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National Highways

For information - to all Interested Parties

Your Ref:

Our Ref: TR010032

Date: 17 November 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

Application by National Highways for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Lower Thames Crossing

The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 (as amended) – Rules 8(3) and 9

Procedural Decision¹ 43 Amending the Examination Timetable to Amend Deadlines 9 and 10 and to Introduce an Additional Deadline 9A to Enable Responses to the Applicant's Preferred Draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) and Control Documents

We are writing to inform you of a procedural decision made by the Examining Authority (ExA) to amend the Examination Timetable to introduce an additional Deadline 9A for the receipt of responses to the Applicant's Preferred Draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) and Control Documents that are due to be submitted at Deadline 9. To facilitate this change, minor revisions to the timing and content of existing Deadline 9 and to the content of existing Deadline 10 are also being made.

This decision was taken by the ExA, having regard to the content of Deadline 9 and Deadline 10 in the Timetable in force, which limited the ability of IPs to make effective closing submissions on the Preferred Draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) and Control Documents in a manner that enabled the Applicant to make closing submissions on final comments made.

43. Timetable Change to Introduce Deadline 9A on 15 December 2023, to Amend the Content and Date of Deadline 9 to 11 December 2023 and to Amend the Content of Deadline 10 on 20 December 2023

¹ All Procedural Decisions made by the ExA for the Lower Thames Crossing examination can be found in the Procedural Decisions Log [PD-007].



Further to the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 (as amended) (the EPR) Rule 8(3), the ExA has decided to amend the Examination Timetable:

- To introduce a **new Deadline 9A on 15 December 2023**. The new deadline is only for the purpose of receiving final Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs), final Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary statements (PADs) and responses to the Applicant's preferred draft DCO and Control Documents. These are responses that were previously due to be submitted at Deadline 9 and so could not have taken the Applicant's preferred draft DCO and Control Documents (required to be submitted at Deadline 9) into account.
- To change the date and content of Deadline 9 from 15 December 2023 to 11 December 2023, to facilitate responses at the new Deadline 9A to documents submitted at Deadline 9. Final SoCGs and PADs are no longer required to be submitted at Deadline 9 as these are now to be received at new Deadline 9A.
- To change the content of Deadline 10 on 20 December 2023, to facilitate responses to documents submitted at the new Deadline 9A.

The ExA is conscious that the end of the Examination will be a busy time for the Applicant and all IPs. However, the changes outlined above are necessary and important to provide a fairer and more inclusive process for all participants in the Examination. The changes will also support the ExA to make the clearest possible recommendations to the Secretary of State in respect of the dDCO and the Control Documents, taking the broadest range of important and relevant information, expertise and opinion into account. We thank you in advance for your attention to these changes.

A summary of the change to the Timetable and a revised Timetable can be found in **Annex A** to this letter.

If you have any questions on the matters addressed in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the case team using the contact details at the head of this letter.

Yours faithfully,

Rynd Smith

Rynd Smith

Lead Panel Member for the Examining Authority

This communication does not constitute legal advice.

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Amendments to the Lower Thames Crossing Examination Timetable to Introduce Deadline 9A on 15 December 2023, to Amend the Content and Date of Deadline 9 and to Amend the Content of Deadline 10

An amendment has been made to the Examination Timetable pursuant to the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 (as amended) (the EPR) – Rule 8(3), to introduce a new Deadline 9A on 15 December 2023, to amend the content and date of Deadline 9 to 11 December 2023 and to amend the content of Deadline 10 on 20 December 2023.

The following table summarises the amendment. This annex also contains a consolidated amended timetable in which the existing arrangements for the Lower Thames Crossing Examination and the amended arrangements for the examination of the proposed provisions can be seen.

