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All Interested Parties and Statutory
Parties

Your Ref:

Our Ref: TR010040

Date: 27 April 2021

Dear Sir/ Madam

Planning Act 2008 – Section 88 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rule 4, Rule 6, Rule 9

Application by Highways England for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A47 Blofield to North Burlingham project

Appointment of the Examining Authority

I, Alex Hutson, write to you following my [appointment](#) by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government as the Examining Authority (ExA) to carry out an examination of the above application.

I would like to thank those of you who submitted Relevant Representations. These representations have assisted me when preparing my proposals regarding how to examine this application.

I have now made proposals taking account of the Relevant Representations that have been made, the Planning Inspectorate's guidance published in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the likely effect of ongoing public health controls. I will be starting the Examination using virtual methods and remain flexible so that, should public health requirements allow, there will be the option of holding physical events later in the Examination. [Advice Note 8.6: Virtual examination events](#) explains how virtual events will be held and how you can get involved.

Invitation to the Preliminary Meeting

This letter is an invitation to the Preliminary Meeting on **Tuesday 8 June 2021** where we will discuss the Examination procedures for the A47 Blofield to North Burlingham project. It contains a number of important annexes, including **Annex A (Agenda)** and **Annex B (Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting)**, explaining how the Preliminary Meeting will be conducted and how you can participate.

The Preliminary Meeting (Part 1) will adjourn on **Tuesday 8 June 2021** rather than close. The Preliminary Meeting (Part 2) has been reserved to resume on **Tuesday 22 June 2021**, if required. The adjournment period is to allow for the consideration of any written submissions by Interested Parties who did not, or could not, make oral submissions at Part 1 of the event. Please note that any such written submissions must be received by **Procedural Deadline B (Tuesday 15 June 2021)**.

In the event that submissions to **Procedural Deadline B** do not justify the resumption of the Preliminary Meeting at Part 2, I may decide to close the Preliminary Meeting in writing, without Part 2 taking place. Therefore, it is strongly advised that Interested Parties should not rely on Part 2 of the Preliminary Meeting to make oral representations about the Examination procedure.

At the start of the meeting is an Arrangements Conference in which the Case Team register participants.

Please register to attend by email or phone, by **Procedural Deadline A (Tuesday 25 May 2021)**.

- Dates of meeting:** **Tuesday 8 June 2021** (Preliminary Meeting Part 1) and **Tuesday 22 June 2021** (Preliminary Meeting Part 2) (if required)
- Arrangements Conference:** Join from **9.20am** on both days
- Meeting begins:** **10.00am** on both days
- Venue:** **Virtual Event (Microsoft Teams)** - see [Advice Note 8.6](#)

Purpose of the Preliminary Meeting

The purpose of the Preliminary Meeting is for me to consider the way in which the application is to be examined. **At this stage I am looking at the procedure and not the merits of, or concerns about, the application.** The merits of, or concerns about, the application will only be considered once the Examination starts, which is after the Preliminary Meeting has closed.

The agenda for the meeting has been set following my **Initial Assessment of Principal Issues** arising from my reading of the application documents and the Relevant Representations received. That assessment is set out in **Annex C**.

As a result of this assessment I wish to hear from the Applicant, Local Authorities, Interested Parties and Statutory Parties where they consider changes may be needed to the **draft Examination Timetable**, which is set out in **Annex D**.

Up-to-date information about the project and the Examination can be obtained on the [project webpage](#) of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

The Planning Inspectorate will make the Examination Documents available to the public through the website. I recommend that you familiarise yourself with the documents and Examination Library before the Examination starts.

There is a function on the right-hand side of the project web page called 'Email updates'. This provides you with an opportunity to register to receive email updates at key stages of the process and you are encouraged to make use of this. The link to the livestream of the Preliminary Meeting and further examination events will be made available on the project page shortly before the event takes place.

Attendance at the Preliminary Meeting

I wish to run a fair, efficient and effective meeting so that all relevant views can be heard. As the Preliminary Meeting will be held virtually, it will be held in two parts, if necessary, separated by an adjournment period. A full explanation of the approach is provided in [Advice Note 8.6](#).

Please note that you are not required to make oral or written submissions at the Preliminary Meeting in order to participate in the Examination. If you are an Interested Party, you can make a Written Representation and comment on the Written Representations made by other Interested Parties and participate in any hearings. Should you no longer wish to be an Interested Party and do not wish to be involved in the Examination process, you can notify the Case Team of this in writing.

Because participation in a virtual Preliminary Meeting relies on the provision of a joining link or telephone number in advance, it is important that you think about whether you wish to speak and confirm your involvement. You must confirm your involvement by pre-registering with the Case Team using the details set out at the top of this letter **no later than Procedural Deadline A (Tuesday 25 May 2021)**. When you register please tell us which agenda items you intend to speak against, listing points you wish to make. Alternatively, if you feel that you are unable to engage in the Preliminary Meeting and further examination events through any of the methods described in [Advice Note 8.6](#), please contact the Case Team **by Procedural Deadline A (Tuesday 25 May 2021)** to discuss how you can participate in the Preliminary Meeting.

The Preliminary Meeting will be livestreamed and recorded. The recording will be published on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as practicable after Part 1 has adjourned and then again after Part 2, if held.

I strongly encourage groups of individuals who have similar views on the procedure to choose one representative to speak for the group. People who have not made a request to participate will still be able to access the livestream and / or the recording of the Preliminary Meeting Part 1 and then make a written submission to the Examination by **Procedural Deadline B (Tuesday 15 June 2021)**. Please note the further information set out in **Annex A**.

After the Preliminary Meeting

After the Preliminary Meeting closes you will be sent a letter, known as the Rule 8 letter, setting out the finalised Examination Timetable.

The Examination will be held using a combination of written and hearing procedures that are explained in **Advice Notes 8.4, 8.5 and 8.6**. Advice Note 8.6 describes the procedure and methods for conducting virtual events.

All hearings are held in public. Where hearings take place virtually, they will be recorded and made available to view on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website shortly after each event. Where physical hearings can take place, a recording will also be published on the website.

All relevant and important matters will be taken into account when I make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will take the final decision in this case.

Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority

I have made the following decisions in relation to the Examination, further details are provided in **Annex E**.

1. Setting deadlines for the submission of Statements of Common Ground.
2. Requesting and setting a deadline for the submission of Local Impact Reports.
3. The notification by Interested Parties of their wish to attend an Accompanied Site Inspection¹ and their suggestions of locations, including justifications, for my consideration.
4. Issuing First Written Questions before the Examination begins.
5. A request to the Applicant to provide an Application Documents Tracker and low-resolution documents.
6. Acceptance of documents into the Examination.

Your status in the Examination

You have received this letter because you fall within one of the groups described in the Planning Inspectorate's document [What is My Status in the Examination?](#)

If your reference number begins with '2002', 'A47B-AFP', 'A47B-S57', 'A47B-APP' you are in Group A. If your reference number begins with 'A47B-SP' you are in Group B. The meaning and purpose of those groups are explained in the document published at the link above. Please contact the Case Team if you'd like further assistance.

