



## Applications by:

- **East Anglia ONE North Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for East Anglia ONE North Offshore Wind Farm; and**
- **East Anglia TWO Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for East Anglia TWO Offshore Wind Farm.**

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Version 2.1 issued on 12 October 2020

This FAQ document aims to assist people involved in the Examinations who have questions about the Examination Timetables, procedures and arrangements.

It combines responses to questions relating to the Examining Authorities (ExAs) Coronavirus response, with responses relating to the delivery of two Examinations in parallel. It replaces FAQ documents published on 3 January 2020, 21 May 2020 and 16 July 2020. It may be updated from time to time at the discretion of the ExAs.

Issues are grouped under the following topic headings, which can be clicked to go directly to that topic.

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## THE EXAMINATIONS

### 1. Why can't the Examinations be postponed until after the Coronavirus pandemic is over?

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had a significant impact on society. During the early stages, the Planning Inspectorate followed Government advice at the time and suspended all casework activities involving unnecessary travel and public gatherings. These included hearings and accompanied site inspections. Over June to August 2020, lockdown restrictions were eased as infection rates fell. Since September 2020 infection rates have been rising, bringing additional local and national controls into force. It is still uncertain when large meetings and hearings will be able to be held in the traditional way, in large indoor venues. The Government will make public health judgments moving forward, considering infection rates and emerging factors such as whether a vaccine or effective drug therapy are available. The ExAs must abide by those judgments and legal requirements that apply.

However, the planning system has a role to play in supporting the UK's economic recovery. Planning decisions of all types still need to be made as. If decision-making was to be halted completely, substantial adverse economic and employment consequences would emerge in the design, construction and related sectors of the economy. Where the development of national infrastructure is argued to meet national needs, a cessation of the assessment and decision-making processes could leave important needs unmet for longer than necessary. A [Written Ministerial Statement](#) was made on 13 May 2020 by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The statement emphasised the importance of planning's role. It called for the resumption of hearings using online documents and virtual events. Given the importance of this work, there is no option nor any practical reason to postpone these Examinations indefinitely.

The applications under examination also include proposals for the compulsory acquisition and temporary possession of land. As long as the applications remain undecided, such proposals are economically and socially disruptive for the people and businesses that they affect. It is important that, if there are means of resolving this disruption sooner rather than later, delay and the blight that can flow from it should be minimised.

Having undertaken extensive testing of processes for virtual meetings and hearings, the Planning Inspectorate is now delivering a rising volume of its casework using virtual methods. Within its national infrastructure casework, many hearings have now been held, all of which have been conducted successfully.

The ExAs consulted all Interested Parties in these Examinations about the possible use of virtual meetings and hearings. They noted the preference of a considerable number to delay hearings until purely physical events can be conducted. On balance, it is clear that the great majority of Interested Parties



can participate in virtual events, as long as they can be joined using conventional land-line telephones as well as using internet connected digital devices. Specific steps are being taken to identify support for those Interested Parties who cannot participate in virtual events and more information about this will be provided soon. See FAQs 19, 37 and 50 if you think you may need help.

The ExAs are confident that the Examination Timetable in the Rule 8 letter provides for a fair, open and impartial examination of the issues.

## **2. Coronavirus restrictions are changing. Why don't you issue Examination Timetables providing for physical meetings and hearings?**

The number of Coronavirus cases dropped significantly in most areas between May and August 2020, but most areas have seen significant rises since that time. The Government significantly eased the public health restrictions in force over the summer but in September 2020 tightened them once again. The ExAs cannot now plan for public events based on less restrictive health controls as we might have anticipated would be the case by autumn 2020. Events must be planned based on the controls in force at the time that they are planned. The ExAs must make a reasonable allowance for the possibility that those controls might become even stricter in the gap between the service of notice for an event and an event itself.

Virtual Preliminary Meetings have been held. At the time the ExAs had to make decisions about how to hold those events, and restrictions did not permit us to hold these important meetings as large indoor public gatherings. It is not fair to change plans for events at the last minute. Even if physical public meetings had become possible between the date of the Rule 6 Letters and the meetings themselves, the ExAs decided to stick to the plans set out in the Rule 6 Letters. However, by the dates set for the meetings, additional controls had come into force that would have made anything other than virtual events very difficult.

The ExAs note the widespread preference of many Interested Parties to attend physical hearings. The draft timetables have been designed to place more hearings later in the Examinations than would typically be the case. This step was taken in July 2020 when it seemed likely that there might be fewer public health controls in force after January 2021. However, the government has announced that the new controls imposed in September 2020 are broadly intended to last for six months, covering most of the Examination period. Firm decisions about whether events held from January 2021 are to be virtual, physical or a combination of the two ('blended' events) will still be taken closer to the dates proposed for hearings. If at the relevant time the ExAs can hold physical or 'blended' rather than virtual hearings, then they will try to do so. They will take specific steps to enable people who are digitally excluded<sup>1</sup> to become involved.

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<sup>1</sup>'Digitally excluded' describes circumstances where a person is not normally able to access or use digital technology or services



Whether or not large indoor public gatherings are permitted, it remains likely that all hearings proposed in the draft timetable will need to be held with at least a virtual element, as 'blended' events. It is becoming more likely that they may need to be held as completely virtual events.

### **3. Where can I find the Examination Timetables?**

The timetables in force are annexed to the Rule 8 Letters of Monday 12 October 2020 – see Annex A

- [East Anglia ONE North - Rule 8 Letter \(12 October 2020\)](#)
- [East Anglia TWO – Rule 8 Letter \(12 October 2020\)](#)

### **4. Why are the new timetables different from the draft timetables?**

Changes to the draft timetables have been made to respond to issues raised in submissions to the Preliminary Meetings. The Rule 8 Letters explain them all.

### **5. Do the ExAs need to hold any hearings at all?**

Examination of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) under The Planning Act 2008 (as amended) (PA2008) is primarily a written process. Whilst public health controls remain in force, the ExAs will protect Interested Parties from adverse health effects by maximising their use of written processes.

However, there are certain circumstances where hearings must and will be held:

- Where Interested Parties request to be heard at an Open Floor Hearing, they have a right to be heard;
- Affected Persons (people whose land or rights are affected by a Compulsory Acquisition (CA) or Temporary Possession (TP) proposal) who object have a right to be heard on their objections; and
- There are certain matters that are complex and multi-factor in nature, requiring testing against policy or that remain in dispute where hearings are more efficient than multiple rounds of written questions ever could be.

We have to hold some hearings in order to make progress in the Examinations. In the current context, the best and fairest method is to hold virtual hearings, with further special measures put in place to ensure that those who cannot participate in such events are also heard.

