



## Meeting note

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| <b>Project name</b>       | Manston Airport  |
| <b>File reference</b>     | TR020002   |
| <b>Status</b>             | <b>Final</b>   |
| <b>Author</b>             | The Planning Inspectorate  |
| <b>Date</b>               | 23 February 2018   |
| <b>Meeting with</b>       | RiverOak Strategic Partners  |
| <b>Venue</b>              | Telecon  |
| <b>Attendees</b>          | <b>The Planning Inspectorate</b><br>Richard Price – Case Manager<br>Richard Hunt – Senior EIA and Land Rights Advisor<br>Conor Rafferty – EIA and Land Rights Advisor<br>James Bunten – Case Officer<br><b>The Applicant</b><br>Tony Freudmann - Partner<br>Niall Lawlor - Partner<br>Rob Grinnell - Partner<br>George Yerrall - Partner<br>Angus Walker (Bircham Dyson Bell)<br>Alex Hallatt (Bircham Dyson Bell) |
| <b>Meeting objectives</b> | Post-consultation and project update teleconference.   |
| <b>Circulation</b>        | All attendees  |

### Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

### Consultation update

The Applicant explained that an additional phase of Statutory Consultation had been undertaken to satisfy the requirements of the updated Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and noted that the consultation suite of documents consisted of: an updated Preliminary Environmental Informational Report (PEIR) with additional chapters and information, including an introductory document and a Noise Mitigation Plan.

The Applicant stated that the consultation closed on 16 February 2018. Additional parties with land interests had subsequently been identified and were given an extended deadline of 2 March 2018 to respond.

The Applicant provided an overview of the response to the additional consultation and highlighted that a large percentage of responses had been copied to a combination of the relevant local authority, local councillors and the Inspectorate.

The Inspectorate acknowledged that it had received a mix of cross-copied responses, direct correspondence commenting on the adequacy of consultation and combination of the two. The Inspectorate advised that it had referred people, who had submitted comments on the adequacy of Applicant's consultation, to the tiered procedure set out in its [Community Consultation FAQ pages](#) on National Infrastructure website.

The Applicant explained how the leaflet campaign to advertise the consultation events had been resourced locally and circulated throughout Ramsgate, Herne Bay and the surrounding areas and provided some insight into the attendance of the events; roughly 550 people attended the events in Ramsgate with 350 people attending in Herne Bay. The Applicant noted that event length was extensive to accommodate attendees who may not have been able to attend during the day-time.

The Inspectorate queried the level of response from key environmental statutory consultees and asked if unexpected significant issues had been raised. The Applicant noted that the anticipated response had been received from the key statutory consultees, none of which contained substantive issues that could impact the applications' timescales for submission.

The Applicant noted future meetings with Natural England and Historic England were in the process of being arranged; engagement with key statutory consultees was ongoing.

The Applicant stated that it was preparing Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) with key statutory consultees and that it was considering submitting some of these with the application. If not submitted with the application they would be ready for consideration during Examination. The Inspectorate highlighted the Statement of Commonality document published on the [example documents page](#) of the National Infrastructure website. The Inspectorate advised it was a helpful document that once submitted would evolve as a live document throughout Examination to track matters to be agreed, as well as matters that had been agreed, from SoCG.

## **Application progress**

The Applicant explained how the Environmental Statement (ES) and associated reports, including the noise mitigation plan, were being refined following the response to the latest phase of consultation.

There was discussion with regards to how the Proposed Development satisfied the thresholds of s23 of the PA2008 to deem it a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).

The Applicant highlighted that it had drafted a document, setting out why the NSIP threshold is satisfied, in response to the Inspectorate's request for further information on the s53 application. This document would also be submitted with the suite of application documents.

The Applicant confirmed that the anticipated submission date remained 19 March 2018. There was discussion on whether the Applicant wished to publish the application suite of documents on receipt of submission or following the Acceptance decision. The Applicant stated that it will confirm as soon as possible.

The Applicant confirmed that it would be able to provide a more realistic submission date after a full review of the application documents scheduled for the following week.

### **Thanet District Council update**

The Applicant provided a brief update on the status of Thanet District Council's (TDC) draft local plan, subsequent to TDC voting against updating it, and discussed the implications on the scheme following a change in administration. The Applicant acknowledged that the preference for the Manston site to continue use as an airport will therefore remain within the saved local plan.

The Inspectorate queried whether a new administration would be in place when the Adequacy of Consultation representation requests were issued to the relevant local authorities following submission of the application. The Applicant stated that that is likely as the new administration is to be appointed 1 March 2018.

The Applicant discussed ongoing dialogue with TDC and the other relevant local authorities and stakeholders. The Applicant noted it was negotiating Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) with both Kent County Council and Dover District Council.

### **Site Access**

The Applicant provided an update on its s53 applications and discussed the alternative of gaining access under s172 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 (as amended by the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017). The Inspectorate reminded the Applicant of the previous advice issued by the former Department for Communities and Local Government and the Inspectorate that s53 was the more appropriate process for seeking site access in relation to NSIPs.

The Applicant discussed its outstanding survey work for which access has been requested by way of the s53 application and noted that as a result of the lack of access it had presently assessed a 'worse-case scenario' baseline within its ES. The Applicant advised the Inspectorate that the lack of access did not have implications for the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the project.

The Inspectorate asked if there had been dialogue with key environmental Statutory Consultees with regard to the extent of survey data. The Applicant confirmed it had been in dialogue with Natural England, and was looking to enter into dialogue with Historic England, to agree the level of additional survey work required. The Inspectorate emphasised the importance of providing sufficient and adequate baseline data as part of its ES and that the absence of baseline data could be a potential risk at Acceptance. The Inspectorate explained that any survey gaps should be explicitly identified and justified in the ES.

There was discussion regarding the current site maintenance regime. It was suggested that the airport had largely been maintained as short grass, although the Applicant noted that the owner had cultivated some grass for wintering cattle feed (hay). The Applicant stated that it was likely that disused buildings on site had potential to support bat roosts.

## **AOB**

The Applicant stated that it will review the Inspectorate's feedback on the suite of draft documents in due course and will forward the comments on the PEIR to its environmental consultants. The Inspectorate advised that any clarifications on their comments could be provided ad hoc if required.

## **Specific decisions/ follow-up required?**

The following actions were agreed:

- The Applicant to confirm as soon as possible whether it wishes for the suite of application documents to be published on receipt of submission.
- The Applicant to notify the Inspectorate if the anticipated date of submission changes.