



Programme Document

EPL Norfolk Limited

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Document control

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1 Introduction

1.1 Document Purpose

- 1.1.1 Planning Inspectorate¹ and Government guidance² require the production and publication of a Programme Document for Development Consent Order (DCO) applications which contains key programme information and sets out the main steps that the Applicant anticipates taking during the preparation of the application. This document fulfils that requirement.
- 1.1.2 Following the Inception Meeting with the Planning Inspectorate, EPL Norfolk Limited (the 'Applicant') will host and maintain the Programme Document on its website at www.longmarshgreenenergy.co.uk for the public to access and will update it as necessary during the pre-application period. The Applicant will proactively communicate updates to the Programme Document to the Planning Inspectorate, with a clear description of the potential impacts on the requested services of the Inspectorate, relevant statutory bodies, local authorities, and other stakeholders.

1.2 Overview of the Project

- 1.2.1 Longmarsh Green Energy (the 'Proposed Development') is a proposed new energy and digital infrastructure project in west Norfolk. It brings together solar energy generation, battery energy storage and a major data centre campus together with associated grid connection to the existing National Grid Walpole substation.
- 1.2.2 Longmarsh Green Energy is currently at the start of the pre-application process.

1.3 Document Contents

- 1.3.1 This document provides the following information:
- Section 4 outlines the anticipated timetable of the pre-application process including the planned application submission date;
 - Section 5 outlines the areas of interest for examination (main project issues for resolution and risks) and the plan to resolve or manage them; and
 - Sections 6 and 7 outline the plan for engaging stakeholders and the local community.

¹ Planning Inspectorate, Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus, 16 May 2024 (last updated 27 July 2026), Source: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-2024-pre-application-prospectus>

² Planning Act 2008: Guidance on preparing an application: Part 1 - Pre-application steps: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-act-2008-guidance-on-preparing-an-application-part-1-pre-application-steps>

2 Background to the project

- 2.1.1 EPL Norfolk Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of Evolution Power Limited. For more information about EPL Norfolk Limited visit: www.longmarshgreenenergy.co.uk.
- 2.1.2 The Proposed Development will include solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and a co-located Data Centre Campus. Associated electrical infrastructure, including cabling, inverter stations, substations and grid connection infrastructure, is also required. The indicative site boundary of the Proposed Development is provided at Appendix 1.
- 2.1.3 The Planning Act 2008 provides the consenting process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). Longmarsh Green Energy's proposed solar generating station would have a generating capacity of more than 100 MW and is therefore classified as an NSIP. The Applicant must consequently apply to the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) for a DCO rather than seek planning permission from the local planning authority. The Applicant is also seeking a direction under section 35 of the Planning Act 2008 so that the data centre can be consented as part of the DCO application.
- 2.1.4 The process comprises pre-application, submission and acceptance, pre-examination, examination, recommendation and a final decision by the Secretary of State. If granted, the DCO would authorise the construction, operation, maintenance and eventual decommissioning of the Proposed Development, together with the associated powers and consents required for its delivery.
- 2.1.5 Details of any licences, permits and approvals required in addition to the DCO are available on the Applicant's website. This information will be reviewed and updated throughout the DCO process.
- 2.1.6 Details of the planning policy framework relevant to the Proposed Development, including the National Policy Statements for Energy Infrastructure and other material planning considerations, are available on the Applicant's website. This information explains the need for the Proposed Development and the policy basis against which the application will be examined and determined.

3 The Planning Inspectorate's pre-application service

- 3.1.1 The Applicant has subscribed to Tier 1 (Basic Service) under the Planning Inspectorate's Pre-application Service. The Applicant considers that Tier 1 is appropriate having regard to the scale and characteristics of the Proposed Development and does not currently intend to pursue the additional services associated with higher service tiers.
- 3.1.2 Further information on the Planning Inspectorate's pre-application service offer is available in the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Pre-application Prospectus³.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-2024-pre-application-prospectus>

- 3.1.3 The Applicant is not currently proposing to develop any supplementary components listed in the Annex to the Pre-application Prospectus beyond those included within the Tier 1 service offer. Should this position change during the pre-application process, the Applicant will engage with the Planning Inspectorate as appropriate and provide an update through future project communications.

