



Meeting note

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| File reference | TR010006 |
| Status | Final |
| Author | Wendy Maden |
| Date | 27 November 2014 |
| Meeting with | Highways Agency |
| Venue | Planning Inspectorate, Temple Quay House |
| Attendees | For the Developer John Payne – Highways Agency Andrew Jarmin – Mott MacDonald Fay Tresidder – Mott MacDonald Elio Rapa – Mott MacDonald Abigale Hooper – Mott MacDonald For the Planning Inspectorate Susannah Guest - Infrastructure Planning Lead Chris White - Case Manager Gail Boyle - Senior EIA Advisor David Price - EIA Manager Wendy Maden - Assistant Case Officer |
| Meeting objectives | Meeting to discuss the M20 Junction 10a project |
| Circulation | All attendees |

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

Following introductions, the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) advised on its openness policy that any advice given would be recorded and placed on the National Infrastructure Planning Portal website under section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 as amended (PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 does not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) can rely.

The developer briefly explained the history and purpose of the project and provided an overview of the current scheme and progress made to date. They noted other proposals in the area, of particular relevance being a proposal "M20 to A2070 Link Road" by AXA Real Estate & DMI Properties (Ashford) Ltd. The developer provided further detail as to the background of this proposal and explained that whilst the AXA Real Estate & DMI Properties (Ashford) Ltd proposal remains a viable alternative to the M20 Junction 10a scheme it would only be likely to progress in the event that the M20 Junction 10a scheme did not progress.

The developer also explained the relationship between the M20 Junction 10a scheme and a current Town and Country Planning Application (TCPA) 14/00906/AS, for outline permission for Business and Retail on the adjacent Sevington Park site, with Ashford Borough Council. The developer explained that the need for the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project proposal was directly related to the TCPA application.

EIA Approach

The developer indicated their intent to submit an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Request to PINS before the end of December 2014. With regard to planned s42 consultation, PINS strongly suggested that the developer avoid any overlap between s42 consultation and the consultation that PINS undertakes in order to provide a Scoping Opinion, as in other cases this had caused confusion. Once a Scoping Request had been received PINS were bound by statutory deadlines and these could not be extended by the developer even if, for example, a request was submitted just prior to the festive period. In terms of timing for submitting a Scoping Request, PINS encouraged the developer to think about the purpose of the EIA scoping process and the requirement to include a sufficient level of detail in the request.

PINS highlighted the benefits of providing as complete a description of the scheme as possible at an early stage in order to support a robust and meaningful EIA scoping process. The description of the proposed development was discussed including the likely approach to the construction stage. It was confirmed by the developer that the Development Consent Order would not contain any off site works, but that the site construction compound may be located outside of the DCO red line boundary although this is not yet confirmed. The developer was reminded that the scoping opinion would only be relevant to the description of the proposed development as provided at the time of the opinion. PINS also highlighted the necessity for the Environmental Statement to assess the cumulative impacts of the proposed development with other reasonably foreseeable developments including the TCPA application. It was acknowledged by all present that the M20 Junction 10a scheme was situated in proximity to a number of other reasonably foreseeable projects that would need to be taken into account.

PINS also explained the importance of the GIS shapefile in helping them to determine who to consult during the scoping process and who should be notified in accordance with The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009, Regulation 9. The importance of ensuring consistency between the red-line depicted using the GIS shapefile and the description of the development in the Scoping Report was discussed and explained.

PINS further highlighted the benefits of seeking legal input at an early stage in the pre-application process.

Consultation

The developer noted the existence of the Stakeholder Liaison Group and confirmed that they had been in discussions with the local authority and County Council. PINS sought clarification about whether there were any statutory undertaker assets on, over or under the site and whether discussions had been started in respect of any protective provisions. PINS also asked about progress with identifying land owners.

The developer outlined their current programme for consultation and noted that they hoped to publish a Statement of Community Consultation in April 2015 in order to conduct community consultation during June and July 2015.

The developer noted that an 'accelerated' timetable had been used for another Highways Agency scheme, A160 - A180 Port of Immingham Improvement. PINS noted that for that particular case the examination had been completed in under the 6 month timeframe. PINS also noted that using the pre-application phase to seek to produce the best quality application could facilitate an efficient examination.

The developer confirmed that their programme is currently aiming at submission of the DCO application in Q3 2015.

The developer outlined the funding situation and PINS agreed to forward links to s51 advice in respect of funding statements to the developer.

Specific decisions / follow up required?

- Request for s51 given in Highways projects to be sent to the developer in order to learn from past experiences.
- Project details on the website to be reviewed by the developer to ensure accuracy.
- PINS would contact *AXA Real Estate & DMI Properties (Ashford) Ltd* of the M20 to A2070 Link Road scheme to seek an up-date.