Summary of Amendment

Item	Description of Amend	ment	Date
29.	Amended deadline on a	a changed date	11 December 2023
	Deadline 9		
		the Applicant for D9 as the 'final documents'	
	 dDCO, with St validation repo 	atutory Instrument ort	
	o draft Control D	Occuments	
	 Book of Reference changes 	ence (BoR) and schedule of	
	 Statement of 0 	Commonality	
	 Status of Nego Acquisition scl 	otiations / Compulsory nedule	
	 Status of Nego Undertakers 	otiations with Statutory	
	o National Policy	Statement (NPS) tracker	
	Final signed a agreement(s) agreements	nd dated s106 or any other final legal	
	 Stakeholder A Register (SAC 	ctions and Commitments -R)	
	o Consents Pos	ition Statement	
	○ Errata, if appli	cable	

Item	Description of Amendment	Date
	 Delete the requirement to provide Final SoCGs at D9 Delete the requirement to provide Final PADs at D9 	
29A (A new item)	New deadline	15 December 2023
	New Deadline 9A (D9A)	
	For receipt by the ExA of:	
	Comments on the final documents submitted by the Applicant at D9	
	Final SoCGs	
	Final PADSs	
	 Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR 	
30.	Amended deadline	20 December 2023
	Deadline 10	
	Add an opportunity to submit comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D9 that is not requested to be submitted at D9A	
	 Add an opportunity to submit comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D9A 	
	Add a request for closing submissions from the Applicant	

Lower Thames Crossing Amended Examination Timetable New Deadline 9A and Changed Deadlines 9 and 10

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.

The Examination of the application primarily takes the form of the consideration of written submissions. The ExA will also consider any oral representations made at hearings.

Items from 1 to 25A shown covered in a grey highlight have already been completed. The items shown covered in a gold highlight has been inserted to add new Deadline 9A, to amend the date and content of D9 and the content of D10.

Item	Matters	Date
1.	Procedural Deadline A (PDA)	Friday
	For receipt by the ExA of:	5 May 2023
	Requests to be heard orally at the Programming Meeting	
	Written submissions in advance of the Programming Meeting	
2.	Programming Meeting	Tuesday 16 May 2023 10am
3.	Procedural Deadline B (PDB)	Friday
	For receipt by the ExA of:	26 May 2023
	Post-event submissions, including written submissions of oral comments made at the Programming Meeting	
	Written submissions on matters raised in the Programming Meeting	
	Written submissions on the Examination procedure and draft timetable	
	Requests to be heard orally at Preliminary Meeting Part 1	
	Applicant's proposed Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) itinerary	
	Junction layout plans from Applicant (see Annex F)	
4.	Preliminary Meeting Part 1 (PM pt1)	Tuesday
		6 June 2023
		10am
5.	Procedural Deadline C (PDC)	Tuesday

Item	Matters	Date
	 For receipt by the ExA of: Post-event submissions, including written submissions of oral comments made at PM pt1 Further written submissions on Examination procedure, including responses to matters raised orally at PM pt1 Requests to be heard orally at the Preliminary Meeting Part 2 Requests to be heard orally at any of the examination hearings notified at Annex E of this letter Comments by Interested Parties (IPs) on the 	13 June 2023
6.	Applicant's proposed ASI itinerary. Preliminary Meeting Part 2 (PM pt2) or issue by the ExA of a decision to close the Preliminary Meeting in writing	Tuesday 20 June 2023 10am
7.	Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1)	Tuesday 20 June 2023 6pm
8.	Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) on Project Definition	Wednesday 21 June 2023 10am
9.	Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) on the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO)	Thursday 22 June 2023 10am
10.	 Continuation of: Open Floor Hearing 1 (if required); and/or Issue Specific Hearing 1 and/or 2 (if required) 	Friday 23 June 2023
11.	Issue by the ExA of: • Examination Timetable	As soon as practicable following PM pt2
12.	Open Floor Hearing 2 (OFH2) ²	Wednesday 28 June 2023 10am and

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² Open Flooring Hearings are open to any Interested Party to attend and speak directly to the Examining Authority. An Interested Party should only attend one Open Flooring Hearing.

