant components and the Inspectorate can bring in specialist support for reviewing relevant documents where appropriate.</p> <p>The Inspectorate outlined that things can also change as the project develops but the Programme Document helps the Inspectorate and other statutory parties to plan resources for each milestone during the pre-Application phase.</p> <p>The Programme Document should help to give the Inspectorate plenty of advance notice of planned and/or perceived milestones to allow for adequate resourcing of specialist accordingly to any issue raised by the Applicant.</p> <p>The Inspectorate is unable to signpost to examples of a well structured Programme Document. However, we would be able to review and give feedback on the next iteration of the Programme Document with a view to the public version, once published on the Applicant's website, being an example for others to follow in future.</p>
<p>Meetings</p>	<p>The Inspectorate highlighted that the applicant may decide that they wish to cancel certain meetings closer to the time.</p> <p>The following milestones might lead to useful meetings for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AoCM</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post Scoping Meeting</li> <li>• Statutory Consultation</li> </ul>
Technical/specialist advice	<p>The Inspectorate highlighted that if there is an issue with engagement there is the possibility for the Inspectorate to escalate these issues because there are commitments from these statutory bodies to meet the resourcing needs for the enhanced scheme.</p> <p>The Applicant asked for the level of engagement that the Planning Inspectorate will have.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that initially all contact would be via the project mailbox.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that with really technical questions the Applicant will still need to engage with their consultants however the Inspectorate will aim to answer what we can based on the issues and experience from other cases and Examination.</p>
Site Inspection	<p>Following a query from the Applicant the Inspectorate highlighted that they can do an Unaccompanied Site Inspection (USI) during the pre-application stage if required.</p>
Evidence Plan	<p>The Applicant asked how the Inspectorate envisages the evidence plan process working. The applicant uses it on Habitats Regulations Assessment and Water Framework Directive but they wondered if this would be suitable for any other aspects or whether there are any other good examples of its use.</p> <p>Post meeting note</p> <p>In response, the Inspectorate advises that <a href="#">Annex H</a> provides guidance on the use of Evidence Planning in the HRA process and also refers to how this can be used to support wider Environmental Impact Assessment matters. The Applicant can apply principles within this advice to other aspects and matters within the Environmental Statement.</p> <p>Prior to the start of the pre-application service, other projects have incorporated expert topic groups on cultural heritage within their evidence plan process. The Evidence Plan process is considered most applicable for complex areas of assessment that may require a high level of engagement from stakeholders to agree for example on baseline survey methodologies, assumptions and approaches to modelling and assessment,</p>

	<p>assessment outcomes and mitigation. The Applicant could make use of multiparty meetings to discuss standalone matters. The Evidence Planning Process works best where it is used as a working forum alongside the development of other documents such as Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statements (PADSS), rather than as a forum for updates. Materials should be prepared in advance of meetings. It is recommended that time in meetings is used to discuss specific matters and effective use of steering group to support where discussions on particular issues have stalled.</p>
<p>Outline control documents</p>	<p>The Applicant asked what is a good example of a mature control document? Then the applicant highlighted that they may want to discuss the issues on this with the Inspectorate in the future. The Inspectorate agreed to take that away and provide a response.</p> <p>Post meeting note</p> <p>The Inspectorate advises that it would expect a level of detail and completeness as provided at the draft document stage, close to the point of submission allowing for time to address any comments. It is anticipated that mature documents would have been informed by consultation with the relevant stakeholders so that any areas of disagreement, potential 'blockers' or novel approaches can be understood.</p> <p>The Inspectorate is not able to signpost to any specific examples of mature control documents, but would refer the Applicant to the <u>Commitments Register</u> advice page on the Inspectorate website.</p>
<p>Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statements (PADSS)</p>	<p>The Applicant asked whether there are any particular good practice examples of a PADSS. The Inspectorate advised that it is difficult to signpost to good practice as this is relatively new and recent examples are at Examination.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that it is not going to define 'disagreement' as this is a judgement of the stakeholder and Applicant, it would be expected that points of principal disagreement would either narrow or become more defined as things progress through pre-application, the purpose is to provide more focus in determining points for examination.</p>