### **6. Why were the Preliminary Meetings held in two parts, with an adjournment 'gap' in between?**

For reasons set out in response to question 2, the ExAs decided to hold virtual Preliminary Meetings to get the Examinations started.

There are technical limits on the number of people who can attend a virtual meeting or hearing with the ability to speak and be spoken to in real time. There is no practical limit on the number of people who can observe a meeting or hearing using an on-line streaming or catch-up service. For these reasons, the ExAs provided a 'gap' in the Preliminary Meetings. This allowed anyone entitled



to attend and speak but who was not able to speak during the initial part of the meetings to make a written submission before the resumption of the meetings. Any written submissions made by the relevant procedural deadline were considered by the ExAs and accorded equivalent weight to any oral submissions.

Any person entitled to attend and speak but who did not speak during the initial part of the meetings was able to request to speak at the resumed meetings if, having responded to matters raised there, wished to respond to the requests for changes to the examination procedure that had been raised. This approach aimed to provide everyone with the same ability to become involved and speak as they would have had at physical Preliminary Meetings.

These meetings were amongst the first Preliminary Meetings held since the onset of Coronavirus. The ExAs were deliberately precautionary and designed procedures that supported virtual involvement. The ExAs also allowed time so that if not all virtual procedures worked as well as intended for all parties, alternative written procedures could be used. We are interested in feedback from those who participated, and the Planning Inspectorate will aim to develop and improve procedures based on your experience.

## **7. What topics will be covered in the early Issue Specific Hearings (ISHs 1 & 2) and why are they not happening until December 2020?**

Given that there are restrictions on our ability to hold physical events and that virtual meetings or hearings typically take longer to accommodate fewer speakers, we have had to review and revise our approach to the examination of some issues.

For these reasons, the new timetables start by requesting the submission of more written material to the Examinations than would typically have been the case before the pandemic. We aim to obtain as much information as we possibly can in writing, early in the Examinations. In addition, our request for the provision of comments on Relevant Representations during the pre-Examinations period ensures everyone has greater clarity on the position of a range of parties on particular issues from the outset. The ExAs hope that this approach has already helped and will continue to narrow/focus the issues at an earlier stage than normal. This should remove the need for more generalised hearing sessions with large numbers of speakers, early in the Examinations.

Moving on, the approach to the timetable has been to retain as much flexibility as possible. This is to allow us to respond to changing public health circumstances, whilst hopefully avoiding the need to revise the timetable part-way through the Examinations.

Issue Specific Hearings (ISHs) are to held on 1 – 3 December 2020:

- **ISH1** (1 December 2020) focuses on biodiversity and habitats regulations assessment (HRA) and will cover:
  - Offshore biodiversity
  - Onshore biodiversity
  - Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)



- Cumulative and in-combination effects; and
- **ISH2** (2 & 3 December 2020) focuses on onshore siting, design and construction and will cover:
  - Onshore cable corridors and transmission connections
  - Siting
  - BEIS review
  - Landscape
  - Visual
  - Historic environment
  - Good design
  - Cumulative and in-combination effects.

The subjects for discussion at these hearings will be complex, multi-party and contentious matters that are difficult to manage in writing alone. We have now issued clear and detailed hearing notices and will issue agendas in good time beforehand, appreciating that this is even more important when using virtual as distinct from physical hearings.

## **8. Will the Examining Authority's Initial Assessments of Principal Issues (IAPIs) be amended?**

Whilst there has been disruption to the commencement of the Examinations due to the public health situation, the applications themselves have not yet changed (although the Applicants have identified the possibility that they might do so moving forward). Whilst responses to Relevant Representations have been requested and some parties have sought to make submissions, until Deadline 1 there were no formal submission deadlines for the receipt of substantive arguments on planning merits. Consequently, up to 12 October 2020 there has been no detailed consideration of the evolving position of parties on particular matters.

As such, the initial assessments of principal issues for both Examinations remain as previously published in the Rule 6 letter of 21 February 2020. Their content was discussed in the Preliminary Meetings and a number of useful suggestions for additional issues were made both orally and in writing. The ExAs are giving careful attention to all such requests and all important and relevant issues will be considered as the Examinations move forward. However, the initial assessments of principal issues remain as a starting point, a snapshot in time at the time that they were made. They will not be amended.



## EXAMINING THE APPLICATIONS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EAST ANGLIA ONE NORTH & EAST ANGLIA TWO

### 9. How will the ExAs handle two parallel Examinations for the two separate DCO applications?

The Examining Authority appointed to examine the East Anglia ONE North Offshore Wind Farm application consists of the same people as the Examining Authority appointed to examine the East Anglia TWO Offshore Wind Farm application. Whilst they consist of the same people, they are two separately appointed Examining Authorities, examining two separate applications. Ultimately, both applications will be fully and independently considered on their planning merits and a separate recommendation report will be produced for each application.

The ExAs recognise that there are some matters which will be common to their consideration of both applications, particularly in relation to onshore aspects of the projects. We have designed a process that allows us to examine common aspects of the two applications in parallel, where it is efficient and sensible to do so. For example:

- the deadlines for written submissions on both cases are identical, thereby simplifying the number of submission dates for parties; and
- the starting point is that hearings for the two Examinations will be held in parallel, allowing us to hear evidence on both cases at once and reducing the need for parties to repeat the points they wish to make.

### 10. What if there are matters that are relevant to only one of the applications?

We recognise that there are some examination matters, particularly but not exclusively in the marine environment, which relate only to one or other of the applications. Where matters unique to one application are being examined, the timetable allows us to receive submissions in writing and at hearings that are relevant to that application alone.

### 11. How will the ExAs know whether submissions relate to just one application or both?

#### Written Submissions

The ExAs have made Procedural Decisions which deal with the fact that two separate DCO applications are being examined by the same Examining Inspectors at the same time. The decision to do this was for efficiency and to ensure a consistent approach to the Examinations and consistent consideration of the issues.

Procedural Decisions 2 and 3 set out the approach – they are now linked in **Annex B(1)** to the Rule 8 Letter.



In summary:

- Procedural Decision 2 emphasises the importance of ensuring that any material that is relevant to both applications is submitted to both Examinations. Parties must not assume that the Examining Authority for one application will copy submissions made only to that Examination over to the other Examination, as they cannot do so; and
- Procedural Decision 3 outlines a colour coding approach for written submissions to ensure that all parties can understand whether a submission relates to one application or to both.

### Preliminary Meetings

Preliminary Meetings (PMs) were held to make arrangements for the Examination of applications. We held the PMs for both applications on the same dates, at the same time and place. In practice, this meant that a single event discharged the duties of two separate PMs. We did retain the possibility of discussing matters relating to only one of the applications by pausing proceedings on one application to allow a separate discussion about just the other application to take place within the framework of the overall event. However, as matters turned out, that approach was not used.