Item	Matters	Date
		Thursday 29 June 2023 (if required)
		10am
13.	Open Floor Hearing 3 (OFH3) ¹	Wednesday 5 July 2023
		10am
		and
		Thursday 6 July 2023 (if required)
		10am
14.	Deadline 1 (D1)	Tuesday 18 July
	For receipt by the ExA of:	2023
	 Post-event submissions, including written submission of oral comments made at the hearings held between 20 June and 6 July 2023 	
	Comments on Additional Submissions submitted since the Application was accepted. (See Annex B of this letter)	
	Comments on Relevant Representations	
	Local Impact Reports (LIR) from Local Authorities	
	Written Representations (WR)	
	Summaries of any WRs over 1500 words	
	Applicant's amended proposed ASI itinerary	
	 New Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) (and of updated SoCGs if required). (See Annex B) 	
	New and updated Principal Areas of Disagreement Summaries (PADS) (if updated). (See Annex B)	
	Applicant's submission of documents (see Annex B)	
	Applicant's amended dDCO	
	 Applicants proposed Addendum to the Environmental Statement (ES) 	
	 Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Procedure Rules (EPR)³ 	
15.	Procedural Deadline D (PDD)	Tuesday 18 July
	For receipt by the ExA of:	2023
	Requests by Statutory Parties to be considered as an Interested Parties (IPs) by the ExA	

³ The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010: SI 2010/103

Item	Matters	Date
	Requests by IPs to be heard at any subsequent OFH	
	 Requests by Affected Persons⁴ to be heard at a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (CAH) 	
	Requests to attend the ASI	
16.	Deadline 2 (D2)	Thursday 3
	For receipt by the ExA of:	August 2023
	Comments on WRs	
	Comments on LIRs	
	Comments by IPs on the Applicant's amended proposed ASI itinerary.	
	Comments on Applicant's amended dDCO	
	Updated SoCGs (if updated. See Annex B)	
	Updated PADSs (if updated. See Annex B)	
	Applicant's submission of documents (see Annex B)	
	Comments on Applicant's submissions (see Annex B) at D1	
	 Comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D1 	
	 Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR 	
17.	Publication by the ExA of:	Tuesday 15
	Examining Authority's First Written Questions (ExQ1)	August 2023
18.	Deadline 3 (D3)	Thursday 24
	For receipt by the ExA of:	August 2023
	Responses to comments on WRs	
	Updated SoCGs (if updated. See Annex B)	
	Updated PADSs (if updated. See Annex B)	
	Applicant's submission of documents requested (see Annex B)	
	Comments on Applicant's submissions (see Annex B) at D2	
	Comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D2	
	Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR	

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⁴ Affected Persons are those defined in section 59(4) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended)

Item	Matters	Date
19.	Dates reserved for:	w/c 4 and 11 September 2023
	 Open Floor Hearings (OFH) (if required) Issue Specific Hearings (ISH), including but not limited to: 	
	 traffic and transportation tunnelling the draft Development Consent Order 	
	Compulsory Acquisition Hearings (CAH)	
	 strategic review of Applicant's case for Compulsory Acquisition 	
	individual Compulsory Acquisition objectionsASIs	
20.	Deadline 4 (D4)	Tuesday 19
	For receipt by the ExA of:	September 2023
	 Post-event submissions, including written submission of oral comments made at the hearings held w/c 4 and 11 September 2023 (if held) 	
	Responses to ExQ1	
	Updated SoCGs (if updated. See Annex B)	
	Updated PADSs (if updated. See Annex B)	
	Applicant's submission of documents requested (see Annex B)	
	Comments on Applicant's submissions (see Annex B) at D3	
	Comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D3	
	Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR	
21.	Deadline 5 (D5)	Tuesday 3
	For receipt by the ExA of:	October 2023
	Updated SoCGs (if updated. See Annex B)	
	Updated PADSs (if updated. See Annex B)	
	Applicant's submission of documents requested (see Annex B)	
	Comments on Applicant's submissions (see Annex B) at D4	
	Comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D4	

