



Meeting note

Project name	A303 Stonehenge
File reference	TR010025
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	17 May 2018
Meeting with	Highways England
Venue	Highways England offices, Bristol
Attendees	The Planning Inspectorate Highways England
Meeting objectives	Post-consultation and project update meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Statutory consultation feedback

The Applicant provided a summary of the level and demographic of attendance at events held during the Statutory Consultation stage. The Applicant noted that it had extended the statutory consultation period, which ran from 8 February to 23 April 2018, by 17 days as result of disruption from bad weather; the events scheduled for Mere and Salisbury had to be cancelled and rescheduled.

The Applicant outlined the level of response it had received - 4810 responses in total plus a petition of over 5000 signatures - and set out the early common themes that had been identified from an initial review. The Inspectorate queried whether there were repeated themes from non-statutory consultation. The Applicant confirmed that there were and confirmed that effects on Solstice Park was still a common concern.

There was discussion regarding the differences between the international body of ICOMOS and the UK branch of the organisation – ICOMOS-UK, the latter of which submitted a response during statutory consultation (copied to the Inspectorate). The Applicant stated that ICOMOS was in the process of writing a report following a delegation from ICOMOS and UNESCO visiting on a three-day fact-finding mission.

The Applicant explained that it had identified 15 additional land interests who had been provided an extended deadline for responding to the statutory consultation. The Inspectorate queried whether they were clustered in a particular location or dispersed across the project. The Applicant noted that they were clustered. The Applicant

highlighted that it had failed to consult Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), an 'A' upper tier authority that borders the host authority, but had since been in contact and offered to hold a bi-lateral meeting. The Inspectorate queried whether OCC were provided 28 days to respond. The Applicant noted it had.

The Inspectorate queried whether the Applicant had consulted fully in line with its Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC). The Applicant confirmed that it had but noted that the SoCC had been updated to account for the two cancelled and rescheduled events and that updated documents had been prepared and circulated.

The Applicant briefly set out provisional areas of concern that led to changes to the scheme. The Inspectorate queried whether the Applicant was likely to change the current redline boundary (RLB) as result of the changes. The Applicant confirmed it was unlikely as ongoing 'optioneering' was taking place within the current RLB.

The Inspectorate enquired as to whether the Applicant planned to conduct further statutory consultation and queried if there was time built into to the project timetable to do so if required. The Applicant stated that it was still working on the design process but there was scope to consult again if it was required; however, a targeted consultation was more probable.

The Inspectorate questioned how the Applicant would cover the change process within the ES. The Applicant noted that it would be captured within the design chapter as well as other chapters.

The Applicant set out the response received from the key environmental statutory consultees and acknowledged that some had responded to advise that there was not enough information provided to produce a detailed response. The Inspectorate queried whether more detailed responses were expected. The Applicant stated that it was hoping to receive more detailed responses that addressed the proposed methodologies for assessing the main issues such as noise and heritage.

The Applicant explained that it held bi-monthly environmental engagement group meetings, which included National Trust, Natural England (NE), English Heritage (EH) and Historic England, and highlighted that some of the key environmental statutory consultees had requested to review particular chapters of the Environmental Statement in draft form. The Applicant noted that it would draft tables of significant effects with 'stories' at the end of each chapter, and proposed to share them instead of individual chapters in their entirety.

The Inspectorate requested an update on the Applicant's progress on the draft Development Consent order (DCO) with regards to requirements. The Applicant stated that it had started liaising with Wiltshire Council (WC); a meeting to discuss the discharging of requirements has been scheduled for mid-June.

The Inspectorate drew the Applicant's attention to a recent Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) judgment in respect of HRA screening and reliance on mitigation measures, being: [C-323/17 - People Over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta \(2018\)](#). The Applicant noted it and was aware of it.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

The Applicant provided an update on its Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening report, noting that Natural England (NE) was generally happy with the information proposed to be provided. The Applicant planned to include a draft of the HRA screening report as part of its suite of draft documents. The Inspectorate said it would also be helpful to receive a draft of the project description from the ES as part of the suite of draft documents.

The Applicant noted that draft chapters one to four of the ES could also be included in the suite of draft documents, noting that the chapters had also been sent to Historic England for review. The Inspectorate advised that it could not provide detailed comments on the chapters but they would prove helpful to read alongside the draft DCO.

The Inspectorate enquired whether the Applicant had started to prepare any Statements of Common Ground (SoCG). The Applicant confirmed it had started to work on the templates after externally stating with particular organisations that SoCG were desired.

The Applicant provided a brief update on access issues around the need to survey certain areas of the site.

There was discussion regarding European Protected Species (EPS) licencing and the Applicant's intention to include 'letters of no impediment' as part of its application. The Applicant noted ongoing discussions with NE regarding the preparation of potential 'ghost' EPS licences.

Draft Documents and future timescales

The Applicant provided a list of documents that it proposed to include in its suite of draft documents - draft DCO, land/ work plans, Explanatory Memorandum (EM), Consultation Report and Planning Statement – and noted that it aimed to submit them for review in June 2018. The Inspectorate emphasised that Applicants should start providing more information within the EM to aid the Examining Authority in Examination.

The Inspectorate advised it would like to see a template of the Book of Reference, with work/ land plans for an example area of the site.

The Inspectorate requested that the Applicant include a draft of the document that explains how the scheme meets the requirements to be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). The Applicant confirmed that it has prepared the document and can include it in the suite of draft documents.

There was brief discussion regarding logistics for venues and accommodation during an Examination due to the rural nature of the site area. The Inspectorate advised that its programme officers will provide advice on what it expects from the Applicant for venues and noted further discussion on the matter can be included in the next meeting.

The Applicant provided an anticipated submission date of 21 September 2018.

The Applicant's attention was drawn to the latest example documents published to the Planning Inspectorate's website: [National Grid's 'Guide to the application' and 'Statement](#)

[of Commonality](#)'. All applicants were being advised to prepare equivalent documents as part of their applications for development consent.

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed:

- The Applicant to confirm likely submission date of the suite of draft documents.
- The Inspectorate to provide programme officer venue advice for applicants.
- Both organisations to liaise with suitable dates for the draft document feedback meeting for late July 2018.