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To Interested Parties, Statutory Parties
and Other Persons invited to the
Preliminary Meeting

Your Ref:

Our Ref: TR010031

Date: 28 January 2020

Dear Sir/ Madam

The Planning Act 2008 – Section 89 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rule 8 etc

Application by Highways England for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvement Scheme

Examination Timetable and procedure

This letter provides you with the Examination Timetable, details of the publication of the Examining Authority's (ExA) Written Questions and other important information about the Examination.

All documentation associated with this project, including a note of the Preliminary Meeting and the audio recording taken at that meeting, can be found using this link:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/north-east/a1-birtley-to-coal-house-improvement-scheme/?ipcsection=docs>

The Examination Timetable

I have made a Procedural Decision about the way the application will be examined. The final Examination Timetable is attached at **Annex A**.

The Examination Timetable replaces the draft timetable that was included in the Rule 6 letter dated 10 December 2019¹.

Please note that the Examination Timetable contains a number of deadlines for receipt of information by the Planning Inspectorate. All deadlines are at 23:59 on the date specified. Please ensure submissions arrive by the deadline. If you do not make your submissions by the dates specified in the timetable, I may disregard them.

¹ Your invitation to the Preliminary Meeting

I request that Interested Parties send, where practicable, electronic copies of their submission as email attachments to A1BirtleytoCoalHouse@planninginspectorate.gov.uk on or before the applicable deadline.

Electronic attachments should be clearly labelled with the subject title and not exceed 12MB for each email. Providing links to websites where your submissions can be viewed is not acceptable. All submissions must be made in a format that can be viewed in full on the National Infrastructure Planning website. Any submissions that exceed 1500 words should also be accompanied by a summary; this summary should not exceed 10% of the original text.

If I consider it necessary to vary the Examination Timetable during the Examination, notification will only be sent to Interested Parties and Other Persons² invited to the Preliminary Meeting. The changes will be published on the A1 Birtley to Coal House project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

I have had regard to the submissions made before and at the Preliminary Meeting. I have not considered it necessary to alter the Examination Timetable from that included in my Rule 6 letter dated 10 December 2019.

Other Procedural Decisions

Annex B contains important details and clarifications about my other Procedural Decisions made at, or following, the Preliminary Meeting. These include:

- **Examining Authority's Written Questions**
- **Statements of Common Ground**
- **Local Impact Reports**
- **Habitats Regulations Assessment**
- **Accompanied Site Inspection**
- **Applicant's additional information**
- **Applicant's request for amendments to the application**

Written Representations

All Interested Parties are now invited to submit Written Representations and any comments on the Relevant Representations already submitted. These should be submitted by Deadline 1 in the Examination Timetable (**Annex A**).

Written Representations can cover any relevant matter and are not restricted to the matters set out in my Initial Assessment of Principal Issues discussed at the Preliminary Meeting and included in my Rule 6 letter³. Nor are they restricted to the content of my Written Questions (see next heading, below).

² Other Persons are persons that I chose to invite to the Preliminary Meeting, in addition to the prescribed persons listed in section 88(3) of the Planning Act 2008 – see 'Your status in the Examination and future notifications' below

³ [Rule 6 letter](#)

Any person, other than the Applicant, who submits a Written Representation must identify those parts of the application with which they agree and those parts with which they do not agree, explaining the reasons why⁴. Interested Parties should also provide with their Written Representations “*the data, methodology and assumptions used to support their submissions*”⁵.

Further written submissions will be requested by the ExA at various points in the Examination.

Any Written Representations, and any further written submissions requested by the ExA in the course of the Examination which exceed 1500 words should also be accompanied by a summary which should not exceed 10% of the original text. The summary should set out the key facts of the written submission and must be representative of the submission made.

Applicant’s Request for Amendments to the Application

As set out in **Annex B**, the Applicant’s proposed amendments to the Application have not at this stage been accepted as part of the Examination. In the event that these amendments are accepted (following the provision of further information) during the course of the Examination, opportunity will subsequently be provided within the Examination timetable for representations to be made regarding them.