Item	Matters	Date
	Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR	
22.	Opening of Relevant Representations in relation to change requests EC01, EC02 and MRC03 pursuant to Regulation 10 of the CA Regulations (CA Regs RRs) ⁵	Tuesday 10 October 2023
	Publication by the ExA of:	
	Examining Authority's further Written Questions (ExQ) (if required)	
23.	Dates reserved for:	Monday 16 to
	Open Floor Hearings (OFH) (if required)	Tuesday 24 October 2023
	Issue Specific Hearings (ISH) (if required)	
	Compulsory Acquisition Hearings (CAH) (if required)	
	Further ASIs (if required)	
24.	Deadline 6 (D6)	Tuesday 31
	For receipt by the ExA of:	October 2023
	 Post-event submissions, including written submission of oral comments made at the hearings held 16 to 24 October 2023 (if held) 	
	Responses to further ExQ (if issued)	
	Updated SoCGs (if updated. See Annex B)	
	Updated PADSs (if updated. See Annex B)	
	Applicant's submission of documents requested (see Annex B)	
	Comments on Applicant's submissions (see Annex B) at D5	
	Comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D5	
	Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR	
24A	Closing of CA Regs RRs ⁵	Friday 10
	CA Regulations Deadline 1 (CA Regs D1)	November 2023
	For receipt by the ExA of:	
	CA Regs Written Representations (CA Regs WRs) ⁵ relating to the effect of the change requests	

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⁵ References to CA Regs Relevant Representations (CA Regs RRs), to CA Regs Written Representations (CA Regs WRs) and to CA Regs Interested Parties (CA Regs IPs) in items 22, 24A, 26, 27A and 28A of this timetable relate to persons making written and oral representations about the effects of the CA Regs proposed provisions for change requests EC01, EC02 and MRC03. They are confined in effect to those matters and do not invite the submission of any written or oral representations of a general nature.

Item	Matters	Date
	Summaries of any CA Regs WRs over 1500 words	
	Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR	
25.	Publication by the ExA of:	Tuesday 14
	Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES) and any associated questions (if required)	November 2023
	ExA's commentary on, or schedule of changes to, the dDCO (if required)	
	Examining Authority's further Written Questions (ExQ) (if required)	
25A	Deadline 6A (D6A)	Tuesday 14
	For receipt by the ExA of:	November 2023
	 Applicant's submission of responses to traffic modelling materials submitted at D6 arising from ISH4 or ISH10 and intended to be heard at ISH13 on 27 November 2023 	
	Submission of comments by Local Highway Authorities, Ports and other IPs engaged in traffic and transportation topics relating to traffic modelling and intended to be heard at ISH13 on 27 November 2023	
26.	Deadline 7 (D7)	Friday 17
	For receipt by the ExA of:	November 2023
	 Applicant's submission of draft s106 agreement(s) and any other draft legal agreements 	
	Comments on responses to further ExQ (if applicable)	
	Updated SoCGs (if updated. See Annex B ⁶)	
	 Updated PADSs (if updated. See Annex B⁴) 	
	Applicant's submission of documents requested (see Annex B)	
	Comments on Applicant's submissions (see Annex B) at D6	
	Comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D6	
	 Requests from a CA Regulations Interested Party to be heard at: 	
	 An Open Floor Hearing held under Regulation 16 of the CA Regs (OFH/CA Regs) 	

⁶ See clarifying amendments to Procedural Decisions 27, 28 & 29.