<p>Policy Compliance Document</p>	<p>The Inspectorate advised that it is good to start this, if not started already, to indicate how your project is complying with policies as this can help with conversations with local authorities or statutory consultations with the policies they will be relying on to come to positions on the scheme.</p> <p>It doesn't have to stick to the National Policy Statement (NPS) but also consider what is significant from the statutory parties.</p> <p>The applicant asked if there is a template/good example for setting compliance out.</p> <p>The Inspectorate highlighted that a number of submissions from National Highways schemes may be a useful starting point however they have tended to concentrate on the NPS incorporating extra information on what the statutory parties deem significant is very useful to show what everyone is working towards i.e. their policy positions.</p>
<p>Design Approach Document (DAD)</p>	<p>Post meeting note</p> <p>The Inspectorate refers the Applicant to advice issued to Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Farm on <u>26 October 2023</u> and <u>19 January 2024</u> and the <u>submission version</u>.</p> <p>The Applicant should refer to the new advice page on Good Design on the Inspectorate website.</p>
<p>Multiparty meetings</p>	<p>The Inspectorate advised that it could also be the facilitator for multiparty meetings if necessary. The meetings with statutory parties and local authorities should be aimed to get a bit more certainty around positions in terms of what the Applicant is working towards and the methodologies for approach and whether the baseline data is agreed with those other parties. This is all aimed at making the Examination easier. In addition, local issues need to be fed back to the Inspectorate so that the Inspectorate can provide valuable feedback.</p> <p>The Inspectorate highlighted with regards to collaboration, the applicant will be closer to the statutory parties and local authorities than the Inspectorate as they are more aware of what the issues are so the applicant should be leading those discussions but if there are issues that can be fed back to the Inspectorate the Inspectorate can discuss certain issues with statutory parties where necessary.</p>

Preparation of Compulsory Acquisition and Temporary Evidence Position	<p>Post meeting note</p> <p>The Inspectorate advises that a form of tracker is now required for submission with the application (see the new National Infrastructure Planning guidance and Prospectus). Iterations of the tracker should be made available to inform interactions with the Inspectorate during pre-application. This can only be of benefit to the Applicant, Inspectorate preparations and the wider system.</p>
Multiparty application readiness check	<p>Post meeting note</p> <p>Given the only recent launch of the new pre-application offering, this approach is yet to occur on any projects. Feedback is therefore unavailable. We will be unable to confirm permanency until after any trials have been completed and the experience/value analysed. If the Applicant wishes to explore this further, then it could be discussed at a future project update meeting to explain the features of the trial/ next steps.</p>
AOB	<p>The Applicant agreed to provide a list of questions that we did not get round to in the meeting. The Inspectorate agreed to provide responses. (See separate <a href="#">Summary of Questions document</a>).</p> <p>The Applicant outlined that if there are any areas where the Inspectorate is keen to be involved in i.e. engagement with other parties they are keen to hear back on that.</p> <p>The Inspectorate outlined that at the next meeting if the applicant can outline what they expect from the Inspectorate over the next six months to a year using an updated Programme Document. We can then discuss any issues within that document at that meeting.</p>
Next Meeting	<p>The Inspectorate agreed that an early February meeting after the scoping opinion will be useful then a meeting to align with the design phase and to align with the public consultation in the Autumn.</p>
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Meeting date: 04 March 2025</b>
Programme Update	<p>The Inspectorate confirmed that the latest version of the Programme Document is dated July 2024. The Inspectorate noted that an updated Programme Document had been requested, however not provided by the applicant and advised that in its preparation for any updated Programme Document</p>