ExA’s Written Questions

I have compiled Written Questions (WQ) about the application and the representations received so far. These questions are published on the National Infrastructure Planning website and can be accessed through the following link:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/document/TR010031-000718>

Answers to my WQs must be provided by Deadline 2 in the Examination Timetable (**Annex A**).

If you require a hard copy of my WQs, please contact the Case Team who will send you a copy.

Hearings

The Examination Timetable at **Annex A** includes periods of time reserved for any further hearings to be held, and I will notify all Interested Parties of any hearings scheduled as part of the Examination at least 21 days in advance of them taking place. That notification will include an additional deadline for Interested Parties to inform the Planning Inspectorate if they wish to attend the notified hearings.

⁴ Required under Rule 10(4) of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-act-2008-examination-of-applications-for-development-consent>

Annex C provides details about what Interested Parties should include in a request to be heard at a hearing, and the procedure that will be followed at hearings.

Accompanied Site Inspection

Information about the Accompanied Site Inspection, scheduled to take place on Tuesday 31 March 2020, is also contained in **Annex B**.

Availability of application documents and representations submitted to the Examination

All documentation and audio recordings associated with the Examination of this application can be found using this link:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/north-east/a1-birtley-to-coal-house-improvement-scheme/?ipcsection=docs>

Annex D provides details of locations in the vicinity of the Proposed Development at which all Examination documents can be viewed electronically, free of charge.

Advice to Interested Parties about how to access and navigate the Examination Library is also provided at **Annex D**.

Your status in the Examination

You have received this letter because you fall within one of the groups described in this FAQ document: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Status-faq.pdf>

- You are in Group A if your reference number (found at the top of your email/postcard) begins with 2002 or A1BC-S57.
- You are in Group B if your reference number (found at the top of your email/postcard) begins with A1BC-SP.
- You are in Group C if your reference number (found at the top of your email/postcard) begins with A1BC-OP.

If having read the FAQ document published at the link above you are still unsure about your status, please contact the Case Team using the details at the top of this letter.

Award of costs

You should be aware of the possibility of the award of costs against parties who behave unreasonably.

To assist understanding of what 'unreasonable behaviour' means in the context of an Examination under the PA2008, you may find it helpful to read the government guidance 'Awards of costs: examinations of applications for development consent

orders' (July 2013)⁶. It is in everyone's interest that information is brought forward as early as possible in the examination process, so you are encouraged to do so.

Management of information

The Planning Inspectorate has a commitment to transparency. Therefore, all information submitted for this project (if accepted by the ExA) and a record of any advice which has been provided, is published at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/north-east/a1-birtley-to-coal-house-improvement-scheme/?ipcsection=overview>

All Examination documents can also be viewed electronically at the locations listed in **Annex D**.

Please note that in the interest of facilitating an effective and fair examination, we consider it necessary to publish some personal information. To find out how we handle your personal information, please view our Privacy Notice.

I look forward to working with all parties in the examination of this application.

Yours faithfully

David Cliff

Examining Authority

Annexes

- A** Examination Timetable
- B** Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority
- C** Requests to appear and procedure to be followed at hearings
- D** Availability of representations and application documents

This communication does not constitute legal advice.

Please view our [Privacy Notice](#) before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awards-of-costs-examinations-of-applications-for-development-consent-orders>

Examination Timetable

The Examining Authority (ExA) is under a duty to **complete** the Examination of the application by the end of the period of six months beginning with the day after the close of the Preliminary Meeting.