### Examination hearings

The Examinations include Issue Specific Hearings (ISHs), Compulsory Acquisition Hearings (CAHs) and Open Floor Hearings (OFHs). We are normally holding hearings for the two applications on the same date, at the same time and place. This should avoid the need for participants to repeat their points if they are the same for both applications. In practice, this will mean that a single event is held, discharging the duties of two separate hearings.

However, where it is necessary to discuss matters relating to only one of the applications, we can hold hearing sessions unique to that application to allow a separate discussion to take place. We have listened to feedback from Interested Parties and indicate that for matters where it is necessary to orally examine each application separately, we propose to hold hearing sessions consecutively rather than concurrently. This means that there will never be circumstances where there are two hearings for different applications happening at the same time.

### Site Inspections

Accompanied Site Inspections (ASIs) take place in the company of Interested Parties whereas Unaccompanied Site Inspections (USIs) are undertaken by the relevant Examining Authority alone. Where we can do so, we plan to undertake site inspections for the two applications on the same date, at the same time and place. A single event will normally take place, discharging the functions of two site inspections.

However, if it is necessary to inspect locations unique to just one of the applications, we have the discretion to do. Notice of any ASIs will be given in advance and further information about our approach to ASIs is provided below from Question 42. We will continue to publish a note of any USIs undertaken.





## PARTICIPATING IN MEETINGS & HEARINGS

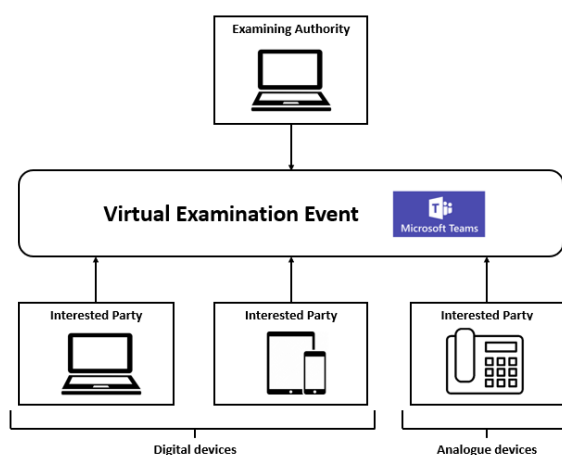
### 12. How will local people have their say if there are no physical meetings or hearings held locally?

The ExAs will try to hold physical events from January 2021, if it is possible to do so whilst responding to public health requirements currently in force at the time. If physical events are held, steps will also be taken to ensure that virtual access options are retained for any people who may still be required to shield, isolate or lockdown at that time. Such events are known as 'blended' events.

The Preliminary Meetings were held virtually, on the basis of the public health controls in force when they were planned. Early Open Floor Hearings (OFHs) are also being held virtually, as rising infection rates in September 2020 led to a reimposition of health controls, making it difficult to plan for physical events. Where Interested Parties wish to get involved or be heard orally at the start of the Examinations, virtual hearings will enable that to happen. Interested Parties who cannot be heard at virtual events will have special arrangements made to ensure their involvement in hearing processes from January 2021. Whilst we will ensure that anyone who does not have access to digital equipment will be involved if they wish to be, we cannot guarantee that physical hearings in large public venues will be available. We must deliver events within the scope of the controls in force at the time.

No one will be disadvantaged by commenting in writing instead of attending a virtual or a physical hearing. Virtual Open Floor Hearings (OFHs) will provide ample opportunities to be heard using internet connected devices and by telephone.

### 13. How will virtual hearings work?



Virtual hearings are held using a combination of digital technology (computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones connected to the internet) and analogue technology (mobile phones not connected to the internet and land-line telephones).



Instead of people being physically together in one place, teleconferencing and video conferencing allow people to observe or join in a discussion from a safe, socially distanced location such as their home or office.

Telephone conferencing allows audio (sound only) discussion between participants who are at different locations. It typically involves the use of a telephone, mobile phone, smartphone, or a computer, laptop or tablet connected to the internet.

Video conferencing allows video (sound plus picture) discussion between participants who are at different locations. It typically involves the use of a smartphone, or a computer, laptop or tablet connected to the internet.

The Planning Inspectorate uses Microsoft Teams to deliver virtual meetings and hearings. This software is widely available already and you may have used it before. Even if you haven't, you may have experienced something similar: meetings using Skype or Zoom, or video calls over Facebook, WhatsApp, FaceTime or similar applications. Guidance on using Microsoft Teams is referred to below.

#### **14. Why is requesting to be heard in advance of virtual or 'blended' meetings or hearings so important?**

Requesting to be heard in advance of an Examination event is not new. Examination timetables have for many years set deadlines by which people wishing to speak should make themselves known to the Case Team. This is in order to ensure that the necessary arrangements can be made, large enough rooms hired, and the right quantity of chairs provided. What is new is that these deadlines are now much more important because there is no longer any scope to invite people to speak on an unplanned basis.

Where physical meetings or hearings were held in a large venue with spare seating capacity and no social distancing requirement, it was traditionally possible for Inspectors to be quite flexible about who got involved. People could even turn up 'on the day'. If Interested Parties did not request to be heard in advance but have a right to be heard and important and relevant contributions to make, ExAs have enabled them to join in discussions, even if they have had to wait their turn, standing at the back of the room. Even where other people who have no right to be heard have asked to get involved from their position in the public seating area of a hearing room, Inspectors have typically allowed them to do so, as long as the following criteria were met. There is time and space available, their contribution is important and relevant, and involving them is not unfair (for example, it does not detract from the ability of Interested Parties with a right to be heard to speak in the time available) or unsafe (for example, exceeding the fire capacity of the venue).

Where virtual or 'blended' events are held, there are several reasons why the ExAs can no longer take such an un-planned approach to involvement.

- A speaker attending virtually needs a hyperlink or a phone number and a conference code to be sent to them beforehand to enable them to join in and speak. They need to have read brief but important technical instructions



beforehand, so that they know what to do and can manage their equipment to avoid causing breakdowns or annoyance to others. An email needs to have been sent by the Case Manager and received before the event. In some circumstances a physical letter or phone call may be required.