Submitting documents into the Examination

All deadlines in the draft Examination Timetable and within this letter are at **23.59 on that day**. You may submit documents for each deadline through the online 'Make a submission' portal. You may also continue to submit documents by email and in hard copy. Communications sent by post may be delayed due to the ongoing public health situation.

¹ An Accompanied Site Inspection would only go ahead if Government guidance on COVID-19 at that time permits

Receiving communications from the Inspectorate

If you have received this letter by post and would prefer to receive emails, please provide details to the Case Team at the email address at the top of this letter.

Managing your information

All information submitted for this project (if accepted by the Examining Authority), and a record of any advice given by the Planning Inspectorate is published on the [project webpage](#) of the National Infrastructure Planning website. The documents can be viewed electronically at the locations listed in **Annex F**.

Please note that in the interest of facilitating an effective and fair Examination, it is necessary to publish some personal information. To find out how we handle your personal information please view our [Privacy Notice](#).

Unaccompanied Site Inspection

In advance of the Preliminary Meeting, I have undertaken an Unaccompanied Site Inspection (USI) to familiarise myself with the area within the vicinity of the application site. A note of my USI has been published on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

Finally, I look forward to working with all parties in the examination of this application. If you have any queries regarding this letter, please contact the Case Team.

Yours faithfully,

Alex Hutson

Examining Authority

Annexes

- A** Agenda for the Preliminary Meeting
- B** Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting
- C** Initial Assessment of Principal Issues
- D** Draft Examination Timetable
- E** Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority
- F** Availability of Examination Documents

This communication does not constitute legal advice.
Please view our [Privacy Notice](#) before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.

Preliminary Meeting Part 1 Agenda

Title of meeting:	A47 Blofield to North Burlingham Preliminary Meeting Part 1
Meeting Date:	8 June 2021
Arrangements Conference:	Joining from 9.20am
Meeting start time:	10.00am
Venue:	Virtual Event (Microsoft Teams) Full instructions on how to join online or by phone will be provided in advance of the meeting to those who register to participate
Attendees:	Registered parties

This meeting can be observed online via a livestream. The link will be advertised on the [project webpage](#) of the National Infrastructure Planning website shortly before the meeting is due to start.

9.20am²	Please arrive at 9.20am to enter the Preliminary Meeting Lobby and join the virtual Arrangements Conference. You will be admitted into the meeting by the Case Team and given further information.
9.45am	The Arrangements Conference will commence at 9.45am. The Case Team will explain the meeting protocols and answer questions about participating in the meeting.
10.00am	The Preliminary Meeting will start promptly at 10.00am.
Item 1	Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting and attendees will introduce themselves.
Item 2	The Examining Authority's (ExA) remarks about the virtual Preliminary Meeting process – Annex B
Item 3	The ExA's remarks about the Examination process – Annex B
Item 4	Initial Assessment of Principal Issues – Annex C
Item 5	Draft Examination Timetable – Annex D <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadlines for submissions and notifications • Dates and format for hearings • Arrangements for site inspections

² If you are joining as an active participant, please follow the joining instructions for the virtual event carefully and connect into the Preliminary Meeting in good time. In common with physical Preliminary Meetings, the event will start at 10.00am irrespective of any late arrivals, for whom access may not be possible

Item 6	Procedural Decisions taken by the ExA – Annex E
Item 7	Any remaining questions or submissions regarding procedural matters not set out in the agenda that have been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in writing in advance of the Preliminary Meeting.
Item 8	Any other matters.
Adjournment of the Preliminary Meeting until Tuesday 22 June 2021	

Preliminary Meeting Part 2 Agenda

Title of meeting: **A47 Blofield to North Burlingham
Preliminary Meeting Part 2 (if required)**

Meeting Date: **22 June 2021**

Arrangements Conference: **Joining from 9.20am**

Meeting start time: **10.00am**

Venue: **Virtual Event (Microsoft Teams)**
Full instructions on how to join online or by phone will be provided in advance of the meeting to those who register to participate

Attendees: **Registered parties**

This meeting can be observed online via a livestream. The link will be advertised on the [project webpage](#) of the National Infrastructure Planning website shortly before the meeting is due to start.

IMPORTANT: In the event that submissions to **Procedural Deadline B** do not justify the resumption of the Preliminary Meeting at Part 2, I may decide to close the Preliminary Meeting in writing, without Part 2 taking place.

9.20am	Please arrive at 9.20am to enter the Preliminary Meeting Lobby and join the virtual Arrangements Conference. You will be admitted into the meeting by the Case Team and given further information.
9.45am	The Arrangements Conference will commence at 9.45am. The Case Team will explain the meeting protocols and answer questions about participating in the meeting.
Item 1 10.00am	The resumption of the Preliminary Meeting will start promptly at 10.00am. Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting and attendees will introduce themselves.
Item 2	Consideration of written submissions received to Procedural Deadline B.
Item 3	Any Procedural Decisions made by the ExA.
Item 4	Any other matters.
Close of the Preliminary Meeting	

Attending the meeting

Please be available from the start and throughout the meeting. The agenda is subject to change at the discretion of the ExA, although in making changes I will be mindful of the need to provide opportunities for fair involvement to all Interested Parties. I will conclude the meeting as soon as all relevant contributions have been made. If there are any additional matters to be dealt with or submissions take a considerable amount of time, I may change the order of the agenda items and may introduce breaks in the proceedings.

Please read the following documents before attending the Preliminary Meeting:

- Our [Privacy Notice](#)
- Our [advice about how to participate in virtual examination events \(Advice Note 8.6\)](#)

Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting

Background

The Preliminary Meeting for the A47 Blofield to North Burlingham project will take place virtually, using Microsoft Teams, but the format, content and procedure will be very similar to the physical, face-to-face Preliminary Meetings that have been held for other National Infrastructure Examinations.

I accept that virtual meetings may present a challenge to some parties to participate in and may be unfavourable and unpalatable to others. However, the Government has been explicitly clear that Examinations of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) should continue to proceed at this time. The safest and most appropriate way to undertake this is to hold meetings virtually.

For these reasons, I will not entertain discussions on the principle or appropriateness of holding virtual meetings either prior to, or at the Preliminary Meeting. A postponement of the Examination until physical meetings can once again take place will not be considered. Should Interested Parties wish to make known their objections to either of the above, they should do so in writing to the Planning Inspectorate via the project email address A47BlofieldtoNorthBurlingham@planninginspectorate.gov.uk. I wish to stress that should the situation change, and restrictions be lifted on such matters early on in the Examination period, I may be able to consider an alternative to virtual meetings.