Item	Matters	Due Dates
1	Preliminary Meeting	Tuesday 21 January 2020 (morning)
	Issue Specific Hearing on the draft DCO (ISH1)	Tuesday 21 January 2020 (afternoon)
	<p>Issue by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination Timetable <p>Publication of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ExA's Written Questions 	As soon as practicable following the Preliminary Meeting
	<p>Deadline 1 (D1)</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on updated application documents • Comments on Relevant Representations (RRs) • Summaries of all RR's exceeding 1500 words • Written Representations (WRs) • Summaries of all WRs exceeding 1500 words • Post Hearing submissions including written submissions of oral case made at ISH1 • Notification by Statutory Parties of their wish to be considered as an IP by the ExA • Applicant's draft itinerary for Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) • Suggested locations for site inspections, and justification, for consideration by the ExA • Notification of wish to speak at an Open Floor Hearing (OFH) • Notification of wish to make oral representations at an Issue Specific Hearing (ISH) • Notification of wish to speak at a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (CAH) • Notification of wish to have future correspondence received electronically 	Tuesday 4 February 2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on any additional information/submissions received • Responses to any further information requested by the ExA for this deadline 	
	<p>Deadline 2 (D2)</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on WRs • Local Impact Reports (LIRs) • Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) requested by the ExA • Statement of Commonality of SoCG • Responses to the ExA's Written Questions • Applicant's first revised draft DCO • Responses to comments on RRs • Comments on draft itinerary for ASI and suggested locations for site inspections • Comments on any additional information/submissions received by D1 • Responses to any further information requested by the ExA for this deadline 	<p>Tuesday 25 February 2020</p>
	<p>Deadline 3 (D3)</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on LIRs • Comments on SoCG • Comments on responses to the ExA's Written Questions • Comments on Applicant's first revised draft DCO • Notification of wish to attend an ASI • Comments on any additional information/submissions received by D2 • Responses to any further information requested by the ExA for this deadline 	<p>Tuesday 10 March 2020</p>
	Date reserved for Accompanied Site Inspection (if required)	<p>Tuesday 31 March 2020</p>
	Date reserved for Open Floor Hearing (OFH1) (if required)	<p>Tuesday 31 March 2020 (evening)</p>
	Date reserved to hold an Issue Specific Hearing (ISH2) (if required)	<p>Wednesday 1 April 2020</p>
	Date reserved to hold an Issue Specific Hearing on the draft DCO (ISH3) (if required)	<p>Thursday 2 April 2020</p>

	Date reserved for Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (CAH1) (if required)	Friday 3 April 2020 (morning)
	<p>Deadline 4 (D4)</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Hearing submissions including written submissions of oral case • Any revised/updated SoCG (if required) • Applicant's revised draft DCO (if required) • Comments on any additional information/submissions received by D3 • Responses to any further information requested by the ExA for this deadline 	Monday 20 April 2020
	<p>Deadline 5 (D5)</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on any revised/updated SoCG (if any) • Comments on Applicant's revised draft DCO (if any) • Comments on any additional information/submissions received by D4 • Responses to any further information requested by the ExA for this deadline 	Friday 1 May 2020
	<p>Publication of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ExA's further Written Questions (if required) 	Thursday 7 May 2020
	<p>Deadline 6 (D6)</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to the ExA's further Written Questions (if required) • Comments on any additional information/submissions received by D5 • Responses to any further information requested by the ExA for this deadline 	Thursday 21 May 2020
	<p>Publication of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES) (if required) • The ExA's proposed schedule of changes to the draft DCO (if required) 	Thursday 4 June 2020

	<p>Hearings</p> <p>Dates reserved for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further Issue Specific Hearing (if required) • Further Issue Specific Hearing on the draft DCO (if required) • Further Open Floor Hearing (if required) • Further Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (if required) • Further Accompanied Site Inspection (if required) 	<p>Tuesday 9 June to Thursday 11 June 2020</p>
	<p>Deadline 7 (D7)</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Hearing submissions including written submissions of oral case (if required) • Comments on responses to the ExA's further Written Questions (if required) • Comments on the RIES (if required) • Comments on the ExA's proposed schedule of changes to the draft DCO (if required) • Comments on any additional information/submissions received by D6 • Responses to any further information requested by the ExA for this deadline 	<p>Thursday 25 June 2020</p>
	<p>Deadline 8 (D8)</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to comments on the RIES (if required) • Responses to comments on the ExA's proposed schedule of changes to the draft DCO (if required) • Final DCO to be submitted by the Applicant in the SI template with the SI template validation report • Final updated Book of Reference • Final SoCG • Final Statement of Commonality of SoCG • Final Compulsory Acquisition Schedule • Final updated Guide to the Application • Comments on any additional information/submissions received by D7 • Responses to any further information requested by the ExA for this deadline 	<p>Tuesday 7 July 2020</p>