- Inspectors can no longer see everyone who is asking to speak just by looking around the room. To be fair to everyone involved and ensure that people do not talk across each other, the ExAs need to know in advance who wants to speak and to make sure that speakers are invited to speak at the right time.
- There are practical and technical limitations on the number of speaking participants. In a 'blended' event, social distancing requirements will impose a maximum number of attendees. Contact tracing requirements may mean we need to know who is attending. There is no virtual equivalent of 'standing room only'. If hyperlinks or telephone connections are given to too many people at all at once, it becomes more and then unacceptably likely that the information technology and systems underlying the event will fail, for some or all participants. For these reasons, the ExAs work with Case Managers to plan events carefully, limiting the number of speakers in an individual event, knowing who is there and ensuring that those requesting to be heard can have their say.
- Where a lot of people want to speak virtually, the ExAs may manage this by breaking an event up into multiple parts or sessions, each with smaller numbers of participants. But for session events to work, the ExA and Case Managers need to know in advance who wants to speak on which topic, enabling individual speaking opportunities to be allocated fairly.

For all of these reasons we have taken the decision that we can no longer support speaking involvement by people who do not request to be heard in advance.

## **15. How can I request to be heard?**

The Examination Timetables provide opportunities for Interested Parties to notify the ExAs of their wish to be heard. You may be asked to:

- complete an online involvement form on your smartphone or computer (used where there are large numbers of people requesting to be heard);
- send an email to the Case mailbox; or if these methods are not possible for you
- telephone or write to the Case Team.

However, you must do so by the relevant deadline.

## **16. What happens if I can't or I forget to request to be heard by the relevant deadline?**

For Open Floor Hearings, multiple events are held, to ensure that all people requesting to be heard can be heard. But if you have not requested to be heard at an Open Floor Hearing yet, you must book your place: contact the Case Teams by Examination Deadline 1.

Some events (eg most Issue Specific and some Compulsory Acquisition Hearings) are unique and not repeated. They will be held once only and if you



don't request to be heard by the relevant deadline, then you will have missed the opportunity for direct oral participation. Check the Examination Timetable carefully and make sure that you do request to be heard by the right deadline.

If you do miss the deadline to request to be heard, the following opportunities will still be open to you:

- As long as the event is still in progress, you will be able to view or listen to a live stream from a link on the National Infrastructure Planning website for the application;
- If the event has ended, you will be able to view or listen to a recording on our catch-up service; and
- All events have a deadline approximately one week after their closure, where people who have used the live-stream or catch-up service can submit their comments in writing.

Finally, at the end of both timetables, an 'Exceptional Issue Specific Hearing' (EISH) has been provided. This will only be held if required and speaking is only by invitation from the ExAs. However, if for good reasons you were unable to speak on an important and relevant matter earlier in the Examinations and that matter remains unexamined or in dispute you may request to be heard at the EISH.

## **17. What equipment and software do I need?**

If you have a computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone (a digital device) that is connected to the internet, you should be able to access and speak at a virtual hearing over the internet using a video link. If you do not wish to appear on video, you can switch off your camera and use voice only.

Depending on the performance of your digital device or the internet in your locality, it may be that you join by video and audio, or by audio alone. If you have a slow or intermittent connection, switching off your video camera and using just your audio connection can improve the quality and reliability of your involvement.

If you do not have an internet connection, or you do not feel confident or able to use a digital device, then you will be able to access and speak at the virtual meeting or hearings using an analogue device with a voice connection: any type of telephone with a keypad.

Please see the sections below on 'Joining by the internet' and 'Joining by telephone'. These include detailed advice on using Microsoft Teams.

## **18. What if I don't have internet access?**

It is possible to participate in virtual hearings using the voice connection on any telephone (including a land-line telephone), in the same manner as a traditional telephone conference (see FAQs from 30 below). If you decide to join by phone, before doing so, we encourage you to think about how to follow the proceedings. You may wish to ensure that you have relevant documents or extracts of them available to refer to, or which other participants might flag. When referencing



documents, it will assist all parties if the Examination Library Document ID is used. There is more information about joining by phone below.

### **19. I've read the FAQs above and I still don't think that I can participate: what next?**

If you don't have access to or are unable to use a digital device (a computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone) and you are still unsure about participating by phone, please contact the Case Team (FAQ 50). They will try to work out how you can become involved. You can attend a familiarisation event (see FAQ 21) to practice participating by phone.

If you don't have access to a telephone of any kind, then it is likely that special arrangements may need to be made to enable you to be heard. Please respond to the Case Team by **Deadline 1** (2 November 2020) to identify your concerns and ask for the help that you need to be heard.

### **20. What is an 'Arrangements Conference'?**

In all but the smallest hearings, the Planning Inspectorate will provide an Arrangements Conference where parties join, introduce themselves, verify their identity and identify the agenda items on which they would like to speak, before the meeting or hearing starts. Arrangements Conferences are run by case management staff. They can help you with questions about procedure and arrangements, but they are not there to hear your submissions. Only the ExAs can hear your submissions in the actual meeting or hearing.

You may be asked to verify your identity during an Arrangements Conference. You can do this by providing:

- your name;
- the last line (including the post code) of any postal address that the Planning Inspectorate holds for you; and
- the unique reference that you were provided with on the first page of the Rule 6 Letter. Please have the letter ready in case you are asked for this.

### **21. How can I prepare for hearings? Is there any help for people to become familiar with virtual meeting and hearing methods and systems?**

There will be familiarisation events held ahead of the scheduled hearings at which parties will have the opportunity to gain experience of the methods and systems used for virtual meeting or hearings. These will be run by case management staff and experienced people will be on hand to provide technical support. In general terms, a round of familiarisation events will be held in the week before a new round of hearings. If you would like to attend one, contact the Case Team a fortnight before the hearings are due to be held.

As events are held in these Examinations, you will find published recordings can provide a valuable guide to the way in which future events will be held. Recordings of the most recent events are available in the banner on both project web pages, for example:



- [Preliminary Meetings](#) (PMs) (from the East Anglia ONE North website)
- [Open Floor Hearings 1](#) (OFHs1) (from the East Anglia TWO website)

In addition, several other National Infrastructure cases have held virtual hearings already, you may wish to view agendas and watch the recordings in order to become more familiar with the hearing format. These can be found on our website - <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>.

Search in the projects search bar for the following cases that have already had virtual hearings, or follow the links below:

- Norfolk Boreas (an offshore wind farm) ([Open Floor Hearing 2](#));
- A38 Derby Junctions ([Issue Specific Hearing 8](#));
- M25 Junction 10 A3 Wisley Interchange Improvement ([Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1](#)); and
- A1 Birtley to Coalhouse Improvement Scheme ([Issue Specific Hearing 2](#)).

## **22. What if I don't know whether I want to speak, or there are not enough speaking links or lines available?**

It is normal for some Interested Parties to attend a hearing not being clear about whether or not they wish to speak. In a physical event, people can request to speak during the event in response to something said by another Interested Party. In a virtual event, if you don't ask to speak in advance then you won't be provided with a link or telephone number that you can use to become involved straight away. But don't worry – you can still make a submission in writing.