I am conscious of videoconferencing fatigue and will keep the proceedings focussed and as efficient as possible. Please read this annex carefully as it provides information that would usually be included in my introductory remarks. I will only present a summary of the key points in order to ensure that the time available for participants to speak is maximised.

The Examining Authority (ExA)

I, Alex Hutson, am the ExA appointed by the Secretary of State (SoS) for Housing, Communities and Local Government and I will introduce myself at the start of the Preliminary Meeting. My appointment letter can be found in the Examination Library under reference [[PD-003](#)].

The Case Team

I will be supported by the Planning Inspectorate Case Team, including Deborah Allen (Case Manager) and James Bunten (Case Officer). During the arrangements conferences a member of the Case Team will welcome and admit participants into the Preliminary Meeting and will be available to answer questions by email before and after the meeting. The contact email address is: A47BlofieldtoNorthBurlingham@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

The purpose of the Preliminary Meeting

The Preliminary Meeting is being held to discuss the arrangements for Examination of the application for Development Consent for the A47 Blofield to North Burlingham project, which is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), and which will generally be referred to in the Preliminary Meeting and Examination as the 'Proposed Development' or 'the Scheme'. The application has been made by Highways England, which will be referred to as 'the Applicant'.

You will find information about the application and, documents produced for the Examination on the Planning Inspectorate's [Project webpage](#), which has links to Examination procedure, the Examination Timetable, Relevant Representations and Examination documents.

The National Infrastructure Planning website is used for some communications and to provide access to documents throughout the Examination. There is the option on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website to register to receive email notifications at key stages during the Examination.

The main purpose of the Preliminary Meeting is to discuss the arrangements for the Examination of the application. It focuses on the process only, and it will not be looking at the substance of the proposals: questions, discussions and representations about the merits or concerns of the Proposed Development are for the Examination itself which will begin the day after the close of the Preliminary Meeting.

The Preliminary Meeting will be your opportunity to influence the process that I intend to follow, as explained in this letter and annexes. The **agenda for the Preliminary Meeting** is in **Annex A**. You may find it useful to have the letter and agenda to refer to during the Preliminary Meeting.

Government guidance and policy

The application is a NSIP under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) regime as a consequence of sections 14(1)(h), 22(1)(a) and 22(1)(b): it includes the construction of a highway for the offline sections of the Proposed Development (section 22(1)(a)) and the alteration of a highway for the online sections of the Proposed Development (section 22(1)(b)). The designated National Networks National Policy Statement (NNNPS) applies to this Examination and to decision-making relating to this application.

I will consider the Proposed Development within the parameters of the NNNPS and any other applicable policy or considerations that is deemed to be important and relevant. The PA2008 makes it clear that, in making a decision, the relevant SoS 'must decide the application in accordance with any relevant NPS' (s104(3)), subject to certain provisos. Essentially, the provisos are that the application must not breach legal or treaty obligations, and that any adverse impact of the Proposed Development would not outweigh its benefits.

The SoS is entitled to disregard any representations that relate to the merits of the designated NPS. In practice, this means that I will not spend time examining representations that challenge policy set out in NPSs, or the validity of NPSs

themselves. The focus will be on the merits, or concerns of, the Proposed Development, tested to the appropriate extent, using the tests set out in relevant designated NPSs that are in force.

Other important and relevant planning policies that I may consider include policies in relevant local authority development plans. However, if these conflict with policy in an NPS, then the NPS will take precedence.

In summary, the Preliminary Meeting will establish the procedures and timetable for the Examination of the Proposed Development. It will set a framework for me to enable the SoS to consider and decide the application, by identifying relevant policy and examining the application in the light of it. In doing so, I will have regard to:

- The positions and representations of all Interested Parties (IPs);
- any Local Impact Reports (LIR) prepared and provided by relevant local authorities;
- other prescribed matters; and
- any other matters that appear to be both relevant and important to the relevant SoS's decision.

Preliminary Meeting invitees

This letter is an invitation to attend the Preliminary Meeting. The following groups of people have been invited:

- The Applicant is invited to the Preliminary Meeting and is generally given the opportunity to reply to any representations made, either orally at the time or in writing during the adjournment of the meeting.
- Everyone who made a Relevant Representation is registered as an IP and every IP is entitled to participate in this Examination.
- Each person or organisation with an interest in land or rights that are affected by a Compulsory Acquisition or Temporary Possession request in this application is an Affected Person (AP) and also an IP. In addition to a general entitlement to involvement in the Examination, APs have a right to be heard in relation to any objection about the effects of Compulsory Acquisition or Temporary Possession on their interests in land, and a right to be notified of any Compulsory Acquisition Hearing.
- Certain bodies are 'Prescribed Consultees' or statutory parties and can request to become IPs without having made a Relevant Representation.
- I have the power to involve people who are not IPs in the Examination as though they are IPs, including by inviting them to the Preliminary Meeting. However, this is only done in exceptional circumstances, for example if it was clear that the application would materially affect a person, they are not automatically or eligible to elect to become an IP and for a good reason they had been unable to take the necessary action to register as an IP.

Management of the Preliminary Meeting

Past experience suggests that a Preliminary Meeting for a project of this size and complexity could take two to three hours to complete. However, in running the event virtually there are limitations on the number of people who can speak at any one time. Therefore, in order to ensure that everyone who wishes to speak can do so, one day has been timetabled for Part 1.

An adjournment has been provided between Part 1 and Part 2 of the Preliminary Meeting to allow for the consideration of any written submissions by Interested Parties who did not, or could not, make oral submissions at Part 1 of the event on **8 June 2021**. Part 1 of the Preliminary Meeting will not end until the I have considered all oral submissions made at the meeting and written submissions made by **Procedural Deadline B (15 June 2021)** following the adjournment and any final requests to be heard. I will then resume Preliminary Meeting Part 2, if required, on **22 June 2021** to enable any further discussions that may be required, and for me to make any procedural decisions necessary to govern the Examination and close the Preliminary Meeting.

Participants may have to make allowances and be patient if there are delays associated with the technology used. In recognition of the fatigue associated with on-screen communication, I may provide a short break during the Preliminary Meeting. For those who register to be involved your joining instructions will provide more information about this.

A digital recording will be made available on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as practicable following each part of the Preliminary Meeting. The digital recording allows any member of the public who is interested in the application and the Examination to find out what has been discussed at the Preliminary Meeting, whether they are able to attend or observe the meeting or not. The making and publication of these recordings are a critical means by which the Planning Inspectorate meet the legal requirement to hold these events in public. In this regard, anyone speaking at the Preliminary Meeting will need to introduce themselves each time they speak, to ensure that someone listening to the recording after the event is clear who was speaking. A written note of the Preliminary Meeting will be produced following the closure of the Preliminary Meeting.

As the digital recordings are retained and published, they form a public record that can contain personal information to which the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) applies. Participants must do their best to avoid making public any information which they would otherwise wish to be kept private and confidential. If there is a need to refer to such information, it should be in written form. Although this will also be published, personal and private content can be redacted or removed before it is made publicly available. Any person who is unclear on this point should ask the Case Team for guidance before they place personal and private information into the public domain.