	<p>Deadline 9 (D9)</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on any additional information/submissions received • Responses to any further information requested by the ExA for this deadline 	<p>Friday 17 July 2020</p>
	<p>The ExA is under a duty to complete the Examination of the application by the end of the period of 6 months beginning with the day after the close of the Preliminary Meeting.</p>	<p>Tuesday 21 July 2020</p>

Publication dates

All information received will be published on the project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as practicable after each deadline for submissions.

Hearing agendas

We will aim to publish a draft agenda for each hearing on the project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website at least five working days in advance of the hearing date. The actual agenda on the day of each hearing may be subject to change at the discretion of the ExA.

Report on the Implications for European Sites

Where the Applicant has provided a No Significant Effects Report or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report with the DCO application, the ExA may decide to issue a Report on the Implication for European Sites (RIES) during the Examination. The RIES is a factual account of the information and evidence provided to the ExA on HRA matters during the Examination up to the date of the publication of the RIES, for the purposes of enabling the Secretary of State, as competent authority, to undertake its HRA. It is not the ExA's opinion on HRA matters. Comments on the RIES will be invited by the ExA and any received will be taken into account as part of the ExA's Recommendation to the relevant Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State may rely on the consultation on the RIES to meet its obligations under Regulation 63(3) of the Habitats Regulations¹ and/ or Regulation 28 of the Offshore Marine Regulations.

¹ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority

I have made a number of other Procedural Decisions following the Preliminary Meeting¹:

1. Examining Authority's Written Questions

Some of my Written Questions (WQ) are directed to specific Statutory Parties which have not, at the time of writing, confirmed that they wish to become Interested Parties for the purposes of the Examination of the application.

All relevant Statutory Parties will receive this correspondence and I request for each to check my WQs carefully in order that they may identify and respond to any questions posed to them. No party should feel inhibited or restricted in responding to any question I ask, even if it is directed elsewhere.

For the avoidance of doubt, Statutory Parties are defined as the parties listed in Schedule 1 to The Infrastructure Planning (Interested Parties and Miscellaneous Prescribed Provisions) Regulations 2015².

2. Statements of Common Ground (SoCG)

The Applicant is taking the lead in the preparation of the SoCG listed below. It will aid the smooth running of the Examination if all Interested Parties who are participating in the preparation of SoCG liaise and co-operate with the Applicant in respect of their production. SoCG should be submitted by **Tuesday 25 February 2020** (Deadline 2, **Annex A**) although it is recognised that these documents may need to be updated during the course of the Examination. Final signed versions of the SoCG are requested to be submitted by **Tuesday 7 July 2020** (Deadline 8, **Annex A**).

1. Gateshead Council
2. Sunderland City Council
3. Environment Agency
4. Historic England
5. Natural England
6. Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
7. Northern Gas Networks Limited

SoCGs should include the Articles and Requirements in the draft DCO. Any Interested Party seeking for an Article or Requirement to be reworded should provide in the SoCG the form of words which are being sought. Further information on the expected content of the SoCG is set out in Annex F of my Rule 6 letter dated 10 December 2019.

The content of SoCG is necessary to help inform me as to the need to hold any Issue Specific Hearings and to enable me and the Applicant to give notice of such hearings at least 21 days in advance of them taking place.

¹ Section 89(1) of the Planning Act 2008

² <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/legislation/>

3. Local Impact Reports (LIRs)

A LIR is a report giving details of the likely impact of a Proposed Development on a local authority's area (or any part of that area). For more information about the importance and content of LIRs see our Advice Note One: Local Impact Reports³.

Local authorities⁴ are invited to submit LIRs by **Tuesday 25 February 2020** (Deadline 2, **Annex A**).