In some large events, with high demand to speak, there may not be enough speaking links or telephone lines available to connect everybody at once. Where this is the case, the Examining Authority will take the following steps:

- The event will be divided into sessions. The aim will be to ensure that as many people as possible are given a speaking link or telephone line into the event during the session where their concern arises most directly. Once they have spoken, they can then leave. This will free up capacity for other speakers and issues in the following sessions.
- Parties will need to advise the ExA in advance about the issues on which they want to speak in order to be allocated a link or a telephone line.
- Parties who do not know whether they wish to speak, and parties who have already spoken in earlier sessions will then be asked to listen to or watch the remaining sessions using a livestream or a catch-up service. They will then be able to respond to anything else that is said in writing, after the event.

We aim to live-stream all events on the internet, through a link posted on the National Infrastructure web pages for the applications. Click on the link and, depending on the technology used, you will be able to view or listen to the event in progress, live. If live-stream technology is not available or fails, we will make this clear on the website as soon as we can.



Whether or not live-stream technology is available and working, every meeting or hearing will also be recorded. All recordings will be posted on the National Infrastructure web pages for the applications after the events have concluded, providing a 'catch-up' service, equivalent to the BBC iPlayer, ITV Hub and similar TV catch-up services. Click on the link and you will be able to view or listen to the event.

If you are using the live-stream or catch-up service and find that there is something that (had you been in a physical hearing room) you would have wished to say, you can still make a submission in writing by a deadline identified in the timetable, normally in the week following the event. You can make your submission to the project mailbox by email, or the ExAs may provide a submission form on which you can respond by clicking a link from the National Infrastructure web pages for the applications.

Please include your Interested Party reference number from the Rule 6 Letter in any submissions. The ExAs will always consider written submissions from Interested Parties in these circumstances.

If you are not an Interested Party, just as you would have to ask the ExAs for permission to speak in a physical meeting or hearing, equally any written submission will be considered at the Examining Authorities' discretion.

## **JOINING A VIRTUAL MEETING OR HEARING ON THE INTERNET**

### **23. Will I be able to participate from a computer, tablet or smartphone connected to the internet and will I need any special software?**

You will use Microsoft Teams – the Planning Inspectorate's virtual meeting and hearing software. The following link provides information about how to use Microsoft Teams on a computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone connected to the internet: <https://support.office.com/en-gb/teams>.

You do not need to download any software to use Microsoft Teams on most computers or laptops, although there are applications (Apps) that can be downloaded free of charge that are available for most types of device. Microsoft Teams will work without an App on an internet browser such as Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome.

On Apple devices it will not work on the Safari browser, but the Google Chrome browser (free of charge) can be installed to enable it to work.

On a smartphone or tablet there are Microsoft Teams Apps for most devices, and you will normally need to install these (free of charge). Search for 'Microsoft Teams' in your device AppStore, PlayStore or equivalent.

Download advice is available here: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft365/microsoft-teams/download-app>.



## **24. How do I join from a computer, tablet or smartphone?**

You will be sent a joining invitation by email between 1 and 24 hours before the event. Please join from a computer, tablet or smartphone as follows:

- Forward the invitation email from the Planning Inspectorate containing the joining instructions to an email account on the computer, tablet or smartphone that you are due to join on.
- A different email invitation with a different web address link will be provided for each virtual meeting or hearing. Some larger hearings may be divided into more than one session. If this is done, we will tell you whether you can use the same invitation or a different invitation to access the later sessions.
- Click on the web address link provided in the invitation email.
- Either join using the Microsoft Teams App (if you have it installed), or 'join on the web instead', which will use your internet browser.
- Check that your computer, tablet or smartphone camera (where available), microphone and speakers are turned on. Some computers, tablets or smartphones require them to be physically plugged in or connected wirelessly. Some require settings or permissions to be changed and the browser, computer, tablet or smartphone may also need to be restarted before you can connect.
- The Microsoft Teams App or your browser should prompt you to enter your name (this will be visible to all participants), then connect you to a virtual 'lobby';
- Do not worry if a little time elapses between clicking the link and joining the meeting: this is normal, particularly when using a browser.
- Once you are in the lobby, a member of the Case Team will admit you into the Arrangements Conference, meeting or hearing.

Participants are admitted individually to ensure that everyone receives the attention and support that they need. Please be patient whilst waiting in the lobby, as they may be admitting large numbers of people.

The Planning Inspectorate will always use the email address that you have most recently provided to it to send you your joining invitation. If you don't get your joining invitation, this could be because you've changed your email address or settings since you last contacted the Planning Inspectorate, or because emails are being stopped or diverted by your internet service provider, email service or any security / anti-spam/ junk mail system you use. Check the settings of these systems and any mailboxes they create for missing mail. It can be helpful to add us to your address book, contact system or preferred contact list on your device. Always ensure that you advise us of any changes to your email address.

## **25. Will my personal information be shared with any other participants?**

Microsoft Teams will normally display the name and may sometimes also display the email address of participants to other participants using digital devices.

If you do not wish the email address that we are currently using to correspond with you to be seen by other parties, you can set up a free email account online using an on-line service to join with. Alternatively, your existing internet or





email service provider may enable you to set up an 'alias' email address such as 'hearing.participant123@freemail.com'.

These measures will protect your privacy. If you plan to do this, please let us have any alternative email address as soon as you can so that we can send the invitation email and joining instructions to the correct email address.

Please check with your internet or email service provider or an intended alternative email service provider before the virtual meeting, hearing or familiarisation test event and ensure that you have taken any steps that you wish to take to prevent the disclosure of your actual email address to other users.

## **26. How will I know which documents the ExAs refer to, as I won't be able to see them?**

Where necessary, a small number of documents may be shared on screen during the hearings. These include the agenda and documents identified in and linked from the agenda. However, the sharing on screen of too many or too large documents can give rise to technical difficulties. Therefore we advise you to have the key documents available in either hard copy or already downloaded to your device. Alternatively, all documents, apart from the National Policy Statement for National Networks, are available in the Examination Library. The ExAs will say when a document is being referred to during a hearing, providing its Examination Library reference number. The Examination Libraries are at:

- [East Anglia ONE North](#)
- [East Anglia TWO](#)

Accessing the virtual meeting or hearing from a computer or tablet using the web address link provided in the invitation email should allow you to see any documents that are shared during it. The relatively small screen on a smart phone may make that impractical.

Everybody with access to a web browser, including those who access a meeting or hearing by smartphone, should be able to access the documents by clicking on the link in the agenda or in the Examination Library.

