



Meeting note

File reference	EN020001 – Hinkley Point C Connection
Status	Final
Author	Tayo Olaitan
Date	22 September 2014
Meeting with Venue	National Grid Temple Quay House, Bristol
Attendees	National Grid (NG) Nikki Suri – Lead Project Manager (Communications) Ellen Struthers – Project Engineer Andrew Weaver – Senior Project Manager (Cooper Consultancy) The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) Mark Wilson – Infrastructure Planning Lead Rob Ranger – Case Manager (Pre-Examination) Siân Evans – Case Officer Tayo Olaitan – Assistant Case Officer Nicola Mathiason – Legal Helen Lancaster – Environmental Services Team
Meeting objectives	A pre-examination meeting for National Grid to provide the Planning Inspectorate with a project update and discuss programme related matters in advance of the preliminary meeting and start of the examination.
Circulation	All attendees and invitees
Absences	Peter Bryant (NG), Dean Alford (PINS)
Duration	2 – 3pm

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

PINS advised on its openness policy, that any advice given will be recorded and placed on the PINS website under s.51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the Act) and also to note that any advice given under s.51 does not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) can rely.

Project Update

NG advised that changes to EDF's construction programme for the Hinkley Point C power station could require them to make some changes to the Environmental Statement (ES) they submitted at acceptance.

This information will affect a number of the earlier volumes submitted, and will be presented in one new volume. The updated information is expected to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 1 October 2014 along with their responses to the s.51 advice given at acceptance.

PINS advised NG to keep their s.51 responses and any changes required to their ES separate, to avoid confusing information requested in the s.51 advice given at acceptance with changes, and information that could potentially result from changes, to the application.

PINS explained this separation would provide clarity to the ExA and others on which information related to changes (necessitated by the delayed construction timetable for Hinkley Point C power station) and submissions that would have been made irrespective of those ES amendments (as recommended by s.51 advice at acceptance).

NG confirmed that they would take this on board and clarified that their intention was to supplement the existing ES documents by referencing the earlier material in the new document.

PINS advised that it can be better to replace existing ES volumes with new ones containing new material rather than provide a supplementary volume that merely references the existing volumes affected by the new material, where this would be less complex. This can assist with ease of navigation and would avoid the need to reference multiple documents when referring to particular points later on in the process, where updated information had been provided.

PINS highlighted there is a possibility that additional consultation may be required on the new material and confirmed that this could only occur once the Examining Authority (ExA) had been appointed and considered the new ES material submitted. It would then be published on the PINS project page, and a Rule 6¹ letter issued, which would include advice on the parameters of the consultation required.

PINS enquired whether the new information was a change to the application or an update on information already provided, and advised that it may not amount to a material change if it was only updated information. NG was advised to have full regard to the legal implications of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (EIA regulations) in relation to any new material.

NG confirmed that it was an update to earlier application documents and mainly affected the northern section of the project route.

NG enquired whether they would be subject to the standard 28 day notification period in respect of the amendments to be consulted on.

PINS confirmed that this depended on the nature of the new material and that the timetable would be set by the ExA once they had seen this material.

NG queried the format that PINS wanted the new ES material and amended plans to be submitted in. They also queried whether the plans should be replacements or supplementary to those already submitted, as they would also need to update their hard copy deposit locations.

PINS requested 5 copies each in hard copy and electronic format be submitted, and confirmed that the amended plans could be provided in tubes and would be supplementary to those already submitted as they would need to be viewed by the ExA alongside the earlier versions. Plans at the deposit location should be treated in the same fashion.

PINS advised that the timeframe for the preliminary meeting was provisionally being looked at for 10 November onwards. However, this would be influenced by the timing of the ExA's decision on the new ES material submitted. A Rule 8¹ letter outlining the timetable for the examination would be issued thereafter.

NG questioned who was responsible for publishing the relevant representations and when this should occur.

PINS confirmed they were responsible for publication and that this would occur after the 6 October, which is the deadline set for any additional representations that might be submitted by those parties that failed to receive notification of the earlier relevant representation period:

<http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk/document/2693781>

Venues

NG confirmed they were looking at the Winter Gardens in Weston-super-Mare for the preliminary meeting, and would now look into the availability they have for 10 November 2014 onwards.

PINS requested a range of dates be provided so that a choice could be made from those available.

PINS advised that they would usually prepare for attendance based on a percentage of the relevant representations received, however, where relevant representations on behalf of multiple parties were made, this was less straightforward.

NG advised there were limited second choice venues in Weston-super-Mare for the preliminary meeting. Other options in Bristol and elsewhere along the route have been identified and these would be provided to PINS if required.

NG asked whether issue specific hearing venues should also be geared towards Weston-super-Mare, leaving only the open floor hearings potentially needing to be held at multiple venues along the route.

PINS advised this would ultimately be an ExA decision, but that open floor hearings would definitely be held at relevant places along the project route, of which Bridgwater was a likely candidate. Open floor hearings were likely to be held in the New Year and other appropriate sites would be expected to come forward in submissions to the preliminary meeting.

Other Business

NG questioned what the timescale was for submissions to the examination following the preliminary meeting.

PINS advised that it was usual to request that they be submitted 6 weeks after the preliminary meeting, but the ExA might want to avoid the Christmas period.

PINS mentioned that the ExA were likely to want to see the whole of the project route, excluding any parts that were inaccessible from public land, prior to the start of the examination and would do so unaccompanied; but that an accompanied site visit to view from private land might occur soon after the preliminary meeting and that NG might be requested to assist with this.

PINS advised that the purdah period in the run up to the General Election in 2015 should be considered. Although it would not affect the issuing of procedural decisions, there could be a chilling factor in terms of agreements being negotiated.

PINS advised NG to try and get s.106 agreements, Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) and any other agreements as complete as possible before that period comes into effect. Even though they are likely to be re-evaluated during the course of the examination, it would be better to confirm points of agreement earlier on and only leave the outstanding matters for later negotiation where necessary.

PINS enquired whether it would be possible for the ExA to view any full scale T-pylons.

NG confirmed they were preparing to erect a series of 5 at their staff training centre and would now check the timeframe for this occurring and advise PINS accordingly.

PINS asked when the environmental survey data would be available.

NG confirmed they would be supplied with the other information being provided in response to the s.51 advice given by PINS at acceptance.

NG asked whether a decision had been made on the request to redact some potentially exempt from publication environmental data in their ES.

PINS confirmed that the information would be dealt with as requested on the basis that it could potentially be harmful to protected species if made publicly available.

NG advised they would be refreshing their Book of Reference (BoR) no earlier than the end of October.

PINS pointed out that there was no requirement for them to do so until the end of the examination unless they received a request from the ExA. It was also pointed out that s102A of the Act allows parties drawn within the scope of the process after the start of the examination and likely to be affected by the granting of an application, to apply to the ExA to become interested parties. That being said it would be prudent to keep the BoR up to date in anticipation of any such request.

Action Points and follow up required

NG

- To submit 5 hard copies and 5 electronic copies of information additional to their ES and as required by the s.51 advice given at acceptance; including any amended plans
- To provide a range of dates (10 November onwards) for the preliminary meeting
- To advise of their second choice venues for the preliminary meeting when available
- To confirm whether the ExA will be able to view a full scale T-pylon
(NG has since confirmed that the T Pylon test line is expected to be constructed by the end of March 2015 at the National Grid training centre at Eakring.)

PINS

- To publish the relevant representations in due course after the 6 October deadline
- To redact the potentially exempt information from the ES

1. The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 (as amended by The Infrastructure Planning (Miscellaneous Prescribed Provisions) Amendment Regulations 2013)