The Planning Inspectorate's practice is to publish the recordings and retain them for a period of five years from the SoS's decision on the Development Consent Order (DCO). If you actively participate in the Preliminary Meeting, it is

important that you understand that you will be recorded and that the recording will be made available in the public domain.

Following my introductions, each participant who has been registered to speak will be asked to introduce themselves, including any organisations or groups that they represent. I will then conduct the meeting in accordance with the agenda. If you prefer not to have your image recorded, you can switch off your camera at any point.

The Examination Process

The examination of NSIPs follows different processes to those, for example, of a Public Inquiry into a planning appeal following the refusal of planning permission. The main differences are that the examination of NSIPs are primarily a written process and hearings take on an inquisitorial approach as opposed to an adversarial one.

This means that I will probe, test and assess the evidence primarily using written questions. While some hearings are held to provide supplementary evidence, questions to the Applicant or to witnesses will come from myself. Questioning or cross-examination of witnesses by other parties will not generally be allowed.

In terms of opportunities to provide evidence in writing, the draft Examination Timetable makes provision for the following written processes:

- Local authorities can submit LIRs if they wish. Whilst these are voluntary, the PA2008 provides that if they are provided, they must be considered by the SoS in reaching a decision. Consequently, LIRs are a very important method for local authorities to communicate issues of concern to the ExA, the SoS and their residents.
- IPs can make Written Representations (WRs) and comments on WRs made by other parties.
- IPs can respond to my written questions (ExQs) and comment on responses to these written questions provided by others.
- IPs may be asked to contribute to the making of Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) if it appears that there are matters on which they and the Applicant agrees, and if it would be useful for this to be clarified. SoCGs most usefully extend to catalogue matters that are not agreed or are outstanding.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a series of numbered deadlines for receipt of written submissions. Timely submissions received by the relevant deadline and that address its purpose will be accepted. Documents received after the relevant deadline are only accepted at my discretion and may not be accepted to ensure fairness to all parties. Circumstances where documents are submitted late without good reason, causing inconvenience or delay to other parties can amount to unreasonable behaviour.

These written processes will be the principal means I use to gather information, evidence and views about the application. However, the Examination will only be

effective if all parties resolve to give timely, full, frank, clear and evidenced answers to every question that is relevant to their interests and to engage fully with any other related processes such as the completion of WRs and SoCGs.

There is no merit in withholding or delaying information, or in failing to co-operate, and, should it occur, any unreasonable behaviour that caused another party to incur wasted expenditure could lead to an [award of costs](#) against the offending party.

I have discretion to make amendments to the Examination Timetable for the wider benefit of the Examination. If possible, events will be arranged for times when all relevant parties are available, but I am under a duty to complete the Examination by the end of the six-month period beginning with the day after the close of the Preliminary Meeting. This requirement is set by legislation, and while I will try to rearrange event dates to accommodate all relevant parties, in practice there will be limited scope to alter dates set out in the draft Examination Timetable.

The statutory time limit for the Examination means that everyone must strive for a 'right first time' approach to matters set out in writing. Where there are matters that still need to be discussed and agreed between the Applicant and IPs, it will be very helpful to me if these could be progressed as early as possible.

Hearings

The draft Examination Timetable includes provision for hearings, at which I will hear evidence from the various parties.

At hearings it will not normally be necessary for parties to make long and detailed submissions that require (for example) PowerPoint presentations. Any supporting detail / information can be provided in writing following the event by the relevant deadline.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a deadline (**Deadline 1 on 6 July 2021**) for participants to notify me that they wish to speak at an Open Floor Hearing or a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing.

Open Floor Hearing:

Any registered IP may request an Open Floor Hearing (OFH) to make oral representations about the application if they believe this to be preferable to restricting their representation to the written form, though both carry equal weight. Oral submissions should be based on representations previously made in writing, but they should not simply repeat matters previously covered in the written submission. Rather, they should focus on specific detail and explanation to help inform me. There should be no new or unexpected material in oral representations. A written summary note with any supporting evidence or references will be requested of each speaker following the hearing.

As with all Examination events, OFHs are subject to the powers of control of the ExA, as set out in the PA2008 and supporting legislation. Participants must register in advance by the deadline shown in the Examination Timetable and in

accordance with the instructions an agenda will be circulated. It is common practice for the ExA to set a time limit for each speaker and speakers with common points are asked to come together to nominate a spokesperson or representative speakers to cover specific topics, so as to avoid repetition. Speakers representing public authorities, community and membership organisations or multiple IPs are normally provided with an additional time allowance, recognising their representative role.

Compulsory Acquisition Hearing:

The Applicant's draft DCO provides for the Compulsory Acquisition of land and rights, and the Temporary Possession of land. Affected Persons (those whose land or rights over land are affected) have a right to request and be heard at a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (CAH). If one or more APs request to be heard, then a CAH must be held. Provisional dates for CAHs are included in the draft Examination Timetable along with deadlines by which requests to be heard must be submitted.

Issue Specific Hearings:

I have the discretion to hold Issue Specific Hearings (ISHs) if it would aid in the Examination and there is a specific reason this would be more helpful than reliance on written evidence only. The lack of an ISH on one or more topics does not suggest that that topic is less important than others which are subject to a hearing. Rather, it is an indication that I am satisfied that the issues can be fully considered through written submissions and responses to its written questions and that each party has had a fair opportunity to put its case.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a number of reservations for ISHs and IPs may make suggestions for topics in their written or oral representations to the Preliminary Meeting.

Issue Specific Hearing on the draft DCO

It may be necessary for me to hold multiple ISHs on the draft DCO. This is normal practice, and they are held on a without prejudice basis. Parties can suggest modifications and amendments to the draft DCO provided with the Proposed Development applications by the Applicant, without prejudicing their overall position on the application.

Holding hearings does not imply that I have reached any judgements on the merits of the application. Whatever the ultimate recommendation is, I must make sure that the draft DCO is fit for purpose if the SoS decides to grant consent, as any consent will be subject to Requirements (ie conditions) set out in the DCO.

Site inspections

As part of the Examination process I may undertake unaccompanied or accompanied site inspections. Any inspection will be in line with any Government restrictions relating to COVID-19 in force at the time.

The purpose of these is for me to see features of the proposals within the context of the evidence put forward. Notes of Unaccompanied Site Inspections

(USIs) are published on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

Accompanied Site Inspections (ASI) will only be necessary to view land to which there is no public right of access, or with no clear view from nearby locations with open public access. The purpose of ASIs is familiarisation only and no discussion of the merits of, or concerns about, the Proposed Development will be allowed during an ASI.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a deadline for IPs to make submissions suggesting sites and locations that I should visit. These will be used to inform further USIs as well as possible ASIs. It should be noted that public health restrictions may limit the scope for ASIs and, if these have not lifted by the end of the Examination, I may decide that holding USIs to relevant nominated locations, supported by the submission of additional written, photographic, video or even drone material would be preferable to not visiting sites or holding ASIs in circumstances which could make them difficult and unduly time-consuming to conduct.