## **27. How will I know who is speaking at any given time?**

If you connect using computer, tablet or smartphone you will be able to see other participants and they will be able to see you. The ExAs will make it clear in their opening statement that all parties have to introduce themselves orally every time they intend to speak. If the person speaking has their camera turned off, a ring around their 'icon' in the system will usually glow to show that they are speaking. Alternatively, their name will become bold in the participants list, accessed via a button on the Microsoft Teams toolbar at the bottom of the screen.



## **28. Will I be able to mute my microphone?**

You can switch the microphone on and off when you are in a meeting or hearing by clicking the microphone icon within the Microsoft Teams toolbar.

Please ensure that you mute when you are not speaking to avoid unnecessary background noise and disruption. The Case Team may mute you when you are not talking. It is important to note that the Case Team cannot unmute you, only you can unmute yourself. Please do this and say your name when asked to speak by the Examining Authorities.

## **29. What if I do not wish to appear on video?**

If you do not wish to appear on video, you can switch off your camera by clicking on the video icon within the Microsoft Teams toolbar and use voice only. This may improve the speed and quality of your connection. Please ensure that your camera is switched off when you are not speaking.



## JOINING A VIRTUAL MEETING OR HEARING BY TELEPHONE

### 30. Can I join by using any telephone?

Yes, you can join using the voice connection from any telephone including a mobile phone, a smartphone not connected to the internet or standard landline telephone with a keypad. You will need to use the \* (star) and the # (hash) keys.

### 31. How do I join by telephone?

Joining instructions will be included in an email invitation sent between 1 and 48 hours before each event. Please join from a telephone as follows:

- Dial the **telephone number** included in the joining instructions.
- Enter the **conference ID number** from the joining instructions (nine figures) on your keypad, followed by the # (hash) key.
- You will be prompted to record your name, which will be announced when you join the meeting.
- You will then enter a virtual 'lobby' where music will be played. Please be patient and a member of the Case Team will admit you into the Arrangements Conference, meeting or hearing as soon as they can.

Participants are admitted individually to ensure that everyone receives the attention and support that they need. If you are not admitted straight away, please don't hang up. The Case Team will be admitting other participants and they will get to you as soon as they can. Remember: there may be a lot of people for them to admit.

### 32. Will my number be visible to other participants and how can I ensure my privacy?

A default setting in Microsoft Teams means that your number will be visible to parties who chose to participate in the virtual meeting or hearing or familiarisation test event by video.

If you do not want to display your telephone number, please add a privacy prefix before you dial the telephone number included in the joining instructions. On most UK telephone networks you can dial 141 before the telephone number. This will ensure that you remain anonymous and your telephone number is not shared with any other users. Some networks require you to use a different method. Certain telephone handsets also allow you to withhold your telephone number using a setting that is specific to your handset.

Please check with your telephone service provider and read the instructions for your telephone handset before the meeting, hearing or familiarisation test event



and ensure that you have taken any steps that you wish to take to prevent the disclosure of your telephone number to other users.

### **33. How will I know who is speaking at any given time?**

If you join by telephone you will be able to speak and be spoken to, but you will not be able to see other participants and they will not be able to see you. However, the ExAs will make it clear in their opening statement that all parties have to introduce themselves orally, every time they speak.

### **34. Will I be able to mute and unmute my telephone during the event?**

You can mute and unmute by pressing \* (star) then **6** on your telephone keypad.

Please ensure that you mute when you are not speaking to avoid unnecessary background noise and disruption. The Case Team may mute you when you are not talking. Please note that the Case Team cannot unmute you, only you can unmute yourself. Please do this and say your name when asked to speak by the ExAs.

Your telephone may have its own mute option; however, please note that you may also need to dial \*6 if you've been muted on Microsoft Teams by the Case Team. For this reason, we advise you to use the \*6 function in preference to your own handset's mute controls.

### **35. How will I know which documents the ExAs are referring to during the event as I won't be able to see them?**

Where necessary, a small number of documents may be shared on screen during hearings. These include the agenda and documents identified in and linked from the agenda. You are advised to have printed copies of these key documents available in hard copy. Alternatively, all documents, apart from the relevant Acts of Parliament, Statutory Rules and Regulations (Statutory Instruments) and National Policy Statements in force, are available in the Examination Library. The ExAs will say when a document is being referred to during a Hearing and provide its Examination Library reference number.

The Examination Libraries can be seen at:

- [East Anglia ONE North](#)
- [East Anglia TWO](#)

If you have access to the internet but are using the phone because eg your connection is slow or your computer does not have a camera or speakers attached to it, you can still access relevant documents by clicking on the internet link in the agenda or in the Examination Library on the project website.



If you do not have an internet connection, you may wish to obtain printed copies or extracts of documents in advance, from the libraries identified in Annex E to the Rule 8 Letters. Do alert the Case Team and/or Examining Authorities, so they are aware if you are not able to see the documents.

### **36. How much does it cost to participate by telephone?**

Depending on your network service provider and contract, you may have enough time in your pre-paid allowance, or telephone charges may apply. General guidance on applicable call charges can be found on the website of your telephone service provider and on the UK government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/call-charges>.

### **37. I've read these FAQs and I don't think I can participate by phone: what next?**

Please contact the Case Team (FAQ 50). They will try to work out how you can become involved.

If you have a phone but are unsure about using it, you can attend a familiarisation event (see FAQ 21) to practice participating by phone.

If you don't have access to a telephone of any kind, then it is likely that special arrangements may need to be made to enable you to be heard. Please respond to the Case Team by **Deadline 1** (2 November 2020) to identify your concerns and ask for the help that you need to be heard.

## **WHAT IF THINGS GO WRONG AT A VIRTUAL MEETING OR HEARING?**

### **38. What if I lose my connection?**

If you experience problems with your connection, then please try again using the same joining instructions. On a digital device, it may help to restart and to check whether your internet connection (including your router or modem) is working. On a phone, hang up and re-dial. If these steps do not work, contact the Case Team by email or telephone using the contact details provided in the invitation email. They will attempt to help you to join or re-join the meeting or hearing. It may be that, if you initially joined by video but that failed, you can still re-join by audio only (switch off your camera) or by telephone, to limit the effect of any technical issues that you may have been experiencing.



### **39. What if I can't re-join?**

If you can't join or re-join the meeting or hearing at all, the ExAs will consider the best way for you to still be able to participate in the Examinations. This may include requesting you to view or listen to a recording of the meeting or hearing and to make a submission in writing by the relevant deadline for submissions identified in the Examination Timetable. There may be an appropriate hearing later in the Examination that you could request to join, including the Exceptional Issue Specific Hearing (EISH) at the end. A technology failure excluding you from an earlier hearing is likely to provide sufficient reason for the ExAs to invite you to the EISH, if there is no other opportunity to be heard remaining in the timetables.

