



Meeting note

File reference	Heathrow Southern Rail Link
Status	Final
Author	Louise Evans
Date	19 July 2017
Meeting with	Heathrow Southern Railway Ltd
Venue	Temple Quay House
Attendees	Planning Inspectorate Gareth Leigh – Infrastructure Planning Lead Helen Lancaster – Senior EIA Richard Price – Case Manager Louise Evans – Case Officer The Applicant Steve Costello – Heathrow Southern Railway Ltd. Andrew Wooddisse - AECOM
Meeting	Inception Meeting
Circulation	All

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) advised on its openness policy, explaining that any advice given would be recorded and published on its website under section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) (the PA2008).

Project Description

The proposed development would provide a new section of railway, connecting the west end of the Heathrow Terminal 5 station box (which has been constructed to allow for westward extension) to the Windsor line west of Staines, continuing to a junction with the Virginia Water-Weybridge Line north of Chertsey. This would therefore open up connections between Heathrow and Woking/Guildford/Basingstoke, and between Heathrow and London Waterloo/Clapham Junction.

Services from Woking are proposed to run through Heathrow, using the airports existing rail infrastructure, to join the Great Western Main Line and serve Paddington and the proposed HS2 interchange at Old Oak Common. This provides non-airport passengers with access to HS2 as well as an alternative to the congested South West Main Line for access to central London, with the Elizabeth Line interchange at Paddington providing an attractive alternative to the LUL lines at Waterloo. The project would be compatible with both the proposed Heathrow Western Rail Link scheme and Elizabeth Line services to Heathrow.

The relevant local authorities are Runnymede, Spelthorne, Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead and Hillingdon. An indicative plan is attached.

The Applicant's investment case doesn't rely on traffic generated by the expansion of Heathrow although in planning terms any application would need to take into account any proposed expansion. The Applicant's scheme has a very high cost-benefit ratio, assessed using DfT's standard WebTAG methodology, and would be privately funded. PINS advised the Applicant that they would need to explain within their Funding Statement the availability of funds for Compulsory Acquisition and compensation.

The proposed railway infrastructure as currently envisaged would be in close proximity and broadly aligned to the M25 corridor, and the Applicant reported positive consultation with Highways England in this regard.

The Applicant explained that Network Rail (NR) are also content with the proposals, subject to agreement on the details of the interfaces between the scheme and NR assets and relevant NR capacity improvement projects (including those which NR may promote separately via DCO or TWA). PINS advised the Applicant to look at the Triton Knoll Offshore Wind Farm application as an example where the operation of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) was contingent on other infrastructure being delivered.

Environmental Impact Assessment/ Habitats Regulations Assessment

The Applicant stated that they were intending to start environmental surveys in 2018.

PINS advised the applicant that early engagement with the statutory consultees was important, and to consider European sites which may be affected. PINS gave an overview of the evidence plan process with statutory bodies, in order to resolve any issues that may otherwise come up during Examination, with the option of PINS chairing if the Applicant felt it helpful.

Section 35

To avoid any uncertainty as to whether the scheme is an NSIP, the Applicant is considering applying to the Secretary of State (SoS) for a direction under s35 of the PA2008. PINS advised that there was no set format for making requests for a direction. The Applicant was also advised to carefully consider when any request under s35 should be made to the SoS. If the scheme changes in any way before the application for development consent is submitted to PINS, it could be the case that the s35 direction no longer covers the development described in the submitted development consent application. PINS also advised that a s35 request can be submitted more than once.

Timescales

The Applicant's aim is for a single option to be developed through informal consultation by summer 2018; to begin their statutory pre-application duties also in summer 2018; and for the formal application to be submitted to PINS in summer 2019.

Specific decisions/ follow up required?

- The Applicant will send PINS their response to the National Policy Statement for Airports.
- Both parties agreed that PINS would contact the Applicant in three months' time in order to arrange another meeting to discuss the progress of the project.