



National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol, BS1 6PN

Customer Services: 0303 444 5000
Email: A417MissingLink
@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

All Interested Parties

Your Ref:

Our Ref: TR010056

Date: 31 January 2022

Dear Sir/ Madam

The Planning Act 2008 – sections 91 and 92; The Infrastructure Planning (Compulsory Acquisition) Regulations 2010; The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rule 13

Application by National Highways (formerly Highways England) for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A417 Missing Link

Notification of Hearings

The Examination Timetable at [Annex A of the Examining Authority's \(ExA\) Rule 8 letter dated 16 November 2021](#) included reserved dates for Hearings to be held during the week commencing 28 February 2022, should the ExA deem it necessary. We are now writing to confirm the arrangements for the following Hearings in the event that the ExA considers they are required:

Date	Event	Time	Venue
Wednesday 2 March 2022	Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) (if required) Draft Development Consent Order	10.00am (Arrangements Conference starts at 9.30am)	Virtually via Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 2 March 2022	Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 2 (CAH2) (if required)	2.00pm (Arrangements Conference starts at 1.30pm)	Virtually via Microsoft Teams
Thursday 3 March 2022	Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4) (if required) Environmental Matters	10.00am (Arrangements Conference starts at 9.30am)	Virtually via Microsoft Teams

Friday 4 March 2022	Continuation of ISH4 (if required) Environmental Matters	10.00am (Arrangements Conference starts at 9.30am)	Virtually via Microsoft Teams
----------------------------	--	--	-------------------------------

Reserved Hearing dates

The ExA is currently deciding whether the above Hearings are necessary. Responses received at Deadlines 3 and 4 of the Examination Timetable are likely to influence this decision.

If the ExA considers that any of the above Hearings are not required, the Hearing(s) may be cancelled and the cancellation(s) will be confirmed in the banner on the [project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website](#) prior to the Hearing date(s). As such, Interested Parties are encouraged to [sign up for email updates](#) on the project webpage, and to regularly check the project webpage for the latest information.

Similarly, if Friday 4 March 2022 is not required for a continuation of ISH4 (if held), this will be confirmed during proceedings on Thursday 3 March 2022, and in the banner on the project webpage following the conclusion of proceedings on Thursday 3 March 2022.

Format of Hearings

Considering ongoing public health concerns related to Coronavirus (COVID-19), the ExA has looked carefully into the possibility of the above Hearings being held as blended Examination events (part in-person and part virtual). However, given the continued prevalence of the Omicron variant and the need to provide Interested Parties with advance notice of the format of the Hearings, the ExA has concluded that it will be using solely virtual methods for these Hearings. The Planning Inspectorate's [Advice Notice 8.6](#) provides detailed advice regarding virtual Examination events.

Please see details in the section below regarding how to register to participate in the virtual Hearings. If your request to participate in a Hearing is accepted (and in the event that the Hearing is held), you will receive an invitation which will include instructions on how to join the virtual event. The Arrangements Conference will admit you to the event, and will provide information on the Hearing and reminders about using the technology. Please arrive at the Arrangements Conference start time so the Case Team can admit you before the start of the Hearing.

Notification of a wish to speak by Interested Parties

If you wish to participate and be heard orally at any of the above Hearings, please let the Case Team know by contacting the email address above as soon as possible, and no later than:

➤ **Wednesday 23 February 2022**

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

Any request to participate in a Hearing must include the following information:

- Name and Unique Interested Party reference number.
- Email address (if available) and contact telephone number.
- Name and Unique Interested Party reference number of any person/ organisation that you are representing.
- The Hearing(s) you wish to participate in and brief details of the topic(s) that you would like to raise.
- For the Compulsory Acquisition Hearing: the plot number(s) of the relevant land provided in the [Book of Reference](#) and the [Land Plans](#).
- The Examination Library reference number (with paragraph/ page number where appropriate) of any documents you wish to refer to.

Please ensure that you include your Interested Party reference number in your correspondence. This can be found either in the email covering this letter or on the hard-copy letter you have received.

If you do not have access to email, you may write to the Case Team to confirm your participation at the postal address above. Please address any letter to the 'A417 Missing Link Case Team' and include the case reference TR010056 and a contact telephone number. Postal communications must be received by the Planning Inspectorate by **Wednesday 23 February 2022**. Interested Parties should therefore be mindful of the potential delays associated with the postal system.

Issue Specific Hearings and Compulsory Acquisition Hearings

Issue Specific Hearings provide an opportunity for the ExA to invite Interested Parties to make oral representations about specific issues relating to the application.

A Compulsory Acquisition Hearing may be held where an application includes a request for an order granting development consent to authorise Compulsory Acquisition (CA) of land or CA of an interest in or right over land.

Procedure at Hearings

The procedure to be followed at Hearings is set out in The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010¹.

Participation in the Hearings will be subject to the ExA's powers of control. It is for the ExA to determine how Hearings are to be conducted, including the time allowed at the Hearings for the making of a person's representations. Any oral representations must be based on either the Relevant Representation or Written Representation made by the person by whom, or on whose behalf, the oral representations are made.

The Hearings will be managed in the interests of ensuring fair access to the events for all parties and to ensure that the submissions of all invited persons are fully heard within the allotted time.

¹ Rule 14

Depending on the number of participants at each Hearing, and the progress made during the events, it may be necessary to have breaks in proceedings.

Hearing agendas

We will publish draft agendas for the Hearings on the [project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website](#) at least five working days in advance of each Hearing date, although our aim is to publish them sooner than this. The actual agenda on the day of each Hearing may be subject to change at the discretion of the ExA.

Hearing livestream and recording

A link to the livestream of the Hearings will be made available on the [project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website](#) shortly before each Hearing which will allow any member of the public who is interested in the application and the Examination to follow proceedings. Recordings of the Hearings will also be published on the project webpage as soon as practicable after each Hearing.

As the recordings are retained and published, they form a public record that can contain personal information to which the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies. Please refer to our [Privacy Notice](#) for further information. Participants should 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.

The Planning Inspectorate's practice is to publish the recordings and retain them for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision on the Development Consent Order. If you actively participate in a Hearing, it is important that you understand that you will be recorded and that the recording will be made available in the public domain. If you prefer not to have your image recorded, you can switch off your camera at any point.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Case Team using the email address above.

Yours faithfully

Ken Stone

Lead Member of the Examining Authority

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