### **40. What if the event is disrupted?**

If a meeting or a hearing is disrupted by technical or other issues, the ExAs may adjourn it, or part of it, to another time, date or format. Time has been provided in the Examination Timetables for this to occur – and this explains the decision to reserve large blocks of time in the timetables shown as for meetings or hearings '(if required)'. If the meetings or hearings are not disrupted, reserved events are unlikely to proceed. They can be cancelled in the banner of the National Infrastructure Planning Website project page for the applications. The ExAs may also decide that it is possible for further written submissions to be made on any agenda items that were not able to be considered at a meeting or hearing. They will normally do so if anyone has lost what otherwise would have been a right or expectation to be heard orally. There may also be an appropriate hearing later in the Examination that you could join. Disruption to or loss of earlier hearing at which you were due to be heard is likely to provide sufficient reason for the ExAs to invite you to the EISH, if there is no other opportunity to be heard remaining in the timetables.

## **HOW DO I PROTECT MY PRIVACY IN VIRTUAL EVENTS?**

### **41. How do I ensure that my personal and private information is not published?**

All National Infrastructure hearings are recorded, and recordings are published on the examination project pages of the National Infrastructure Planning Website. By established practice, a digital audio recording has been published. You are advised not to place private and confidential material onto the oral record. If you feel that need to do so to support your case, seek procedural advice from the ExAs before you do so.

The technology used for virtual meetings and hearings support digital video recording by default. In order to discharge the Planning Inspectorate's legal obligation to hold events in public, meetings and hearings with large numbers of Interested Parties can be live-streamed. If you are participating using a digital



device but you do not wish to be included in a published or live-streamed video recording, you have the option to switch off your device camera during the hearing and the live-stream or recording will be of your voice alone.

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (as was) has provided guidance on the examination of National Infrastructure applications for development consent<sup>2</sup>. This guidance provides as follows:

*'Hearings should be open to journalists and the wider public, as well as interested parties. Provided that it does not disrupt proceedings, all individuals present at hearings should be allowed to report, record and film proceedings including using electronic and social media. Examining inspectors will advise persons present at the start of hearings that the proceedings may be recorded and/or filmed, and that any persons using social media during or after the end of the proceedings should do so reasonably.'*

This guidance remains unchanged and so all participants in a virtual event must be aware that the event may be recorded by any attendee and that any such activity will only be regulated if it becomes unreasonable or disruptive to the event.

#### **42. How to I ensure that my privacy is protected when I'm using a digital device to join?**

The virtual event system Microsoft Teams will normally display the name and may sometimes also display the email address of event participants to other hearing participants who are using digital devices.

After you click your joining link but before you join the event, Microsoft Teams will enable you to type in the name that you wish to be displayed. You can choose what name to type in and can add an organisation name too if you need to. It needs to be sufficient to enable the ExAs to identify you.

If you do not wish the email address that the Planning Inspectorate is currently using to correspond with you to be seen by other parties, you can set up a free email account on-line to join with. Alternatively, your existing internet or email service provider may enable you to set up an alias email address such as 'hearing.participant123@freemail.com'. These measures will protect your privacy. You would need to provide any alternative email address from the one we are currently using for you as soon as possible. This is so that we can send out the invitation with the link for joining any familiarisation event and for an actual meeting or hearing, ahead of the event.

Please check with your internet or email service provider or an intended alternative email service provider before a familiarisation event, meeting or hearing and ensure that you have taken any steps that you wish to take to prevent the disclosure of your actual email address to other users.

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<sup>2</sup> [Planning Act 2008: Guidance for the examination of applications for development consent](#), March 2015, Department for Communities and Local Government, at paragraph 102, page 23



#### **43. How to I ensure that my privacy is protected when I'm using the telephone to join?**

Microsoft Teams will normally record and play the name and display the telephone numbers of hearing participants to all other hearing participants who are using digital devices.

You can choose what name to record. It needs to enable the ExAs to identify you in the hearing.

If you do not want to display your telephone number, you can add a privacy prefix before you dial the telephone number for the hearing. On most UK telephone networks you can dial 141 before the telephone number and this will ensure that you remain anonymous and your telephone number is not shared with any other users. Some networks require you to use a different method. Certain telephone handsets also allow you to withhold your telephone number using a setting that is specific to your handset.

Please check with your telephone service provider and read the instructions for your telephone handset before the familiarisation event and the hearing and ensure that you have taken any steps that you wish to take to prevent the disclosure of your telephone number to other users.

## **THE APPROACH TO SITE INSPECTIONS**

#### **44. What will be the approach to Site Inspections?**

The ExAs commenced site inspections by holding Unaccompanied Site Inspection 1 (USI1) on 20 and 21 January 2020. A note of these first inspections has been published on the National Infrastructure Planning website.

Our new member Jonathan Hockley inspected the same locations for himself on 15 and 16 July 2020 and his inspection notes are published as USI2. USI3 was held on 13 and 14 August to enable Rynd Smith and Jonathan Hockley to review locations associated with the onshore transmission connection and cable corridors and other transmission system connections for offshore wind farms (Greater Gabbard, Galloper and East Anglia ONE) that have been raised in certain submissions, alongside part of the Sandlings area. Further written notes will be published as further unaccompanied inspections are undertaken.

Interested parties have been asked to nominate particular locations for site inspections in writing by timetable **Deadline 1**. Before making any nominations, please read the USI notes, as the ExAs do not need to inspect locations that have already been inspected. This is unless there is some specific feature at the site that needs to be drawn to our attention which we have not already observed.

Because of social distancing requirements, it will be the ExAs' preference to inspect sites on an unaccompanied basis. We won't inspect all nominated sites. We prioritise and inspect sites where observations are likely to identify important





and relevant considerations. We will aim to visit as many locations as we can as USIs. These will be held on a socially distanced basis, from land in the public domain or that is open to the public. We'll use written notes to provide an account of our activities. USIs can be carried out the ExAs see fit. They are not included in the timetables.

We can't visit private or access-restricted land (such as operating infrastructure) without the consent of the landowner/operator and proper safety measures being taken where necessary. For this reason, there may be some land where Accompanied Site Inspections (ASIs) are still required and we have reserved time in the timetable to hold these if required. Before agreeing to an ASI, we will need to be clear that one is necessary. We also need ensure that it can be carried out on an appropriately socially distanced basis, meeting whatever public health controls are in place at the time. We are continuing to investigate virtual and remote techniques to augment or replace part or all of an ASI: for example by commissioning photographic or video submissions, or using technology such as drones to see places that would otherwise be difficult or unsafe to access on a socially distanced basis.

