



## Meeting note

<b>File reference</b>	Consenting Forum
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Author</b>	Hannah Pratt
<b>Date</b>	11 September 2015
<b>Meeting with</b>	Consenting Forum
<b>Venue</b>	Temple Quay House, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN
<b>Attendees</b>	Sheila Twidle - Planning Inspectorate Robert Hanson - Planning Inspectorate Simone Wilding - Planning Inspectorate Hannah Pratt - Planning Inspectorate Mel Bischer – Planning Inspectorate (Consents Service Unit) Shane Gould - Historic England Carol Bolt - Environment Agency (by telephone) Samantha Neck - Forestry Commission (by telephone) Alan Gibson - Marine Management Organisation (by telephone) James Bussell - Natural England Sarah Wood - Natural Resources Wales (by telephone) Anna Lewis - Natural Resources Wales (by telephone)
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	To discuss experiences of the pre-application and examination phases
<b>Circulation</b>	All attendees

### 1. Procedural issues update

The Planning Inspectorate explained that the following advice notes have been published/revised since the last meeting:

- [Advice note 3](#): EIA consultation and notification (republished June 2015, version 6)
- [Advice note 10](#): Habitat Regulations Assessment relevant to nationally significant infrastructure projects (republished June 2015, version 6)
- [Advice note 16](#): How to request a change which may be material (published July 2015, version 1)

[The Infrastructure Planning \(Changes to, and Revocation of, Development Consent Orders\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2015](#) came into force on 14 July 2015; guidance for which is anticipated from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The Consents Service Unit (CSU) [prospectus](#) was republished in July 2015 and sets out the CSU's purpose, its roles and responsibilities and how it operates. The CSU explained that their service has been expanded to all developers, and not just to those who are seeking a consents management plan.

The Energy Bill announced in the May 2015 Queen's speech will remove onshore wind projects over 50MW from the Planning Act 2008 regime and will return the decision making power to local authorities. The Planning Inspectorate noted that the majority of onshore windfarm projects that were in the pre-application stage have since been withdrawn by developers. The group also noted that the Mid Wales Public Inquiry granted permission to repower Llandinam onshore wind farm, however planning consent for the remaining four wind farms and the overhead electrical connection were all refused.

## **2. Historic England Enhanced Advisory Services**

Historic England introduced their [Enhanced Advisory Service](#) which will be launched on 12 October 2015 and comprises four new paid-for services:

- Fast-track Listing: listing recommendations sent to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in a quicker and guaranteed timeframe
- Listing Enhancement: greater clarity over the extent of statutory protection in a guaranteed timeframe
- Extended Pre-Application Advice: additional pre-application advice beyond the initial free service
- Listing Screening Service: assessment of the likelihood of any heritage assets with the degree of interest that would warrant statutory Listing

Of interest to NSIP developers, Historic England will now be offering 15 hours initial free service, after which they will charge for their advice. The group discussed their different charging schedules and agreed to circulate their organisations plans for further discussion at the next meeting.

## **3. Advice note 11 (Working with public bodies in the infrastructure planning process) annexes**

Natural England and Natural Resources Wales confirmed that they have received comments on their draft annexes from the Planning Inspectorate and will shortly be finalising the documents.

Historic England recognized the need to update their annex in the future and will bring an update to the next meeting.

## **4. AQTAG 21**

The Planning Inspectorate explained that some developers had used AQTAG21 guidance for their air quality assessments, which has been produced by a consortium of the Environment Agency, Natural England and Natural Resources Wales. The document is not currently published online; therefore Natural Resources Wales agreed to investigate whether it could be hosted on their website. Alternatively, the Planning Inspectorate may be able to host it, however it was noted neither location would be the most logical place for it to be held.

## **5. AOB**

The group discussed a slowdown in current applications, however the Planning Inspectorate noted a number of anticipated forthcoming projects including nuclear power stations, electrical connections and highways schemes from the Road Investment Strategy.

The group agreed that it would be beneficial for CSU to attend future meetings.

It was agreed to hold the Consenting Forum meetings three times a year, with two meetings to be teleconference/videoconference and one meeting to be face to face. The group agreed to aim to use videoconference facilities for the next meeting.

James Bussell and Sarah Wood explained they are both changing roles internally within their respective organisations and will provide contact details for their replacements in due course.

## **6. Actions**

- a. Sarah Wood to circulate link for the Mid Wales Public Inquiry (post meeting note: action completed).
- b. Historic England to send web-link for the Enhanced Advisory Service (post meeting note: action completed).
- c. All attendees to circulate cost recovery plans, along with commentary on the benefits and disadvantages of each plan (by 18 September 2015) to PINS (Hannah Pratt) for collation and onward circulation to the whole team (post meeting note: received from NRW, NE and EA)
- d. Sarah Wood and James Bussell to complete their revisions to the annexes to advice note 11 before moving onto their new roles.
- e. Historic England to provide update on their revision to their annex to Advice note 11 at the next meeting.
- f. James Bussell and Sarah Wood to forward contact details of their replacements.
- g. Anna Lewis to explore possibility of publishing AQTAG21 guidance.
- h. All to explore video conference capabilities before the next meeting with a view to trialing this approach at the next meeting.
- i. NRW to produce a statement explaining the role of the organisation to be included in relevant representations.
- j. Historic England to provide Cadw contact (post meeting note: action completed).
- k. Planning Inspectorate to arrange next meeting for January 2016.