4. Habitats Regulations Assessment

Under the Habitats Regulations⁵, in order to inform the Secretary of State as the competent authority, certain information needs to be provided and consultation undertaken during the course of the Examination. It appears from the submitted application documents that there is no pathway for any effect on the qualifying features of designated European sites, and therefore I currently see no need to requested completed screening or integrity matrices.

5. Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI)

Time has been reserved in the Examination Timetable to undertake an ASI on **Tuesday 31 March 2020**.

The Applicant is requested to submit to the Examination a draft itinerary for the ASI on **Tuesday 4 February 2020** (Deadline 1, **Annex A**) The draft itinerary will be published to the National Infrastructure Planning website and will be available to view, here:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/north-east/a1-birtley-to-coal-house-improvement-scheme/?ipcsection=overview>

Comments from any Interested Party on the Applicant's draft itinerary and any other suggested locations for site inspection are invited by **Tuesday 25 February 2020** (Deadline 2, **Annex A**). Requests by Interested Parties to attend the ASI should be provided by **Tuesday 10 March 2020** (Deadline 3, **Annex A**). Interested Parties requested to attend the ASI include representatives of the Applicant and Gateshead Council, together with any other Interested Parties (or their representatives) who wish to attend.

It may be necessary to limit the numbers of persons who accompany me for logistical and safety reasons, but it should be possible for arrangements to be made for Interested Parties (or their representatives) to join the inspection at specified locations within the itinerary. Please contact the Case Team if you wish to meet the inspection at a specific location within the itinerary, or at a new location, as proposed in your comments.

The final itinerary for the ASI will be published on the project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website on or before **Tuesday 24 March 2020**.

³ <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/>

⁴ Defined in s56A of the Planning Act 2008

⁵ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Interested Parties should be aware that **ASIs are not an opportunity to make any oral representations to the ExA about the Proposed Development.** However, I may invite participants to indicate specific features or sites of interest.

6. Applicant's additional information

The Applicant submitted updated documents as set out and detailed in its letter dated 14 January 2020 [APP-008]. These include updates to the following:

- Guide to the Documents to be Certified
- Works Plans
- Draft Development Consent Order
- Statement of Reasons
- Composite Land and Works Plans
- Environmental Statement Addendum (including updates to Figures 2.2 and 8.1)

I have made a Procedural Decision to accept these documents into the Examination.

7. Applicant's request for amendments to application

The Applicant's letter dated 14 January 2020 includes a request to admit certain changes to the Application. These are detailed in the Applicant's accompanying submission '*Summary of Proposed Changes to the Application January 2020*' [AS-009].

As discussed at the Preliminary Meeting, I consider that the material submitted with the Applicant's request for amendment amounts to a notification that a request is to be made for proposed changes as set out in Step 1 of Figure 1 (page 4) of the Planning Inspectorate's *Advice note sixteen: How to request a change which may be material* (AN16).

I note that (i) the design details of the proposed changes are yet to be fully developed, (ii) further work regarding the environmental effects of the changes is required, (iv) associated updated application documents are required and v) non-statutory consultation is yet to be undertaken by the Applicant regarding the changes.

I am therefore not able to make a Procedural Decision to accept the proposed changes as amendments to the Application and consequently they do not form part of the Examination at this time.

Materiality of the proposed changes

It is ultimately for the ExA to decide whether or not a proposed change is material. I do not at this stage have sufficient information to reach a final view as to materiality. It is however noted that the proposed changes may potentially give rise to a change to the assessment of significant environmental effects and that further assessment is required to confirm significance. The third of the proposed changes also would result in the need for additional land to be included in the Order

limits which could trigger the need for consultation pursuant to the Infrastructure Planning (Compulsory Acquisition) Regulations 2010 (CA Regulations).

Such factors lead me to conclude that the changes taken together may be material. Therefore, the Applicant should include in a subsequent request to make a change to the application the information requirements set out in paragraphs (a) to (f) in Figure 3 of AN16.

