



Meeting Note

File reference	NA
Status	Final
Author	Siân Evans

Meeting with	Highways Agency
Meeting date	14 March 2013
Attendees (Planning Inspectorate)	Kathrine Haddrell – Senior Case Manager Mark Southgate – Director of Major Applications and Plans Gideon Amos – Examining Inspector Frances Russell – Land Rights and EIA Manager Sarah Green - Lawyer Siân Evans - Case Officer
Attendees (non Planning Inspectorate)	Mima Garland – Highways Agency David Hinde – Highways Agency Lesley Mahon – Highways Agency
Location	Planning Inspectorate Offices, Temple Quay House, Bristol

Meeting purpose	To brief the Planning Inspectorate on potential Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and discuss processes
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Summary of key points discussed and advice given	<p>The Planning Inspectorate advised on its openness policy. The Planning Inspectorate referred to s.51 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) and noted that any advice given under s.51 does not constitute legal advice on which applicants or others can rely.</p> <p>Background</p> <p>The Highways Agency (HA) explained that they have a number of schemes which may need to be determined under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) due to section 22(3)(c) - improvement of a highway which is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The HA would like to understand the PA2008 process and would like advice on how to receive quicker decisions.</p> <p>Planning Inspectorate advice</p> <p>The Planning Inspectorate advised that the process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects is highly regulated, with statutory deadlines and it is important to follow this in the interests of natural justice.</p> <p>However the Planning Inspectorate pointed out that there are</p>
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	<p>things a developer can do to ensure an application runs smoothly.</p> <p>The Planning Inspectorate advised the HA to look at previous section 55 checklists which will highlight what is looked for and issues that have arisen with previous applications.</p> <p>The Planning Inspectorate also advised the HA to submit draft documents as any issues with these can be discussed prior to the application being submitted. The HA may want to obtain their own legal advice before drafting their Development Consent Order (DCO).</p> <p>The Planning Inspectorate stated that key to a smooth examination is to ensure documents are correct, clearly signpost where documents are and to ensure that all relevant documents are provided.</p> <p>With regard to Environmental Statements, the Planning Inspectorate advised that matters can be scoped out if there is sufficient evidence to justify this.</p> <p>The Planning Inspectorate advised that if requirements will be needed in the DCO it is important to communicate with the bodies responsible for discharging them.</p> <p>In response to the HA's query as to whether additional information can be submitted after an application has been submitted, the Planning Inspectorate advised that the Planning Act 2008 is an iterative process and while substantial changes cannot be made to the proposed scheme it is possible to submit updated information. Any additional/updated information would need to be sent to Affected Parties and Interested Parties and would be published on the Planning Inspectorate's web pages.</p> <p>The Planning Inspectorate noted that since there was no National Policy Statement for National Networks applicants may wish to explain their proposals with reference to other relevant policies including, for example, the statutory development plan in the areas affected.</p>
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Specific decisions/ follow up required?	<p>The HA will submit a screening report to the Planning Inspectorate.</p> <p>A meeting will be arranged to discuss lessons learnt.</p>
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Circulation List	<p>All attendees</p>
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