



Preliminary Meeting Note

Application: A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvement Scheme

Reference: TR010031

Time and date: 10:00am, 21 January 2020

Venue: Newcastle Gateshead Marriott Hotel MetroCentre, NE11 9XF

This meeting note is not a full transcript of the Preliminary Meeting. It is a summary of the key points discussed. An audio recording of the event is available on the National Infrastructure Planning website.

1. Welcome and Introduction

David Cliff welcomed those present and introduced himself as a Chartered Town Planner and an Examining Inspector for national significant infrastructure proposals with the Planning Inspectorate. He confirmed that he has been appointed by the Secretary of State as the Examining Authority (ExA) to examine the application by Highways England (“the Applicant”) for an Order granting Development Consent for the proposed A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvement Scheme.

The ExA also introduced Michele Gregory, who is the Planning Inspectorate’s Case Manager for the application and Elis Roberts from the Inspectorate’s Case Team.

The ExA explained the purpose of the Preliminary Meeting (PM) and noted that the Examination will commence after the PM closes.

The ExA said that there will be an audio recording of the meeting which will be available on the National Infrastructure [page](#) of the Planning Inspectorate’s website. All documents and submissions received and accepted during the Examination will be published on the project-specific page of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

The ExA explained the Planning Inspectorate’s duties under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Further info relating to the GDPR can be found in the Planning Inspectorate’s [Privacy Note](#).

2. Examination Process

The ExA briefly explained the examination process under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008), further info can be found in the [Advice Note 8.4](#)

The ExA clarified the purpose of:

- Open Floor Hearings
- Issue Specific Hearings
- Compulsory Acquisition Hearings

- Accompanied Site Inspections
- Unaccompanied Site Inspections

The ExA sought comments on the Examination process. These were noted and considered by the ExA.

Further information relating to hearings and site inspections can be found in our [Advice Note 8.5](#)

3. Initial Assessment of Principal Issues

The ExA explained the purpose of the Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (section 88 of the PA2008), which can be found in Annex B of the [Rule 6](#) letter of 10th December 2019 and asked for any observations on them.

No comments have been made by any of the parties in attendance.

4. Examination Timetable

The ExA explained the Examination Timetable contained in Annex C of the Rule 6 letter and sought comments from the parties in attendance.

All comments received were noted by the ExA and considerations will be reflected in the Rule 8 Letter.

The Examination Timetable can be found in the Rule 8 letter published approximately a week after the Preliminary Meeting takes places.

5. Procedural decisions

The ExA clarified the procedural decisions made under section 89(3) of the PA2008 and asked for any observations.

Procedural decisions can be found in Annex F of the Rule 6 Letter.

The ExA also invited the Applicant to briefly summarize its updated application documentation as submitted in advance of the Preliminary Meeting on 14 January 2020.

6. Proposed changes

The ExA asked the Applicant to outline the proposed changes to the application as set out in its letter of 14 January 2020 and its accompanying document [Summary of Proposed Changes to Application January 2020](#).

Discussions took place on the nature of the proposed changes, the progress of relevant supporting documentation, consultation and how the proposed changes might be examined were they to be accepted as part of the Examination. Submissions made included those by Northern Gas Networks Limited regarding the need to provide sufficient time to consider the proposed changes in preparation for Hearings.

The ExA explained that the proposed changes were not at this stage accepted as part of the application to be examined and that further procedural advice would be provided in the Rule 8 letter.

7. Any other matters

Comments were made by a local resident regarding the availability of information submitted and the need for consultation with local residents. The ExA requested that the Applicant address such concerns.

The ExA thanked all attendees for their contributions to the meeting and advise that the Rule 8 would be published approximately one week following the meeting.

Meeting closed at 11:53am