4 The pre-application programme

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 The Applicant's indicative pre-application programme is provided at Figure 1 and summarised below. It covers the period from initial technical, planning and stakeholder activities through to the planned submission of the DCO application in April 2027. The programme will be maintained as a live document and updated as the design, consultation/engagement strategy, environmental assessment and application documents develop.

4.2 Planning Inspectorate engagement

- 4.2.1 The Applicant proposes to engage with the Planning Inspectorate at key stages of the pre-application process. The currently programmed interactions are:

- 5th October 2026: Planning Inspectorate inception meeting;
- October 2026: submission of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report;
- November 2026: anticipated receipt of the Planning Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion;
- March 2027: pre-submission meeting with the Planning Inspectorate.

4.3 Engagement with statutory bodies and local authorities

- 4.3.1 Early stakeholder engagement has been undertaken and is being used to inform the project design, environmental assessment and consultation strategy. The principal activities to date comprise:

- targeted introductory meetings with statutory bodies, including the Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England, between April and October 2026; and
- introductory meetings with host local authorities planned for October 2026.

- 4.3.2 Engagement with local authorities and statutory bodies will continue following these introductory meetings and will be coordinated with design development, the EIA and preparation of the application, along with meetings with the relevant technical specialists in respect of the EIA methodology, receptors and approach to mitigation of effects. The programme will be updated to identify any subsequent topic-specific meetings and engagement.

4.4 Consultation

- 4.4.1 Consultation with the community is anticipated to take place during October and November 2026. This will include a consultation brochure that provides information on the project, the DCO

process and the likely environmental effects, and a dedicated project website (longmarshgreenenergy.co.uk). The Applicant will contact local residents and businesses directly to ensure they are aware of the consultation.

4.5 Application documents

4.5.1 Application documents will be developed through coordinated drafting, review, finalisation and sign-off stages. The application is expected to comprise:

- application information, including the application form, document index, guide to the application, glossary and section 55 checklist;
- plans, including Land Plans, Works Plans, access and rights of way plans, any required traffic regulation plans, illustrative project drawings and landscape drawings;
- the draft DCO, Explanatory Memorandum and DCO verification material;
- compulsory acquisition documents, including the Book of Reference, Statement of Reasons, Funding Statement and schedule of negotiations and powers sought;
- the Environmental Statement, Non-Technical Summary, figures and technical appendices; and
- other supporting reports, strategies and management plans, including the Planning Statement, Design Approach Document, Design Principles, commitments register and outline environmental management plans.

4.5.2 The draft DCO will be developed alongside the Works Plans, Land Plans, environmental mitigation and management documents. This will help ensure that the powers, requirements and other controls included in the draft DCO are aligned with the project design and the mitigation identified through the EIA.