	<p>it should include the review of draft documents and anticipated meetings. Such detail would enable the service to be able to plan resource effectively, including Inspector input.</p> <p>The Applicant advised that an updated Programme Document would be provided once prepared and it had passed through the Applicant's internal governance procedure.</p>
Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)	<p>The Inspectorate advised the applicant it does not have a preference regarding the timing on Statutory Consultation and explained that the applicant would be best placed to assess this.</p> <p>The Inspectorate asked the applicant if it has had conversations with the local authorities on the timings of the SoCC to ensure there is the necessary resource as this has not been mentioned within the Programme Document. The applicant confirmed it had used an informal consultation document to liaise with the local authorities.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised the applicant to make it clear within the consultation report what statutory consultation the local authorities are responding to.</p>
Adequacy of Consultation Milestone (AoCM) statement	<p>The Inspectorate asked the applicant how close to submission it intends to submit its AoCM. The applicant confirmed it will be approximately 4 months beforehand. The Inspectorate recommended it is submitted no less than 3 months before DCO submission.</p>
EIA Scoping	<p>The Inspectorate advised the applicant it does not have a preferred way of how to further refine the scope of the Environmental Statement (ES) and it would be the applicant's decision as to how to include the Inspectorate in the ongoing conversations. The applicant can request the Inspectorate's involvement in the components of the enhanced pre-application process such as evidence planning and multiparty meetings where required. The applicant should follow the requirements of the prospectus if they would like to use any of these components eg ensuring an agreed terms of reference is in place prior to the Inspectorate getting involved in the evidence planning process.</p> <p>Where the applicant would like to involve the Inspectorate in any of the enhanced pre-application components, this would need to be reflected in the Programme Document in enough detail and within</p>

	<p>enough time so as to allow the Inspectorate to appropriately resource. The Inspectorate outlined the importance of understanding the position of all relevant parties on matters of complexity or contention so that the Inspectorate can provide useful feedback.</p> <p>With regards to breach, the Inspectorate advised that within the ES it would need to understand how the design has mitigated for any potential failure and how it is secured through the application.</p>
<p>Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)</p>	<p>In response to the applicant enquiring the role of the Inspectorate in multiparty meetings (e.g. Natural England, Environment Agency etc), the Inspectorate advised the applicant to appropriately document agreements/positions agreed and/or not agreed during pre-application stage. Any request for a multiparty meeting, should outline the topics for discussion and what the Inspectorates involvement would be.</p> <p>Subject to acceptance, the Examining Authority (ExA) can then see the narrative of changes, based on the applicant's reviews and how the applicant concluded on decisions or where resolutions were made on certain issues. Particularly with stakeholders that have area-based teams instead of national team set ups. The information would be helpful because there can be change of personnel once examination is reached.</p>
<p>Forward plan of engagement for 2025</p>	<p>The Inspectorate noted that any construction traffic and transfer routes being considered by the applicant, should consider and settle on the traffic modelling before submission of the DCO.</p> <p>The Inspectorate further suggested that in any future project update meetings, consideration should be given to focus on operational effects, including carbon usage/effects. The applicant agreed to this.</p>
<p>AOB</p>	<p>The Inspectorate advised that across the board, it would like to undertake an initial assessment of the pre-application tiers, 6 months following implementation. The Inspectorate will be contacting all applicants involved, welcoming feedback. Initially this would be in the format of a survey and then a follow up may be required, if requested.</p> <p>The applicant outlined how face-to-face feedback is better to discuss any complex issues. The</p>