These requirements include that if the CA Regulations are engaged, the provision of information prescribed by Regulation 5 of the CA Regulations and confirmation that the procedural requirements of the CA Regulations can be met within the remaining statutory six month Examination period.

The Applicant will also need to ensure that the timing of a full submission for changes to the application takes account of the need all the proposed changes to be properly examined, including the need for written and oral representations to be made by Interested Parties as part of the six month statutory Examination period.

Consultation

Whether or not the proposed changes are material, I consider that in order to ensure fairness, appropriate and proportionate non-statutory consultation should be carried out before a subsequent change request is submitted.

The consultation must engage all those persons identified in the Planning Act 2008 under section 42 (a) to (d) who would be affected by the proposed changes (giving a minimum of 28 days), including any section 42 persons not originally consulted on the application but who may now be affected by the proposed changes.

The Applicant should also consider whether or not persons not already participating in the Examination (and not falling within section 42) might require an opportunity to comment (such as persons living or commercial entities operating outside the Order limits) and whether or not any newspaper notices or site notices are necessary to inform such persons about the proposed changes. For example, residents and businesses in Lamesley may require an opportunity to comment on the additional land proposal and/or the additional design alternative for the replacement Allerdene Railway Bridge.

When submitting the change request it is requested that the Applicant submits a statement which:

- Lists the persons (affected by the changes) under Section 42 (a) to (d) who have been consulted.
- Identifies (within the above list) those section 42 (d) persons who are 'affected persons', meaning those persons over whose land Compulsory Acquisition powers will be exercised. It is noted that if the procedure under the CA Regulations is to be followed the Applicant will also need to submit a request for additional land and identify the additional Affected Persons.
- Provide justification as to why any person under section 42 (a) to (d) is not affected by the proposed changes and has not therefore been consulted.
- Provide copies of any newspaper notices or site notices or justification as to why such general publicity is not required to ensure fairness.

- Appends an annex comprising any consultation responses received.

Next steps

At this stage, all representations should be based on the submitted documents that have been accepted for examination. These do not include the proposed changes set out in the Applicant's '*Summary of Proposed Changes*' document **[AS-009]**.

If following a subsequent written request for change to the application I decide to accept the changes (whether or not material) into the Examination, all Interested Parties will have an opportunity to make representations on the changed application as the Examination progresses. The Applicant, when submitting the change request, should ensure that sufficient time remains within the statutory 6 month Examination period for the revised proposals to be properly and fairly examined. This includes the procedural requirements of the CA Regulations if applicable.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Examination Timetable as set out in Annex A does not incorporate the proposed changes or the steps proposed by the Applicant in paragraph 3.1.1 of its '*Summary of Proposed Changes*' document. To do so would result in the possibility of confusion for Interested Parties regarding the details upon which their submissions (such as Written Representations and Local Impact Reports) need to be based.

Requests to appear and procedure to be followed at hearings

The Examination Timetable has reserved the following periods for a series of hearings to be held if required:

- Tuesday 31 March 2020 to Friday 3 April 2020
- Tuesday 9 June 2020 to Thursday 11 June 2020

Requests to appear at hearings

Interested Parties are required to notify the Examining Authority (ExA) in writing of their wish to take part in an Open Floor Hearing (OFH) or Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (CAH) on or before **Tuesday 4 February 2020** (Deadline 1, **Annex A**).

If no written requests to take part in an OFH or CAH are received by the above deadline, I am not required to hold such a hearing; although I may choose to do so nonetheless.

I may also choose to hold Issue Specific Hearings (ISH) about topics that I think need to be explored orally.

The time, date and place of any confirmed hearing will be notified in writing to all Interested Parties, providing at least 21 days' notice.

If an Interested Party wishes to attend an OFH or ISH they should indicate which topics in their Relevant Representation or Written Representation they wish to address at the hearing. Similarly, any Affected Person wishing to attend a CAH should identify clearly the plots of land about which they wish to speak.

Notifications from Interested Parties in respect of the above should be sent separately from any other written submission, and appropriately titled to allow us to quickly identify which event the notification relates to.

