

Overview of the nationally significant infrastructure planning process for members of the public and others

Advice Note 8.2: How to register to participate in an Examination

This annex contains practical advice about registering a Relevant Representation in order to become an Interested Party.

Registration ensures that you will receive formal notifications during the Examination process and gives you important participation rights. Any member of the public, business or group can register to participate in the Examination.

1. What are the benefits of becoming an Interested Party?

1.1 Becoming an Interested Party gives you the right to make representations about the application that is being examined. Interested parties are informed of the progress of the Examination and are notified of the final Decision by the Secretary of State.

1.2 Interested Parties also have the opportunity to attend and speak at the Preliminary Meeting or hearings that take place during the Examination. Please see Advice Note 8.3 in this series for further information about the Preliminary Meeting.

1.3 Once the Examination has started, interested parties will have the opportunity to provide further written evidence to the appointed Examining Inspector(s), known as the Examining Authority. More information about the Examination stage of the process is included in Advice Note 8.4 of this series.

2. When can I become an Interested Party to an application?

2.1 Once the Planning Inspectorate has accepted an application for Examination, it is the applicant's duty to advertise the Relevant Representation period and provide details about how to register to become an Interested Party. The Relevant Representation period is the time you have to register to become an Interested Party. The registration period must be at least 28 days and the publicity notice will tell you when the deadline is.

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6 Minute video

To watch a brief, illustrated introduction to having your say on NSIPs visit:
<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/participating-in-the-process/>



2.2 You can find out about the registration period from any of the following:

- An applicant's newspapers advert;
- An applicant's site notice;
- Information on the relevant project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website;
- Via Twitter or email alert if you have signed up for this service on the relevant project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

3. How do I become an Interested Party?

3.1 During the registration period you must fill in a Relevant Representation form in full. It is not possible to participate in this process anonymously if you are registering as an individual. The easiest way to become an Interested Party is to complete the form online via the relevant project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website. If you would prefer to fill in a paper form you can contact the Planning Inspectorate during the registration period to request one. Please make sure there is enough time for the form to be sent to you and for you to post it back to the Planning Inspectorate before the deadline for responding expires.

3.2 The Examining Authority will be appointed soon after the application is accepted and will use the views put forward in the Relevant Representations, to carry out an initial assessment of the principal issues. Therefore, even if you are automatically an Interested Party because you have an interest in land affected by the application or your organisation is on a list of prescribed bodies, you should still complete a Relevant Representation form so that your views can be made available to the Examining Authority at an early stage.

3.3 If you are interested in more than one project, you will need to register for each project separately

4. Why do I need to fill in a form?

4.1 Legislation sets out the matters (for example, your name and address) that a representation must contain in order to be a "Relevant Representation". The information you provide must be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on the 'prescribed Relevant Representation form' by the deadline specified in the applicant's notice. Making a Relevant Representation means you become an Interested Party. You can choose to cease being an Interested Party at any point during the Examination by emailing or writing to the Planning Inspectorate.

4.2 Providing a form for individuals and organisations to fill in ensures that we have all the contact information necessary to keep interested parties up to date with the progress of the Examination. It also ensures that we are aware of how an Interested Party wishes to participate in the Examination (by electronic means or by post) and any land interests they have that are affected by the application. Completing the form also ensures all the legal requirements that make a representation "relevant" are met.

5. Can more than one person from the same household apply to be an Interested Party?

5.1 Yes. Please note, however, that the Planning Inspectorate is legally required to send out correspondence to every person/organisation who has registered.

5.2 If more than one person in your household has similar views to you and wishes to become an Interested Party, you may wish to consider submitting one representation as an organisation made up of yourself and the other householders/occupiers, to avoid receiving multiple letters with the same information. In these circumstances, please fill in the organisation section of the form as, for example, "The Smith family" or "the residents of 22 High Street". It is not possible to accept a Relevant Representation form from, for example, Mr and Mrs Smith – each form must be completed by an individual or an organisation.



6. How to complete a Relevant Representation and what it should contain?

6.1 The online form will become available on the relevant project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website at the start of the registration period.

6.2 The electronic form will automatically navigate you to each of the required sections. It is advised to complete the form online where possible, due to safeguards which help to ensure that the form is completed correctly. If you are filling in a paper copy (which you can request from the Planning Inspectorate), please ensure that your form is completed correctly and received by the Planning Inspectorate by specified deadline.