	<p>Inspectorate advised that ongoing feedback is preferred.</p>
<p>Next Meeting</p>	<p>The Inspectorate requested the applicant provides exact dates for the next meeting, number of attendees, and the justification for a face-to-face meeting, so the Inspectorate can assess availability of resources and venue. The applicant understood and agreed to this.</p> <p>The Inspectorate also advised the applicant that ideally it would require the presentation notes at least 2 weeks prior to meetings, to enable questions to be answered during the meeting rather than post meeting. This request was noted by the applicant.</p> <p>The Inspectorate also requested the programme document is updated more regularly and is provided at least 10 working days in advance of future meetings, so the appropriate feedback can be given. This request was noted by the applicant.</p>
<p>Post meeting note</p>	<p>The Inspectorate recommends using the components of the enhanced service to determine where the applicant would like the Inspectorate's involvement.</p> <p>Where it is known that the applicant intends to engage with the pre-application service components outlined in the prospectus, this should be included in an updated Programme Document and reissued to the Inspectorate.</p> <p>Where the need to engage in pre-application service components is not yet known, but may be required at a later date, then the applicant should keep the Inspectorate updated and issue an updated Programme Document when the need to engage in components is identified. Please note that as stated in the prospectus, should the applicant require the Inspectorate to engage in multiparty meetings or evidence plan meetings, then a minimum of 6 weeks' notice is required.</p> <p>The applicant presented two issues that are currently being discussed with consultation bodies, the assessment of the reservoir emergency drawdown and the options for the transfer pipeline – which has implications for the HRA. The applicant and Inspectorate discussed that, depending on the nature of the issues that emerge and the extent of agreement with the relevant stakeholders,</p>

	<p>involvement could be in the form of attending evidence plan meetings, specific focussed reviews of issues or attending multiparty meetings.</p> <p>Below is an explanation of how some of the components discussed at the meeting are envisaged to be used and what the Inspectorate's involvement would be, noting that other components are likely to be relevant also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues tracker/PADSS:- Having sight of specific key issues in an issue tracker/PADSS is useful for the Inspectorate to understand the parties positions and provide comment/advice where relevant. Updates of these trackers should be provided 10 working days before the project update meetings in order for the Inspectorate to review relevant topics for discussion before the meeting and so that the applicant can get the most value from those meetings.</li> <li>• Evidence plan process:- The Inspectorate would need to review and agree a Terms of Reference before engaging in an Evidence Plan process. The Inspectorate would also need to review the Programme Document setting out what meetings will be taking place and when and what attendance is expected of the Inspectorate at least 6 weeks before the first meeting.</li> <li>• Multiparty meetings:- where discussions with consultees reach an impasse, the Inspectorate would require a 6 week notice period to attend a multiparty meeting to seek agreement on specific matters to allow the allocation of necessary resources. 10 days before the meeting the Inspectorate would require any relevant information to review in preparation for the meeting.</li> </ul> <p>The timeframes provided in relation to the above are noted by the applicant.</p>
<p><b>Topic</b></p>	<p><b>Advice date: 11 April 2025</b></p> <p><b>Section 51 advice regarding the 2nd iteration of the Programme Document</b></p>

Programme Document	<p>The applicant supplied the Inspectorate with its second iteration of its Programme Document. The Inspectorate has reviewed the document and considers that it includes the expected content as set out in paragraph 10. The Inspectorate has noted the following points for consideration in future iterations of the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include whether the Programme Document has been shared with local authorities, statutory consultees and others and whether they are content with the proposed programme;</li> <li>• include a date for review of draft documents;</li> <li>• the draft documents listed in Appendix A should allow time for addressing any feedback from draft docs given that draft document reviews can take 6 – 8 weeks;</li> <li>• the publication of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) seems to overlap with the draft document review. It is preferable to allow time between feedback from the PEIR and section 42 consultation and submission of the draft docs so that the applicant can address feedback from section 42 consultation before updating the information to submit as draft docs;</li> <li>• further information on the Inspectorate’s involvement/input in the evidence plan process; and</li> <li>• whether the applicant will use a pre-application Land and Rights Negotiations Tracker.</li> </ul> <p>The Programme Document needs to be published on the applicant’s website and updated, as needed, throughout the pre-application stage and be provided to the Inspectorate.</p>
Flood Risk Assessment	<p>Section 3, paragraph 3.1.4 identifies the applicant’s approach to Flood Risk Assessment and its ongoing engagement with the Environment Agency (EA). The applicant is advised to also consider the EA <a href="#">new national flood and coastal erosion risk information</a>, including their new national flood risk assessment (NaFRA) published 25 March 2025 with regards to <a href="#">flood zone data</a>.</p>
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Meeting date: 01 September 2025</b>
<b>Programme Update</b>	The Inspectorate acknowledged the applicants confirmation in publishing their programme