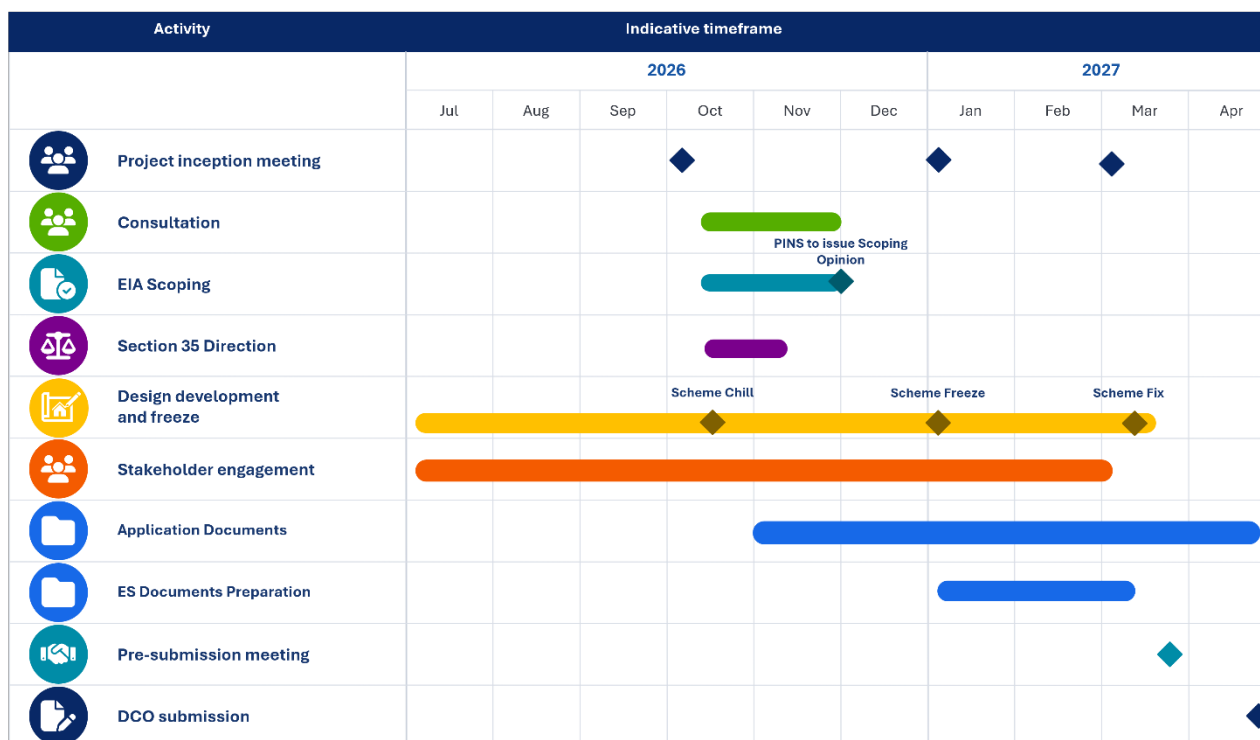
4.6 Other consents and licences

4.6.1 The Applicant will maintain a schedule of other consents and licences that may be required in addition to the DCO. The schedule will identify the relevant consenting authority, the anticipated application timing, the relationship with the DCO, and any dependencies on environmental surveys or detailed design.

Figure 1 – Indicative project programme

Pre-application Programme Overview

Indicative timeline of key pre-application activities



4.7 Expected submission date

4.7.1 The Applicant currently expects to submit the DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate in April 2027.

4.8 Programme management and dependencies

4.8.1 The programme integrates planning, consultation and engagement, design, engineering, environmental assessment and survey workstreams to support submission of the DCO application. Key milestones include EIA scoping, design development and freeze, preparation of the Environmental Statement, consultation reporting, finalisation of application documents and engagement with the Planning Inspectorate. The programme will be kept under review and updated as required throughout the pre-application process.

5 Main issues for resolution

5.1.1 The Applicant will be producing a 'potential main issues for examination' document for submission with the application. The following issues are anticipated to be raised by the relevant statutory bodies and other stakeholders:

Table 1 – Main issues identified by the Applicant

Topic	Issues	Management of issue
Ecology and biodiversity	Presence of protected species and their movement across the site.	The Applicant has undertaken habitat and species surveys, including birds, bats, reptiles, amphibians and badgers. Additional habitat and species surveys are continuing to be conducted. The Applicant is committed to mitigate adverse impacts where possible. The Applicant will engage with landowners, key technical specialists, and community stakeholders to support the design process and develop a green infrastructure and mitigation strategy and ensure the delivery of biodiversity net gain through design.
Flood risk and drainage	Parts of the Site are located in Flood Zone 3, principally within the western part of the site and sections of the cable corridors.	The Applicant has already engaged with the Environment Agency regarding these areas of the site to agree baseline flood risk models. The Applicant will also engage with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs), water company and Local Planning Authority drainage officers to seek to agree hydrology / hydrogeological interactions, climate change allowances, infiltration testing and sustainable drainage systems strategy
Landscape and visual	Potential effects on residents, PRow users, road users, heritage assets and County Wildlife Sites, including from operational lighting associated with the data centre. Potential receptors and effects will be assessed through the EIA.	The design process is environmentally led and the Applicant will seek to take advantage of natural screening, topography and landform, existing hedgerows, and woodland, informed by the Local Landscape Character Assessment. The Applicant will use Design Principles to help deliver a Proposed Development with good design that seeks to locate larger aspects of the Project at a distance from any receptors. All lighting would be designed to minimise light pollution and local impact. Engagement with King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council will be progressed to refine and inform the approach to mitigation.
Cultural heritage	There are no designated heritage assets with the proposed Order Limits but the Proposed	As a part of the ongoing cultural heritage assessments, the