Initial Assessment of Principal Issues

I have assessed the application documents, Relevant Representations and any other important and relevant matters.

It is not a comprehensive or exclusive list of all relevant matters which will be examined. I will have regard to all important and relevant matters during the Examination and in writing a Recommendation Report to the Secretary of State for Transport after the Examination has concluded.

The order of the issues listed is alphabetic and does not imply any order of prioritisation or importance. A number of the Principal Issues set out below have an interrelationship and overlap and these will be reflected in the Examination.

The policy and consenting requirements and documents associated with the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) are an integral part of the Examination and are therefore not set out as separate Principal Issues.

It should also be noted that whilst the effects of the proposal in relation to human rights and equalities duties are not listed as Principal Issues, I will conduct all aspects of the Examination with these in mind.

Principal Issues	Including but not limited to:
Air Quality and Emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach to the air quality assessment, including during construction and operation. • Construction effects on human and ecological receptors. • Operational effects on human and ecological receptors. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures.
Biodiversity, Ecology and the Natural Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications for European / international sites and their qualifying features, including in-combination assessment. • Effects on other designated sites. • Adequacy of surveys. • Effects on protected species and species of conservation concern including bats, badgers and great crested newts. • Effects on habitats including ponds, woodland, grassland and hedgerows. • Issues relating to Biodiversity Net Gain and No Net Loss. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures. • Residual effects after mitigation and their significance.

Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effects of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development on climate change. • The overall change in greenhouse gas emissions which may arise from the construction of the Proposed Development. • Emissions of greenhouse gases arising from the Proposed Development during its operational phase. • The achievement of sustainable development including the mitigation of, and adaption to, climate change. • Consideration of carbon budgets. • Government policy for zero emissions target by 2050.
Compulsory Acquisition and / or Temporary Possession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for land and rights to be subject to compulsory acquisition / temporary possession. • Minimisation of the need for land and rights. • Whether a compelling case in the public interest has been established. • Effects on those impacted by compulsory acquisition / temporary possession. • Land, rights and powers sought. • The position of and effects on Statutory Undertakers, protected provisions and whether the tests of s127 and s138 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) would be satisfied. • The current position in relation to Crown land. • The adequacy and security of funding for compensation. • Human rights considerations. • Accuracy of the Book of Reference. • Statement of Reasons and justification for powers sought. • Whether reasonable alternatives have been explored sufficiently. • Whether the proposals meet the requirements of PA2008 in all other respects.
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, including the Grade I listed Church of St Andrews in North Burlingham. • Effects on archaeology. • Effects on the historic landscape. • Whether further archaeological investigation is required to understand potential effects. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures.

<p>Draft Development Consent Order (dDCO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure of the dDCO. • The clarity of definitions and the consistency of use of terms and phrases referred to in the dDCO. • Relationships with other consents, permits and licences and any impediments of them being granted. • Design flexibility. • Whether the requirements effectively secure the mitigation identified in the Environmental Statement. • Whether the requirements are relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be consented, enforceable, precise and reasonable. • Matters for which detailed approval needs to be obtained, the discharging authority and the roles of the local authorities and of other independent statutory and regulatory authorities. • The identification of all relevant statutory undertakers for which protective provisions are required and the adequacy and agreement of those provisions. • Other provisions in the dDCO, including for removal of consent requirements, compulsory acquisition and documents to be certified. • The appropriateness of all proposed provisions. • Whether the dDCO is satisfactory in all other respects.
<p>Geology and Soils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on agricultural land and soil quality. • The protection of soils during construction. • Agricultural land restoration matters. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures.
<p>Landscape and Visual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach to landscape and visual impact assessment. • Baseline information. • Viewpoint selection and visualisations. • Methodology and application of professional judgement. • Effects on landscape character and landscape features during construction and operation. • Visual effects during construction and operation. • Artificial lighting. • Design of the Proposed Development. • Masterplan - design of proposed landscaping and species selection. • Landscape management and maintenance. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures.

Material Assets and Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effects on local and regional waste infrastructure. • Safeguarding mineral resources. • Materials management and re-use. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures.
Noise and Vibration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach to the noise and vibration assessment. • Baseline conditions and surveys. • Construction noise and vibration effects on residential and non-residential receptors. • The number and location of properties likely to experience significant adverse construction noise or vibration effects and the duration. • Operational noise and vibration effects on residential and non-residential receptors. • Compliance with statutory requirements and policy. • Management and monitoring of construction and operational noise and vibration effects. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures, including noise barriers and low noise road surfacing. • Residual effects after mitigation and their significance.
Population and Human Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach within the application to population, human health and equalities. • Socio-economic impacts of the Proposed Development. • Non-motorised users and public rights of way, accessibility, suitability of replacements, impacts on recreation and opportunities for improvement. • Effects of any severance, including in respect of communities to the north and south of the A47 (ie North Burlingham and Lingwood). • Effects on business, agriculture, and social / community facilities. • Effects on living conditions of surrounding residents, both from construction and operational activities. • Effects on Blofield allotments. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures.
Scope of Development and Environmental Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parameters and description of the Proposed Development. • The need for the Proposed Development. • Adequacy of surveys and baseline data, the approach to flexibility and definitions of the

	<p>significance of impacts in the Environmental Statement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of reasonable alternatives relevant to the Proposed Development particularly concerning route selection. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures including the content of the Environmental Management Plan and the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments. • Whether all other necessary consents and licences have been considered. • Conformity or otherwise with the National Networks National Policy Statement, development plans and other relevant policies. • Cumulative and in-combination effects on, and with, other major projects and proposals. • Whether the mitigation identified in the Environmental Statement is adequately secured by the combination of the dDCO with other consents, permits and licenses. • 'Good design', including functionality, durability and aesthetics. • Opportunities for environmental benefits. • Outline management plans. • The significance of residual effects after mitigation.
Transportation and Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme context, strategic vision, objectives and alternative design solutions. • The case for and benefits of the scheme. • Baseline conditions and surveys. • Construction effects on traffic and the surrounding road network. • Whether effects of construction traffic have been adequately considered. • Temporary and permanent road closures and access to existing properties. • Effects on non-motorised users and the public rights of way network during construction and operation. • Operational effects on the surrounding road network, including the A47 / Brundall roundabout. • Road layout and design, including junctions and bridges. • Road safety. • Road classification. • Management and maintenance responsibilities. • Outline Traffic Management Plan. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The significance of residual effects after mitigation.
<p>Water Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline information. • Effects on groundwater, water courses and water bodies. • The adequacy of the Flood Risk Assessment. • Climate change allowances. • Surface water drainage proposals. • Compliance with the Water Framework Directive. • Potential land contamination and stability issues. • The effectiveness of mitigation measures.