Procedure at hearings

The procedure to be followed at hearings is set out in The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010¹. Any oral representations must be based on either the Relevant Representation or Written Representation made by the person by whom, or on whose behalf, the oral representations are made.

The ExA is responsible for the oral questioning of a person giving evidence and the process affords very limited scope to allow cross-questioning between parties². My Examination will be principally undertaken through the exchange of written submissions, and I will decide whether a hearing on a particular issue or topic is necessary. This decision is not connected to how relevant or important I consider an issue or topic to be.

¹ Rule 14

² Rule 14(5)

Hearing agendas

I will aim to publish a draft agenda for each hearing on the project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website at least five working days in advance of the hearing date. The actual agenda on the day of each hearing may be subject to change at the discretion of the ExA.

Availability of representations and application documents

All application documents and representations submitted to the Examination are available to view on the project page on the National Infrastructure Planning website:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/north-east/a1-birtley-to-coal-house-improvement-scheme/?ipcsection=docs>

For ease of navigation, we recommend that you use the Examination Library (EL) which is accessible via a blue button under the 'Documents' tab. The EL is updated regularly throughout the Examination.

The EL records:

- each application document;
- each representation accepted to be read in conjunction with the Examination; and
- each Procedural Decision made by the Examining Authority.

Each document is provided with a unique reference which will be fixed for the duration of the Examination. A hyperlink to each document on the National Infrastructure Planning website is provided. **Please use the unique reference numbers applied in the EL when referring to any Examination documents in representations that you make.**

Documents can also be viewed electronically at the following locations close to the application site, free of charge. If you have difficulty accessing any documentation please contact the Case Team using the details provided at the top of this letter.

Electronic deposit locations

Local authority	Library/ address	Opening hours
Gateshead Civic Centre	Regent Street Gateshead NE8 1HH	Monday: 08:45 – 17:00 Tuesday: 08:45 – 17:00 Wednesday: 08:45 – 17:00 Thursday: 08:45 – 17:00 Friday: 08:45 – 16:30 Saturday: CLOSED Sunday: CLOSED
Printing costs	Black and white	Colour
A4	Single-sided: 10p	Single-sided: 50p
A3	Single-sided: 20p	Single-sided: 90p

Local authority	Library/ address	Opening hours
Link to website: https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/1765/Contact-Gateshead-Council		
Gateshead Central Library	Central Library Prince Consort Road Gateshead NE8 4LN	Monday: 09:00 – 19:00 Tuesday: 09:00 – 19:00 Wednesday: 09:00 – 17:00 Thursday: 09:00 – 19:00 Friday: 09:00 – 19:00 Saturday: 09:00 – 13:00 Sunday: CLOSED
Printing costs	Black and white	Colour
A4	Single-sided: 10p	Single-sided: 50p
A3	Single-sided: 20p	Single-sided: 90p
Link to website: https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/9037/Gateshead-Central-Library		
Birtley Library	Birtley Library, Durham Road, Birtley Chester-Le-Street DH3 1LE	Monday: 09:00 – 19:00 Tuesday: 09:00 – 19:00 Wednesday: 09:00 – 17:00 Thursday: 09:00 – 19:00 Friday: 09:00 – 17:00 Saturday: 09:00 – 13:00 Sunday: CLOSED
Printing costs	Black and white	Colour
A4	Single-sided: 10p	Single-sided: 50p
A3	Single-sided: 20p	Single-sided: 90p
Link to website: https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/9027/Birtley-Library		
The Birtley Hub Resource Centre	16 Harraton Terrace Birtley Chester-Le-Street DH3 2QG	Monday: 09:00 – 15:30 Tuesday: 09:00 – 15:30 Wednesday: 09:00 – 12:00 Thursday: 09:00 – 15:30

Local authority	Library/ address	Opening hours
		Friday: 09:00 – 15:30 Saturday: CLOSED Sunday: CLOSED
Printing Costs	Black and White	Colour
A4	Single-sided: 10p	Single-sided: 40p
Link to website: https://www.thebirtleyhub.co.uk/		