Topic	Issues	Management of issue
	Development has the potential to affect the setting of a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets.	Applicant is undertaking surveys from identified heritage receptors. Engagement with Historic England, Norfolk County Council (archaeology) and King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council (built heritage) will be progressed.
Construction impacts	Potential impact of construction on highway and Public Right of Way users.	The A17, A47, A10, A134, A1122 will be the primary routes for any traffic associated with the construction and decommissioning of the Proposed Development, which will mitigate potential impacts on local road users and respect the amenity of residents. The Applicant is continuing to undertake surveys and assessments of local routes to assess traffic flows and inform the preferred route for construction and access points to the Site. The DCO application will include a comprehensive Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) and Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to ensure appropriate construction activity control.
Land use and agriculture	The site is predicted to contain areas of best and most versatile agricultural land.	The Applicant will review the assessment of best and most versatile land and will seek to minimise the permanent loss of agricultural land where possible. Engagement with Natural England and King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council will be progressed.

6 Engaging with statutory bodies

6.1.1 The Applicant has prepared an initial list of statutory bodies to inform pre-application engagement for the Proposed Development. The initial list includes:

- Anglian Water;
- Canal & River Trust;
- Civil Aviation Authority;
- Coal Authority;
- Environment Agency;
- Health and Safety Executive;
- Historic England;
- King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council;
- Marine Management Organisation;

- Ministry of Defence;
- Neighbouring authorities (including Fenland District Council, South Holland District Council, Breckland District Council and, where relevant, Cambridgeshire County Council and Lincolnshire County Council);
- National Energy System Operator (NESO);
- National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET);
- National Gas Transmission;
- National Highways;
- NATS (En-Route);
- Natural England;
- Norfolk County Council; and
- relevant internal drainage boards and the Water Management Alliance:

- 6.1.2 The Applicant intends to undertake proportionate, topic-led engagement with the identified statutory bodies as the design, environmental assessment and supporting evidence develop.
- 6.1.3 The Applicant's objective is to resolve, or materially narrow, issues raised by statutory bodies before submission of the application. The anticipated degree of resolution will be monitored through the pre-application engagement programme and recorded against each technical topic.
- 6.1.4 At this stage, the Applicant has not confirmed which statutory bodies will be requested or expected to prepare pre-application principal areas of disagreement summary statements (PADSS). The Applicant considers that statements of common ground (SoCGs) provide the most effective mechanism for recording matters under discussion and the status of issue resolution.

Table 2 – Approach to stakeholder engagement

Audience	Methods of engagement
Technical Stakeholders	Direct engagement through relevant technical lead(s) Written briefings Technical one-to-one (engagement) meetings with statutory bodies Preparation of SoCG, where required The Applicant's website
Host Authorities	Technical one-to-one (engagement) meetings with host authorities Preparation of SoCG Written briefings The Applicant's website
Neighbouring Authorities	Written briefings Feedback form Mailout questionnaire The Applicant's website
Landowners	Hard copy and online feedback form Mailout questionnaire One-to-one meetings with directly affected landowners where justified The Applicant's website

7 Engaging with local authorities

- 7.1.1 The host authorities relevant to the Proposed Development are Norfolk County Council and King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.
- 7.1.2 The Applicant will establish a programme of regular engagement with the host authorities throughout the pre-application stage. The frequency and format of engagement will be tailored to the issues arising within each authority area and are intended to support the identification and resolution of matters prior to submission of the application.
- 7.1.3 The Applicant is committed to preparing SoCGs with host local authorities and will engage proactively to identify areas of agreement and disagreement.
- 7.1.4 Additionally, the Applicant intends to enter into Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) with the host local authorities where this is considered beneficial to support effective engagement and timely consideration of application documents. Details of any agreed PPAs will be confirmed as discussions progress.
- 7.1.5 In addition to the host authorities, the Applicant anticipates engaging with neighbouring authorities that may be affected by the Proposed Development, including Fenland District Council, South Holland District Council, Breckland District Council and, where relevant, Cambridgeshire County Council and Lincolnshire County Council. The final scope of neighbouring authority engagement will be kept under review as the environmental assessment and project design develop.
- 7.1.6 The Applicant expects that the majority of technical matters will either be agreed or narrowed through the SoCG process prior to submission of the DCO application, with any remaining areas of disagreement clearly identified and explained within the relevant SoCGs.

8 Pre-application risks

- 8.1.1 The Applicant will keep the pre-application programme and associated risks under review throughout the pre-application period. Where matters arise that may materially affect the programme, the Applicant will engage with the Planning Inspectorate and relevant stakeholders as appropriate and update this Programme Document where necessary.

