



## Meeting note

<b>Project name</b>	Teesside Flexible Regas Port Project
<b>File reference</b>	EN040001
<b>Status</b>	Final
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	1 May 2024
<b>Meeting with</b>	Teesside Flexible Regas Port Limited
<b>Venue</b>	MS Teams
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Project Update Meeting
<b>Circulation</b>	All attendees

### Summary of key points discussed, and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

### Project Update

The Applicant updated that it is progressing with the project design and commercial efforts. The market consultation process with Ofgem ended on 26 April 2024 and showed strong market interest.

The Applicant informed the Inspectorate that a Hazard Identification Workshop was conducted in April 2024 with project stakeholders. The Applicant is carrying out ongoing ecological surveys.

Whilst the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) were not part of the workshop, the Inspectorate advised of the importance of full engagement with the HSE.

### Red Line Boundary Changes

The Applicant advised of some recent amendments to the red line boundary, with some plots removed, following a land referencing exercise and engagement. The Applicant explained that this included removal of some land where habitat might have been affected. There had also been some additional land included for highway access and to provide flexibility for siting of the proposed export pipeline. The current red line boundary is that which will be presented in the statutory consultation.

## Summary of Engagement Undertaken to Date

The Applicant has engaged with stakeholders such as Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, the Environment Agency, the Marine Management Organisation and Natural England (NE). The Applicant invited the Inspectorate to attend any technical meetings. The Inspectorate will consider whether resource commitments would support this and will advise the Applicant in due course.

The Inspectorate sought an update on the status of discussions with NE regarding Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA), noting that NE had raised the possibility of potential adverse effects on integrity (AEoI) of the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site from loss of intertidal foreshore habitat. The Applicant confirmed that it had presented to NE on this matter on 30 April 2024 and it was awaiting further advice from NE. The Applicant's current position is that there would not be any AEoI. The Inspectorate noted that it would be helpful to be kept updated on how discussions were progressing.

## EIA Scoping Opinion

The Applicant received the Inspectorate's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping opinion on 22 April 2024. The Applicant stated that there were a few matters on which it was hoping to secure some feedback on its proposed approach to addressing the Inspectorate's comments. It was agreed that the Applicant would provide a separate table summarising those matters and its proposed approach for the Inspectorate to review. The Inspectorate advised that a separate follow up meeting could be arranged if needed.

## Statutory Consultation

The Applicant confirmed statutory consultation for the project will run from 4 June 2024 to 11 July 2024. This includes two public consultation events on 14 June 2024 and 15 June 2024.

The Inspectorate flagged the recent change to the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure (APFP)) Regulations 2009 (APFP Regulations) that came into force on 30 April 2024. It advised the Applicant to review the transitional provisions in Regulation 4 of the Infrastructure Planning (miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2024 (MP Regulations), together with the amendments to the APFP Regulations, and consider whether any new or different consultation bodies should be included in future consultations for the project. The Inspectorate confirmed that a separate email would be sent to the Applicant on this matter in due course.

**Post-meeting update:** The Applicant has informed the Inspectorate that there is a delay to statutory consultation due to the general election. The Applicant will update the Inspectorate in due course on programme implications but statutory consultation is currently planned to take place in Autumn 2024.

## Programme

The Applicant emphasised that it has planned for an accelerated programme as it considers it imperative for the scheme to be active by Winter 2026. Therefore, the intention

is for the DCO application to be submitted in late August 2024. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant to update if there are any slippages to this date as soon as possible.

The Applicant confirmed that it is aware of recent guidance issued in relation to NSIP reform and looks forward to the publication of the updated pre-application prospectus, to gain a better understanding on new pre-application services.

### **Possible draft documents review**

The Applicant enquired whether there was any flexibility on the Inspectorate's timescales (6-8 weeks) for reviewing draft documents. The Inspectorate advised that unfortunately it could not commit to delivering feedback in a time period shorter than standard. However, the Applicant can assist the review by focussing on specific documents rather than large quantities, highlighting any novel drafting, providing clear timescales for the document submission and sticking to those dates. The Applicant will consider whether its programme can accommodate a draft document review and will advise the Inspectorate in due course.