

Stakeholder Meeting Note

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Status	Final
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Meeting with	Friends of the Earth
Meeting date	24 January 2012
Attendees (IPC)	Sir Michael Pitt, Ian Gambles
Attendees (non IPC)	Naomi Luhde-Thomson, Laura Gyte, Mike Birkin
Location	FoE offices, London

Meeting purpose	General discussion ahead of the integration of the IPC into the Planning Inspectorate
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Summary of outcomes	<p>There was a discussion of issues which FoE felt merited further consideration in relation to the different stages of the national infrastructure planning process. FoE thanked the IPC for the consistently helpful and positive approach of its staff in relation to the recent Brig y Cwm application (now withdrawn).</p> <p>FoE requested that IPC consider further the presentation of application documents. There was a glut of information, not always well signposted or summarised, or consistently named. A glossary of terms would also assist. The IPC indicated that it was reviewing Advice Note 6 with a view to encouraging clearer summarisation and signposting, and would consider FoE's suggestions.</p> <p>FoE requested that IPC reconsider their position on making a set of hard copy application documents available without charge, possibly on a loan basis, to organised community groups, who could not be expected to pay full cost. FoE considered this to be an "equality of arms" issue. IPC agreed to consider the issue in the context of specific applications together with the applicant and local authority holders of deposit copies.</p> <p>FoE felt that the registration form was misleading – there should be a much simpler process for registering initial interest. IPC disagreed that the form was misleading, but acknowledged that it was a long form and some of the</p>
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	<p>questions the regulations required would not necessarily appear straightforward to ordinary members of the public. The form was kept under regular review. More fundamental changes would require changes to regulations and FoE would need to raise the issue with DCLG.</p> <p>FoE raised criticisms of the handling of the Preliminary Meeting for the Brig y Cwm application. In particular they considered that the layout of the room and the perceived admonitory tone adopted with members of the community had been unhelpful. FoE noted that the handling of the subsequent “other meeting” had from their perspective been substantially better and they were grateful that lessons had been learned. FoE also acknowledged as a positive development the decision of the Examining Authority in that case to respond to representations and hold open-floor hearings earlier in the process, as this made them more meaningful. IPC noted FoE’s views. There would inevitably be some differences of style from one examination to another, but it was important for all to learn lessons from experience.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion of expectations in relation to the forthcoming National Policy Planning Framework. FoE and Sir Michael Pitt agreed that it would be important for the reputation of the Inspectorate that the NPPF was implemented in a consistent manner by different Inspectors.</p>
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Record of any advice given	None
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Specific decisions/follow up required?	IPC to consider points raised by FoE in the meeting.
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