Item	Matters	Date
	 An Issue Specific Hearing held under Regulation 14 of the CA Regs (ISH/CA Regs) 	
	 A Compulsory Acquisition Hearing held under Regulation 15 of the CA Regs (CAH/CA Regs) (if required) 	
	 Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR 	
27.	Dates reserved for:	Monday 20 to
	Open Floor Hearings (OFH) (if required)	Tuesday 28 November 2023
	Issue Specific Hearings (ISH) (if required)	
	Compulsory Acquisition Hearings (CAH) (if required)	
	Further ASIs (if required)	
27A	CA Regulations Deadline 2 (CA Regs D2)	Monday 27
	Comments on CA Regs WRs	November 2023
	 Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR 	
28.	Deadline 8 (D8)	Tuesday 5
	For receipt by the ExA of:	December 2023
	 Post-event submissions, including written submission of oral comments made at the hearings held 20 to 28 November 2023 (if held) 	
	Comments on RIES (if issued)	
	Comments on ExA's DCO/Commentary (if issued)	
	Responses to further ExQ (if issued)	
	Applicant's submission of updated s106 agreement(s) and any other updated legal agreements	
	Updated SoCGs (if updated. See Annex B ⁴)	
	 Updated PADSs (if updated. See Annex B⁴) 	
	 Applicant's submission of documents requested (see Annex B) 	
	Comments on Applicant's submissions (see Annex B) at D7	
	Comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D7 or CA Regs D2	
	 Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR 	
28A	Dates reserved for:	Tuesday 12 and Wednesday 13 December 2023

Item	Matters	Date
	 An Open Floor Hearing held under Regulation 16 of the CA Regs (OFH/CA Regs) (if required) 	
	 An Issue Specific Hearing held under Regulation 14 of the CA Regs (ISH/CA Regs) (if required) 	
	 A Compulsory Acquisition Hearing held under Regulation 15 of the CA Regs (CAH/CA Regs) (if required) 	
	A hearing held pursuant to Regulations 14, 15 or 16 of the CA Regulations may be notified and held (if required) concurrently with another hearing notified and held under the CA Regulations.	
29.	Deadline 9 (D9)	Monday 11
	For receipt by the ExA of:	December 2023
	Comments on responses to further ExQ (if applicable)	
	Applicant's final documents (the 'final documents'):	
	 dDCO, with Statutory Instrument validation report 	
	o draft Control Documents	
	 Book of Reference (BoR) and schedule of changes 	
	 Statement of Commonality 	
	 Status of Negotiations / Compulsory Acquisition schedule 	
	 Status of Negotiations with Statutory Undertakers 	
	 National Policy Statement (NPS) tracker 	
	 Final signed and dated s106 agreement(s) or any other final legal agreements 	
	 Stakeholder Actions and Commitments Register (SAC-R) 	
	 Consents Position Statement 	
	 Errata, if applicable 	
	Comments on Applicant's submissions at D8	
	 Comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D8 	
	 Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR 	
29A	Deadline 9A	Friday 15
	For receipt by the ExA of:	December 2023
	Comments on the final documents submitted by the Applicant at D9	
	Final SoCGs	

Item	Matters	Date
	Final PADSs	
	 Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the EPR 	
30.	Deadline 10 (D10)	Wednesday 20
	For receipt by the ExA of:	December 2023
	 Comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D9 not requested at D9A 	
	 Comments on any information requested by the ExA and received by D9A 	
	 Closing submissions from the Applicant. 	
	Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules	
31.	The ExA is under a duty to complete the examination of the application by the end of the period of six months	Wednesday 20 December 2023

Submission times for Deadlines

The time for submission of documents at any Deadline in the timetable is 23:59 on the relevant Deadline date, unless instructed otherwise by the ExA.

Publication dates

All information received will be published on the <u>project webpage</u> as soon as practicable after the Deadlines for submissions.

Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES)

Where an applicant has provided a No Significant Effects Report or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report with the application, the ExA may decide to issue a 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 Secretary of State. The ExA may also raise questions in the RIES to confirm or clarify matters that remain outstanding.

The Secretary of State may rely on the consultation on the RIES to meet its obligations under Regulation 63(3) of The Habitats Regulations 2017 and/or Regulation 28 of The Offshore Marine Regulations.