We note that some Interested Parties felt that ASIs might normally have included the ability to make oral submissions. From this perspective, a decision to replace them with virtual processes would mean that an opportunity to be heard would be lost. This is not the case. The normal procedure for National Infrastructure ASIs before Coronavirus drew a very strict distinction between hearings and site inspections and this distinction is still in place. Hearings are the only places where oral submissions and argument can be put in front of the ExA. Site inspections are not and never have been hearings: oral submissions and arguments were never allowed to be made at them. Verbal communication between the ExAs and interested parties at a site inspection is strictly limited to matters of fact: the Inspectors assuring themselves that they are in the right place, looking in the right direction and seeing the right features of the site. People wishing to make oral submissions about the effects of the proposals on particular sites are advised to request to be heard at an appropriate hearing.

#### **45. What if public health restrictions remain in place throughout the Examinations or even become more severe?**

The ExAs have already undertaken Unaccompanied Site Inspections (USIs 1 - 3) to underpin our understanding of the local area and to view specific locations referred to within Relevant Representations. More are proposed.

Site inspections (whether accompanied or unaccompanied) are a common part of the examination process for applications for NSIPs. It is considered good practice for ExAs to be able to visit relevant locations to support their consideration of an application, however there is no legislative requirement for site inspections to be held.

If restrictions preventing effective site inspections are introduced during the Examination period, the ExAs will invite Interested Parties to provide written



submissions on the locations that might be beneficial to be viewed as part of future USIs. Alternatively, if long-distance and overnight travel is not possible, a virtual site inspection might be set up, where photographs of relevant locations could be submitted and described by parties, or technology such as drones could be used.

Should the public health situation and accompanying restrictions on travel ease significantly, the ExAs have retained time within the draft timetable for an Accompanied Site Inspection. Further arrangements can be made at a later time, drawing on the submissions referred to above.

Interested Parties will appreciate that this is inevitably a fluid situation subject to change, dependent on the progress of the COVID-19 pandemic and on controls in place in local areas as well as nationally.

## COMPOSITION OF THE EXAMINING AUTHORITIES

### 46. Why was there a change to the composition of the Examining Authorities?

Mike Harris resigned his position on the Panel with effect from 26 June 2020 consequent on a change of employment. As such, it has been necessary to appoint another Inspector to replace him. Jonathan Hockley has been appointed to the ExAs for both Examinations. His qualifications, skills and experience (see **Annex B** to the Rule 6 Letters of 16 July 2020) are equivalent to those held by Mike Harris and no other change to the operation of the ExAs will be required.

Formal details of the appointment are available here:

- East Anglia ONE North [Appointment Letter](#); and
- East Anglia TWO [Appointment Letter](#).

The ExAs are also supported by a further Examining Inspector, Mike Hayes. Although he is an Inspector, Mike Hayes is not a member of the ExAs, which means that he does not play a part in any formal decisions. He advises, researches and drafts documents as required.

## HELP, FURTHER INFORMATION & KEEPING UP TO DATE

### 47. Where can I view copies of the application documents?

The Rule 8 Letters set out where the Applicants have deposited digital copies of the applications. Arrangements for viewing these are recorded in Annex E. Please note that the Applicants will additionally maintain a hard copy set of application documents at Leiston Town Council Offices. The ability to visit these locations and the availability of technology to view digital documents may be dependent on the public health restrictions in force.



The application documents can also be viewed online on the Planning Inspectorate's webpage for the applications:

- [East Anglia ONE North](#)
- [East Anglia TWO](#)

As public health restrictions change, it may be that people who do not have access to computers or the internet will be able to seek support from people (such as relatives or neighbours) who do.

If you do not have access to computers or the internet and have no means of addressing that, please contact the Case Team by telephone at 0303 444 5000 and ask whether there is additional help that can be made available.

#### **48. How should I keep up to date with the latest news about the Examinations?**

Please visit the project websites regularly for updates:

- [East Anglia ONE North](#)
- [East Anglia TWO](#)

This FAQ document will be kept under continuous review and updated as new questions arise.

The project websites also have a facility for you to sign up to receive updates by email.

#### **49. What is the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 8.6 and does it apply to these Examinations?**

On 30 September 2020 the Planning Inspectorate published a new Advice Note 8.6 on Virtual Examination Events.

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/advice-note-8-6-virtual-examination-events/>

This advice note has been prepared, drawing on Inspector, Case Officer and digital systems staff experience, good practice and customer feedback from virtual meetings and hearings held as part of National Infrastructure Examinations since June 2020. The advice that it contains is broadly the same as the general practice advice in these FAQs.

It would not be fair to ask Interested Parties attending virtual events from early October 2020 to read a new advice note straight away, when they have prepared for events using these FAQs. For this reason, these FAQs will continue to be used as the main reference source for Interested Parties involved in events up to the end of December 2020. We then intend to review these FAQs and flag that for Interested Parties involved in events from January 2021, Advice Note 8.6 will become the main reference source. We will replace these FAQs in early 2021 with a shorter document, dealing only with case-specific questions that are not covered in Advice Note 8.6.



## 50. What if I need more help?

Please contact the Case Team by telephone at 0303 444 5000 or by email at

- East Anglia ONE North - [EastAngliaOneNorth@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:EastAngliaOneNorth@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)
- East Anglia TWO - [EastAngliaTwo@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:EastAngliaTwo@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

The Case Team can help with inquiries about how the Examinations and any events will be run and how to get involved. They cannot provide planning advice and they cannot arrange for you to be represented or support you at a hearing.

If you need professional planning advice or support you can employ an appropriate consultant (Chartered Town Planners, Surveyors, Engineers, Lawyers and related professionals may all be able to provide relevant advice). You need to make your own inquiries about who to appoint.

If you cannot obtain affordable professional advice, you may be able to get support from Planning Aid England. This is a service provided under the auspices of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) under which qualified volunteers (Chartered Town Planners) provide advice. Initial requests can be made via: <https://planningaid.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new>, by telephone (020 7929 8338) or post: Planning Aid England, RTPI, 41 Botolph Lane, London EC3R 8DL.

You may also be able get support from elected representatives or community organisations in the local area. Contact your MP, elected Councillors and any community organisations who are also Interested Parties in the Examinations.

The ExAs are not like a court and do not work in an adversarial manner. They do not rely advocates for the parties to put arguments to them. Instead, they work in an inquisitorial fashion – meaning that the duty to ask questions rests on the ExAs themselves. The ExAs will design and manage hearings to ensure that people who are not professionally represented can make their views known.