	document, however encouraged the applicant to keep this updated as and when the programme changes. This includes when project update meetings and/or multiparty meetings is anticipated.
<b>Environmental/consenting challenge</b>	<p>The Inspectorate advised the applicant to give at least 6 weeks of notice for the Planning Inspectorates involvement in any multi-party meeting and an agenda provided 10 working days before. But ideally this would go in the diary now. If it doesn't go ahead it can be cancelled/postponed</p> <p>The applicant agreed with this approach.</p>
<b>Evidence plan update</b>	<p>The Inspectorate asked whether the meetings with Natural England and the Environment Agency are a part of an evidence plan process that has already begun or are they separate.</p> <p>The applicant confirmed it's all part of the evidence plan that was produced at least 6 months ago. This is currently being updated.</p>
<b>Water Framework Directive (WFD) 1 Update.</b>	<p>The applicant outlined that if they are unable to come to an agreement with regards to the interpretation of WFD requirements they may seek support from the Inspectorate to attend multi-party meetings.</p> <p>The Inspectorate asked if this is for this project or decisions for all new reservoirs going forward.</p> <p>The applicant believed it was similar for all new reservoirs going forward and that the issues being talked about are strategic issues that would impact other reservoirs using the Development Consent Order (DCO) process.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that a multi-party meeting would need cross government involvement as this relates to all reservoir proposals. Therefore, this is a strategic meeting that the Inspectorate would also need to attend.</p>
<b>Badger Relocation update</b>	<p>The applicant may seek support from the Planning Inspectorate around licencing and powers in the DCO. The applicant asked if the Planning Inspectorate has any examples of experience in section 120 of the Planning Act 2008 to permit the taking (and relocation) of badgers (and any related activity) necessary to enable the reservoir development and section 150 of the Planning Act 2008 to disapply typical section 10 licencing under</p>

	<p>PoBA (Protection of Badgers Act 1992) (and include an alternative licencing/approval process within the DCO instead).</p> <p>The Inspectorate agreed to come back on finding examples of use of those sections.</p> <p>The Inspectorate asked the applicant if moving the badgers could require additional land take to the current red line boundary. The applicant advised badgers may need to be moved at least twice and any additional land take required will be confirmed following a further survey and at a future consultation.</p> <p>Post meeting note:</p> <p>If the applicant wishes to include certain licenses in the DCO, this can only be done with Natural England's agreement. The Inspectorate has no previous examples where this has been done.</p>
<p><b>Trial Embankment</b></p>	<p>The application for this would be via a Town and Country planning application via Fenland District Council rather than the DCO planning process. This would potentially reduce construction delays post DCO.</p> <p>The Inspectorate asked about the timeline of this compared to the DCO application and whether it feeds into the Environmental Statement.</p> <p>The applicant advised that they are at the very early stages of this plan so need to work through that in terms of the EIA baseline and the DCO. It would ideally run in parallel with an application next year but the applicant does not have a detailed programme for the trial embankment yet.</p> <p>The Inspectorate suggested that the applicant could have a parallel programme document to show how this fits in with/impacts the current DCO programme.</p> <p>The applicant confirmed that they would be looking for temporary planning permission with land restoration afterwards.</p>
<p><b>PINS Engagement</b></p>	<p>The applicant asked for any examples of the use of technical working groups for an evidence plan process. The Inspectorate suggested the <a href="#">A66 Northern Trans-Pennine Project</a> as an example of a project that had a lot of technical working groups. The Inspectorate advised that the applicant considers providing information in advance of evidence plan meetings to allow participants to</p>

