



Preliminary Meeting Note

Application:	Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement
Reference:	EN020002
Time and date:	Tuesday 12 September 2023, 10.00
Venue:	Sir Bobby Robson suite, Ipswich Town Football Club. Portman Road, Ipswich

This meeting note is not a full transcript of the Preliminary Meeting. It is a summary of the key points discussed.

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/bramford-to-twinstead/>

1. Welcome and introduction

Andrew Mahon (AM) welcomed those present and introduced himself as the lead member of the Examining Authority (ExA) that will examine the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement Development Consent Order (DCO) application. Julie de-Courcey, John McEvoy and Jason Rowlands also introduced themselves as members of the ExA.

AM explained that the ExA's appointment was made under delegation from the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on 5 July 2023.

AM said that the application had been made by National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ('the Applicant'). The ExA would make a recommendation to the Secretary of State, who will then decide whether to make an Order granting development consent for this Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).

AM explained that the purpose of the Preliminary Meeting (PM) was to discuss procedure and noted that the Examination would commence after the PM closed.

The ExA confirmed that all documents and submissions received and accepted during the Examination will be published on the project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

2. Recording

A video recording of this PM would be available on the National Infrastructure Planning website following its close (it can be accessed [here](#)).

3. General Data Protection Regulation

The ExA explained the Planning Inspectorate's duties under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). (Further information relating to the GDPR can be found in the Planning Inspectorate's [Privacy Note](#)).

4. Examination Process

The ExA briefly explained the examination process under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008), and highlighted that further information could be found in [Advice Note 8.4](#).

5. Initial Assessment of Principal Issues

The ExA explained the purpose of the Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (section 88 of the PA2008), which can be found at [Annex C](#) of the [Rule 6](#) letter of 7 August 2023, and asked for any observations on them.

Mr Wilde from Braintree District Council requested further issues be raised including:

- Impact on businesses;
- Removal of overhead 132kV line;
- Impact on climate change.

The ExA confirmed point 2 could be discussed at Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) and other points were subject to continuous review. The Applicant confirmed no further comment on these points.

Mr Woodger from Essex County Council confirmed a joint approach with Braintree District Council.

Mr Bedford for Suffolk County Council referred to Item 10 (Landscape and Views) and requested that it be made clear whether the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is included in the Principal Issues. The ExA confirmed this would be specifically considered under the Landscape and Views heading.

The ExA thanked parties for the comments and assured them that these matters will be properly examined.

There were no further comments on this agenda item.

6. Examination Timetable

The ExA acknowledged the earlier written requests to amend the draft Examination Timetable (at [Annex D](#) to the Rule 6 letter) and also welcomed further suggestions from the parties in attendance.

All comments received were noted by the ExA and considerations will be reflected in the Rule 8 Letter, which will include the final Examination Timetable.

7. Hearings and Site Inspections

The ExA clarified the purpose of:

- Issue Specific Hearings;
- Compulsory Acquisition Hearings;
- Open Floor Hearings;
- Accompanied Site Inspections;
- Unaccompanied Site Inspections.

The ExA sought comments on the arrangements for the above events. These were noted for further consideration by the ExA.

(Further information relating to hearings and site inspections can be found in [Advice Note 8.5.](#))

8. Procedural Decisions

The ExA clarified the Procedural Decisions that it had made so far under section 89(3) of the PA2008 and asked for any observations. No comments were made by any of the parties in attendance.

(Those Procedural Decisions can be found in [Annex F](#) of the Rule 6 Letter.)

9. Any other matters

The ExA referred to the Examination Library and advised where all documents and annexes are available for viewing. It requested Examination Library document references be used in all submissions. It also highlighted Annex H of the [Rule 6 letter](#), which provided guidance on submissions.

The ExA noted that the Applicant had contacted the Case Team for clarification on items 6 and item 4 of the agenda for ISH1. The Applicant sought clarification on the 'ambiguous language' that the ExA was referring to, and on what was intended by 'construction'. The ExA briefly provided further information.

The Applicant's earlier response to the ExA's Rule 9 letter dated 24 July 2023 was discussed. The Applicant advised that the relevant people to answer the ExA's questions were not available. The ExA expressed concerns that the Environmental Statement may not be complete and that this may have implications for closing the PM, and the start of the six-month Examination. The Applicant undertook to provide an update in writing on the matters as soon as possible, including a timetable for the submission of any further survey data and assessment.

The ExA took a short break to discuss the matter. Upon returning, the ExA confirmed the Examination would proceed, on the basis that the Applicant would provide all relevant further information as early as possible in the Examination so as to allow other parties ample time to respond.

10. Close

The PM closed at 13.00 and the ExA confirmed the Examination would begin the following day.