Draft Examination Timetable

I am 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. I will also consider any oral representations made at hearings.

Hearings and site inspections will only be held if I require them and they may be cancelled, if necessary.

Item	Matters	Date
1.	<p>Procedural Deadline A Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions on Examination procedure • Requests to be heard orally at the Preliminary Meeting Part 1 	Tuesday 25 May 2021
2.	Preliminary Meeting Part 1	Tuesday 8 June 2021 at 10.00am
3.	<p>Procedural Deadline B Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions on Examination procedure including responses to matters raised orally in the Preliminary Meeting Part 1 • Requests to be heard orally at the Preliminary Meeting Part 2 	Tuesday 15 June 2021
4.	Preliminary Meeting Part 2 (if required)	Tuesday 22 June 2021 at 10.00am
5.	Publication by the ExA of the Examination Timetable	As soon as practicable after the close of the Preliminary Meeting
6.	<p>Deadline 1 (D1) Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to the ExA's Written Questions (ExQ1) 	Tuesday 6 July 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Impact Reports (LIR) from Local Authorities • Comments on Relevant Representations • Notification by Statutory Parties of their wish to be considered as an Interested Party (IP) • Notification of wish to speak at an Open Floor Hearing • Notification of wish to speak at a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing • Notification of wish to attend an Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) • Provision by IPs of suggested locations and justifications for ASI • Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) requested by the ExA (see Annex E) • Statement of Commonality for SoCG • The Compulsory Acquisition Schedule • An Application Documents Tracker • An updated version of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) in clean and tracked versions • A schedule of changes to the dDCO 	
7.	<p>Deadline 2 (D2) Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on documents submitted at D1 • Written Representations (WRs) including summaries of all WRs exceeding 1500 words • Submission by Applicant of draft ASI arrangements and itinerary • Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 ('the Examination Rules') • Progressed SoCG • Progressed Statement of Commonality for SoCG • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions • An updated Application Documents Tracker in clean and tracked versions • An updated version of the dDCO in clean and tracked versions • An updated schedule of changes to the dDCO 	Tuesday 20 July 2021
8.	<p>Deadline 3 (D3) Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on responses to ExQ1 • Comments on LIRs 	Tuesday 3 August 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on WRs • Comments on documents submitted at D2 • Comments on Applicant's draft ASI arrangements and itinerary • Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules • Progressed SoCG • Progressed Statement of Commonality for SoCG • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions • An updated Application Documents Tracker in clean and tracked versions • An updated version of the dDCO in clean and tracked versions • An updated schedule of changes to the dDCO. 	
9.	<p>Hearings</p> <p>If required, weeks reserved for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Floor Hearing(s) • Issue Specific Hearing(s) • Compulsory Acquisition Hearing(s) 	w/c 16 August and 1 to 3 September 2021
10.	<p>Deadline 4 (D4)</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written summaries of oral submissions to hearings • Any post-hearing notes requested at the Hearings • Comments on documents submitted at D3 • Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules • Progressed SoCG • Progressed Statement of Commonality for SoCG • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions • An updated Application Documents Tracker in clean and tracked versions • An updated version of the dDCO in clean and tracked versions • An updated schedule of changes to the dDCO. 	Tuesday 7 September 2021
11.	<p>Publication by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further Written Questions (ExQ2) (if required) • Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES) (if required) 	Tuesday 28 September 2021

12.	Accompanied Site Inspection (if required)	w/c 4 October 2021
13.	<p>Deadline 5 (D5) Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to ExQ2 (if required) • Comments on RIES (if required) • Comments on documents submitted at D4 • Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules • Progressed SoCG • Progressed Statement of Commonality for SoCG • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions • An updated Application Documents Tracker in clean and tracked versions • An updated version of the dDCO in clean and tracked versions • An updated schedule of changes to the dDCO. 	Tuesday 19 October 2021
14.	<p>Deadline 6 (D6) Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on responses to ExQ2 (if required) • Comments on documents submitted at D5 • Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules • Progressed SoCG • Progressed Statement of Commonality for SoCG • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions • An updated Application Documents Tracker in clean and tracked versions • An updated version of the dDCO in clean and tracked versions • An updated schedule of changes to the dDCO. 	Tuesday 2 November 2021
15.	<p>Hearings</p> <p>If required, week reserved for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue Specific Hearing(s) • Compulsory Acquisition Hearing(s) • Open Floor Hearing(s) 	w/c 15 November 2021
16.	<p>Deadline 7 (D7) Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p>	Monday 22 November 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written summaries of oral submissions to hearings • Any post-hearing notes requested at the Hearings • Comments on documents submitted at D6 • Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules • Progressed SoCG • Progressed Statement of Commonality for SoCG • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions • An updated Application Documents Tracker in clean and tracked versions • An updated version of the dDCO in clean and tracked versions • An updated schedule of changes to the dDCO. 	
17.	<p>Publication by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ExA's preferred DCO / proposed schedule of changes to the dDCO (if required) 	Friday 26 November 2021
18.	<p>Deadline 8 (D8) Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on ExA's preferred DCO / proposed schedule of changes to the dDCO • Comments on documents submitted at D7 • Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules • Progressed SoCG • Progressed Statement of Commonality for SoCG • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions • An updated Application Documents Tracker in clean and tracked versions • An updated version of the dDCO in clean and tracked versions • An updated schedule of changes to the dDCO. 	Tuesday 7 December 2021
19.	<p>Deadline 9 (D9) Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalised SoCG • Finalised Statement of Commonality for SoCG • A finalised Application Documents Tracker in clean and tracked versions • A finalised and validated version of the dDCO in clean and tracked versions 	Friday 17 December 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A finalised schedule of changes to the dDCO • Comments on documents submitted at D8 • Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules. 	
20.	Deadline 10 (D10) for receipt by ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on documents submitted at D9 • Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules. 	Tuesday 21 December 2021
21.	Close of Examination	Wednesday 22 December 2021

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 I instruct otherwise.

Publication dates

All information received will be published on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as practicable after the deadlines for submissions. The [Examination Library](#) will be kept up to date throughout the Examination and can be accessed via the 'Documents' tab on the project webpage. Each document will be given a unique reference, it is helpful to use these in any submissions made during examination.

Hearing agendas

I will aim to publish a detailed draft agenda for Issue Specific Hearings and Compulsory Acquisition Hearings at least five working days in advance of the hearing date. However, the agenda on the day is subject to change at my discretion. For Open Floor Hearings agendas will not be published unless, in consideration of the number of participants notified to the Planning Inspectorate, I decide that establishing a running order will facilitate the process on the day.

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, I may decide to issue a RIES during the Examination. The RIES is a factual account of the information and evidence provided 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 my opinion on HRA matters. Comments on the RIES will be invited and any received will be taken into account as part of my 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 Regulations 2017 and / or Regulation 28 of The Offshore Marine Regulations.

Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority (ExA)

I have made the following Procedural Decisions under Section 89(3) of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008):

1. Statements of Common Ground (SoCG)

In relation to some of the Principal Issues identified in **Annex C**, I would be assisted by the preparation of SoCGs between the Applicant and certain Interested Parties. The draft Examination Timetable at **Annex D** therefore provides a deadline for submission of initial and finalised SoCG. The deadline for initial SoCG is **Deadline 1** on **Tuesday 6 July 2021** and the deadline for finalised SoCG is **Deadline 9** on **Tuesday 17 December 2021**.

The aim of a SoCG is to agree factual information and to inform me and all other parties by identifying where there is agreement and where the differences lie at an early stage in the examination process. It should provide a focus and save time by identifying matters which are not in dispute or need not be the subject of further evidence. It can also usefully state where and why there may be disagreement about the interpretation and relevance of the information. The reasons for the differences and interpretation of the implications of a difference can then be expanded in the evidence. Unless otherwise stated or agreed, the SoCG should be agreed between the Applicant and the other relevant Interested Party or parties and submitted by the Applicant.

SoCG are requested to be prepared between the Applicant and:

- A. **Environment Agency**, to include:
 - Development Consent Order (including Requirements)
 - Water environmental effects
 - Drainage and flooding, including the Flood Risk Assessment
 - Water framework directive compliance
 - Material assets and waste
 - Biodiversity
 - Environmental permits
 - Environmental Management Plan (including Record of Environmental Actions and Commitments)
- B. **Natural England**, to include:
 - Development Consent Order (including Requirements)
 - Biodiversity, including protected species license applications, Habitat Regulations Assessment and adequacy of surveys
 - Environmental Management Plan (including Record of Environmental Actions and Commitments)
- C. **Historic England**, to include
 - Development Consent Order (including Requirements)
 - Effects on heritage assets including archaeological considerations
 - Environmental Management Plan (including Record of Environmental Actions and Commitments)
- D. **Norfolk County Council**, to include:
 - Planning policy

- The need for and principle of the Proposed Development and consideration of alternatives
- Development Consent Order (including Requirements)
- Environmental Impact Assessment (including any cumulative effects)
- Impacts within authority area including in respect of air quality and emissions, biodiversity, heritage assets including archaeology, landscape and visual, geology and soils, material assets and waste, noise and vibration, population and human health, traffic and transportation and the water environment (including flood risk)
- Effects on non-motorised users
- Management and maintenance responsibilities
- Environmental Management Plan (including Record of Environmental Actions and Commitments)
- Outline Traffic Management Plan

E. Broadland District Council, to include:

- Planning policy
- The need for and principle of the Proposed Development and consideration of alternatives
- Development Consent Order (including Requirements)
- Environmental Impact Assessment (including any cumulative effects)
- Impacts within local authority area including in respect of air quality and emissions, biodiversity, heritage assets including archaeology, geology and soils, landscape and visual, material assets and waste, noise and vibration, population and human health, traffic and transportation and the water environment (including flood risk)
- Effects on non-motorised users
- Environmental Management Plan (including Record of Environmental Actions and Commitments)
- Outline Traffic Management Plan

F. Affected statutory undertakers (including Anglian Water Services Limited, BT Openreach, Cadent Gas Limited, UK Power Networks, Virgin Media and Vodafone), to include:

- Development Consent Order (including Protective Provisions)
- Impacts on operations
- Whether the requirements of s127 of the Planning Act 2008 have been met

The above list may be added to during the course of the Examination and should not be taken as precluding any Interested Party not listed and the Applicant from drafting a SoCG.

The suggested content of the SoCG, listed above, is indicative and should not be taken to preclude the inclusion of any other matters that parties consider important and relevant.

Additionally, SoCGs should cover the following topics where relevant:

- Methodology for environmental impact assessment including assessment of cumulative effects
- Data collection methods
- Baseline data

- Data / statistical analysis, approach to modelling and presentation of results
- Full expression of expert judgements and assumptions
- Identification and sensitivity of relevant features and quantification of potential impact
- Likely effects, including construction and operational effects
- Feasible and deliverable mitigation and method for securing such mitigation within the DCO

All of the SoCGs listed above should cover the Articles and Requirements in the draft Development Consent Order. 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.

Where a particular SoCG cannot be agreed between the parties by **Deadline 1**, or in so far as any local authority position represents an officer level view only, draft versions of that SoCG are requested to be submitted **by the Applicant** to **Deadline 1**. The position of the relevant Interested Parties should then be confirmed during the course of the Examination and by no later than the final deadline.

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

In addition, I request that at each deadline, the Applicant provides a Statement of Commonality of Statements of Common Ground to provide an update on progress with SoCG and an overview of where the areas of agreement and dispute between the Interested Parties are.

2. Local Impact Reports

I request Local Impact Reports (LIRs) from the host Local Authority and welcome LIRs from any other relevant local authorities who may wish to submit one. All LIRs are requested to be submitted into the Examination no later than by **Deadline 1 (Tuesday 6 July 2021)**.

3. Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI)

ASIs are an opportunity for attendees to point out specific features or sites of interest.

The Examination Timetable reserves time for an ASI in week commencing 4 October 2021. Public health restrictions related to COVID-19 will determine the format of this event and whether it can go ahead. I made an Unaccompanied Site Inspection on 19 and 20 April 2021 and a note of this has been published on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website [here](#).

Interested Parties are asked to submit their wish to attend an ASI and provide suggested locations by **Deadline 1 (Tuesday 6 July 2021)**. This should include issues to be observed and whether the site can be accessed via public land.

The Applicant is requested to prepare a draft itinerary for the ASI to be submitted at **Deadline 2 (Tuesday 20 July 2021)** to include sites and locations:

- in Relevant Representations
- submitted by Interested Parties at Deadline 1
- where the Applicant has predicted likely significant environmental effects.

I will consider all submissions, and if I decide to hold an ASI, I will aim to publish the final itinerary and arrangements on the project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as practically possible.

The ASI is not to an opportunity to make representations about the Proposed Development. Please make all representations in hearings or in writing at the appropriate deadline.

4. Written Questions

First Written Questions (ExQ1) [[PD-006](#)] are published alongside this Rule 6 letter. Responses to these questions are due by **Deadline 1 (Tuesday 6 July 2021)** as outlined on the draft Examination Timetable at **Annex D** of this Rule 6 letter. They should not be submitted until the Examination starts, which is the day after the Preliminary Meeting is closed. If a question is addressed to you, a full and comprehensive written response is requested. Other parties may also provide a response or information on the topic. The responses will be published on the project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website and all parties can provide representations on the responses by **Deadline 2 (Tuesday 20 July 2021)**.

5. Guide to the Application

I request the Applicant to provide an Application Documents Tracker at **Deadline 1** which provides a list of the most up to date documents before the Examination. This should be updated at each subsequent deadline. A final version must be submitted at **Deadline 9** before the close of the Examination.