	<p>prepare and to be mindful of the number of meetings being held vs capacity. Keeping an updated programme document is vital so that all stakeholders can understand the programme they are working to.</p> <p>The Inspectorate also outlined that keeping the Inspectorate up to speed on the meetings to understand the barriers of communication is important. The Inspectorate do not need to necessarily attend every meeting due to the complexities of the issues discussed but should be kept up to speed on the progress/barriers to progress of the meetings. The Planning Inspectorate's attendance is led by the applicant under the tiered service and potentially by the content of the meetings where it would be beneficial to involve the Inspectorate where key issues are discussed. The applicant suggested that the Inspectorate could form part of the steering group which the Inspectorate agreed would provide useful oversight.</p> <p>The Inspectorate asked whether the applicant's evidence plan meetings have agreed terms of reference. The Inspectorate advised that it would want to see terms of reference before becoming involved in any evidence plan meetings but can supply some standard text on its roles and responsibilities to insert in the applicant's own terms of reference. The Inspectorate also advised that the applicant consider the timing and content of any evidence plan meetings in relation to other meetings such as multipartite meetings, that are held with the Inspectorate to avoid duplication.</p> <p>The applicant confirmed they have a terms of reference which have been agreed by all parties at the technical working groups.</p> <p>The Inspectorate requested to have sight of the terms of reference before engaging in evidence planning. The Inspectorate also advised that it is important for everybody involved in the evidence plan to understand the role of each group and what happens when problems arise or issues are not being resolved. It's important everyone knows the consequences of any delayed decisions on the pre-application timeline. The applicant should also be mindful of how this feeds into other areas of the pre-application service like the issues tracker.</p>
--	--

	The Inspectorate requested to see the applicant's proposed plan for meetings and engagement and its suggestion for the Inspectorate's involvement.
<b>AOB</b>	Looking to schedule next meetings in Autumn so November/December and January
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Advice date: 24 October 2025</b>
<b>Email Advice</b>	<p><b>IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT UPDATES TO OUR PRE-APPLICATION SERVICES</b></p> <p>Following a 6-month review of our services, our Pre-application Prospectus has been updated: <a href="#">2024 Pre-application Prospectus</a>. The update log at the bottom of the page summarises the changes and clarifications that have been applied.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Please note in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> <li>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.</li> </ul> <p>Please note that as stated in the Pre-application Prospectus that it is expected for an updated programme document to be provided to the Inspectorate at least 10 working days before each programmed interaction with us. The issues tracker should also be made available to the Inspectorate at least 10 working days before each programmed interaction with us to help us to understand the project issues, review progress and target advice.</p>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Meeting date: 24 March 2026</b>
<b>Consultation 3 – Summary and high level feedback</b>	<p>The Inspectorate noted that the road network capacity is limited and based on feedback received from communities and stakeholders, regarding “traffic and transport”, during consultation, the applicant is advised to consider policy section on traffic and transport within the NPS for Water and Resources.</p> <p>The Inspectorate highlighted that the NPS for Water Resources places important consideration on rail and water-borne transport options as “preferred” over road transport options and the applicant should take this into consideration when reviewing options for mitigation. The Applicant was advised to review section 4.14 of the NPS. The Applicant confirmed that they are undertaking multi modal assessment work.</p>
<b>Environment/Consenting issues</b>	<p>The Inspectorate advised they would be willing to engage on any environmental matters if required and the preference would be early engagement, so that it could have an understanding of the project, including environmental/consenting issues and therefore advice accordingly/appropriately.</p>
<b>PINS engagement</b>	<p>The Inspectorate advised that with any substantial issues that need resolution it would be really helpful to understand the context to help focus any questions or reviews that may come during acceptance/examination. It is useful for the Inspectorate to take part in multi-party meetings before any issues become an impasse. The applicant will take away as an action where to engage with the Inspectorate and if any upcoming multi-party meetings would benefit from the Inspectorate’s attendance.</p> <p>In relation to s51 advice, the Inspectorate noted that only advice provided by the Inspectorate either in writing and/or at project update meetings will be recorded within the “Advice Log” and the applicant will have sight thereof prior to publication.</p>
<b>AoB</b>	<p>The Inspectorate advised that it would be helpful to receive issues trackers and questions in advance to help identify the advice that the applicant may need before the meeting.</p>

	The Inspectorate suggested the next project update meeting be held in June 2026.
--	--