6. Low-resolution documents for possible sharing on screen at virtual events

As Examination events will be held virtually, the Applicant is requested to provide compressed / low-resolution versions of land and works plans. Plans and drawings provided with the application which are over 20MB will be difficult or impossible to share in a Microsoft Teams environment.

The Applicant should provide drawings in accordance with the following specification by **Deadline 2 (Tuesday 20 July 2021)**. For avoidance of doubt this also includes Figures to the Environmental Statement.

- No individual drawing / set of plans to exceed an absolute maximum of 10 MB - as a guide 5 to 6 MB should be achievable
- Check the output of plans on .pdf from, for example, CAD systems, as certain systems output these in multiple layers which load successively and thus take a long time to load - layers should be merged / switched off

- Files should be given intelligent short names so that the content of the file can be understood from its filename or the beginning of its filename (for example, 'Worksplans sheet 1' rather than 'E-may77_project_449_large works_sheets44') - the name should be intelligible in the tab when multiple document windows are open in a browser
- Files should be read checked before submission to ensure that all relevant details can still be read when zoomed in, for example plot numbers on land plans and labels for road, field or property names
- Files should be given a 'screen share' test before submission, ensuring that when shared over the internet the plan distributes to multiple viewers in a timely manner, the cursor remains mobile and no unlooked for behaviours (screen freezing, pixilation, judder, etc.) are experienced by multiple users.

Low-resolution versions of plans and drawings are duplicate evidence. They are requested to assist the carrying out of virtual events only and will not form part of the Examination Library or be published on the National Infrastructure Planning website.

7. Acceptance of Additional Submissions into the Examination

Following the acceptance of the application, the Applicant submitted a range of documents on 8 February 2021 and 23 March 2021. This was in response to my Procedural Decision, dated 2 February 2021 [[PD-004](#)]. I have exercised my discretion to accept the documents provided by the Applicant as [Additional Submissions](#). The revised / amended documents submitted by the Applicant are as follows:

8 February 2021

- Cover Letter
- 1.1 Introduction to the Application
- 2.8 Crown Land Plans
- 6.1 Environmental Statement Chapter 14 – Climate
- 6.2 Environmental Statement Appendices Appendix 4.1 – Scoping Opinion Responses

23 March 2021

- Cover Letter
- 6.9 Report to Inform Habitats Regulations Assessment Rev 1 – Clean
- 6.9 Report to Inform Habitats Regulations Assessment Rev 1 – Tracked
- 7.7 Environmental Management Plan Rev 1 – Clean
- 7.7 Environmental Management Plan Rev 1 – Tracked
- 7.8 Outline Traffic Management Plan Rev 1

I have also exercised my discretion to accept Additional Submissions from the following:

- The Coal Authority
- Transport Action Network
- The Applicant on behalf of the Norfolk Constabulary
- The Applicant – 4.3 Book of Reference (Clean) Rev 1
- The Applicant – 4.3 Book of Reference (Tracked) Rev 1

Availability of representations and application documents

The project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website contains the [Application documents and Relevant Representations](#).

All further documents submitted during the Examination will be published at the above location.

For ease of navigation, please refer to 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 and provides a hyperlink to:

- each application document;
- each representation made to the Examination; and
- each Procedural Decision made by the Examining Authority.

Each document is given a unique reference which will be fixed for the duration of the Examination. A hyperlink to each document on the project webpage is also provided. Please use the unique reference numbers applied in the EL when referring to any Examination Documents in any future submissions that you make.

Documents can be viewed electronically, free of charge, at the following locations. Please note that you may need to bring a form of identification to use a computer at these locations.

Electronic deposit locations

Documents can be viewed electronically, free of charge, at the following locations. Check with the location before you leave to confirm opening times, and whether you need to register as a library member in order to use a computer.

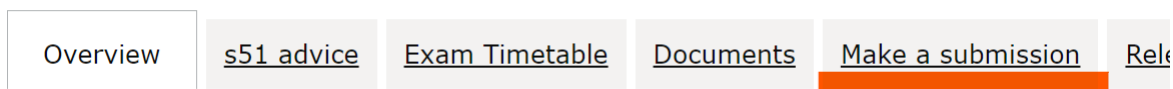
You'll want to consider the impact from the coronavirus public health requirements, please check the current circumstances with the relevant location before you attend.

Location	Address	Opening hours	Printing / photo copying costs
Lingwood Village Hall	Station Road, Lingwood, Norwich NR13 4AZ	Monday 9:00-5:00pm Tuesday 9:00-5:00pm Wednesday 9:00-5:00pm Thursday 9:00-5:00pm Friday 9:00-5:00pm Saturday Closed Sunday Closed	None available
Brundall Library	90 The Street, Norwich NR13 5LH	Monday 8:00am-7:00pm Tuesday 8:00am-7:00pm Wednesday 8:00am-7:00pm Thursday 8:00am-7:00pm Friday 8:00am-7:00pm Saturday 8:00am-4:00pm Sunday 10:00am-4:00pm	Black and white printing is 20p per A4 sheet. Colour printing is 50p per A4 sheet.
Blofield Library	North Street, Blofield, Norwich, NR13 4RQ	Monday 1:00pm-6:00pm Tuesday Closed Wednesday 10:00am-1:00pm and 1:30pm-4:00pm Thursday Closed Friday 10:00am-1:00pm and 1:30pm-4:00pm Saturday 1:00pm-4:00pm Sunday Closed	Black and white printing is 20p per A4 sheet. Colour printing is 50p per A4 sheet.
Acle Library	Bridewell Lane, Norwich NR13 3RA	Monday Closed Tuesday 10:00am-4:00pm Wednesday Closed Thursday 10:00am-2:30pm Friday 2:00pm-4:00pm Saturday 1:00pm-4:00pm Sunday Closed	Black and white printing is 20p per A4 sheet. Colour printing is 50p per A4 sheet.

If you require a hard copy of the application documents, please contact the Applicant:
A47BlofieldtoNorthBurlinghamRIS@highwaysengland.co.uk
0303 123 5000.

Submission of documents

The Examination Timetable has deadlines for submitting relevant information. You can submit documents through the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website using the 'Make a submission' portal. You may also use email or letters, these will take longer to process so please submit as early as you can.



The portal separates submissions by date and type of submission, using drop-down menus. There is an 'other' option if you are not able to separate your submission into one of the categories.

- Electronic attachments should be clearly labelled with the subject title and not exceed 50MB.
- The Planning Inspectorate cannot accept links to websites.
- All submissions must be made in a format that can be viewed in full on our website. For example, Word, PDF, presentations.

If your submission exceeds 1500 words, please include a summary which is less than 10% of the original text. The Planning Inspectorate has found that readers can access your main points more quickly, before reading the details.

Please contact a member of the case team if you have any questions:
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