6.3 Towards the end of the form is a box where you are able to put forward your views about the application. This will be the first time that your views about the application will be put to the Examining Authority.

6.4 If you participated in the pre-application consultation your views on the project at that stage should have been reflected in the Consultation Report that was submitted as part of the application. However, at this stage we are seeking your views on the application as it has been submitted. Remember, the project you commented on previously may have changed in response to the pre-application consultation carried out by the applicant.

6.5 A Relevant Representation should relate to the application. It must include a summary of points which you agree and/or disagree with about the application, highlighting what you consider to be the main issues and impacts.

6.6 There is no word limit on how much to include in your Relevant Representation; however, the Examining Authority may only have a short period of time to read all the Relevant Representations before the Preliminary Meeting. As such, you should make sure your main points are clearly set out. We recommend the use of bullet points and headings to highlight your main points.

6.7 Once the Examination has started, you can continue to rely on the Relevant Representation you submitted in order to register as an Interested Party or you can submit a further written representation by the deadline that will be set out in the Examination Timetable. This can expand on the matters included in your Relevant Representation.

6.8 You don't have to be a technical expert to make a representation. Information about how you think a project may affect your day-to-day life may also be of interest to the Examining Authority.

6.9 Once you have submitted your form online, you will be sent a confirmation email.

7. What not to include in a Relevant Representation

7.1 The Examining Authority may disregard a representation if it considers that it is vexatious or frivolous, or if it concerns the merits of national policy, contained in National Policy Statements. The role of the Examination is not to debate the merits of National Policy Statements that have already been consulted on, laid in Parliament and designated as Government policy.

7.2 Please be careful not to include personal information about you or another person that you or they would not want to be made public.

7.3 If you submit a form with little or no information in the representation box (where you set out your views on the application) then it is not likely to be accepted as valid.



8. Will my Relevant Representation be published?

8.1 After the close of the registration period, all representations will be published on the project webpage on the National Infrastructure Planning website.

8.2 The Planning Inspectorate is required to make relevant Relevant Representations available for public inspection. The only information from the Relevant Representation form that will be published is your name and your representation about the application.

8.3 We will redact personal information about third parties because they may not have given their consent to including it in the representation.

Overview of the NSIP process

Advice Note 8.2 How to register to participate in an Examination

Become an Interested Party to participate in the Examination.

Individuals, businesses or community groups; anyone can register to participate in an Examination.

Become an Interested Party by making a Relevant Representation.

Have your say by setting out your support or concerns for an application. You will have the opportunity to go into more detail in the Examination.

A Relevant Representation must be made on the correct form.

The online form is there to help you.

We are a government agency, not a commercial website. We will not send you 'spam', or pass your details on to another organisation without your consent.

A Relevant Representation is not a petition.

Your name and address is not enough to register; you must explain why you support or object to the application on the form.

A Relevant Representation must be received while the registration period is open in order to register as an Interested Party.

If you miss or fail to make a Relevant Representation, you can still keep up with the Examination on our website. You may also be able to participate in the Examination at the Examining Authority's discretion.

Each form creates one Interested Party - this can either be an individual or an organisation/group.

Please don't try to put two or more individuals' names on one form. (e.g. 'Mr and Mrs Smith') Either register as a group (e.g. 'The Smith Household'), or register on separate forms (e.g. one for 'Mr Smith' and one for 'Mrs Smith').

Be clear whether you want to register as a group or separately as individuals. If people register individually, they will each get a copy of notifications and correspondence from the Planning Inspectorate about the Examination.



Advice Note 8 series

The Planning Inspectorate has produced a series of non-statutory Advice Notes about a range of process matters. These are available to download on the legislation and guidance / advice notes page of the National Infrastructure planning website.

The Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 8 series explains how to get involved in the National Infrastructure planning process. It includes 5 annexes, as follows:

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| Advice Note 8 | Overview of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Planning process for members of the public and others |
| Annex 8.1 | Responding to the developer's pre-application consultation |
| Annex 8.2 | How to register to participate in an Examination |
| Annex 8.3 | Influencing how an application is examined: the Preliminary Meeting |
| Annex 8.4 | The Examination |
| Annex 8.5 | The Examination – Hearings and Site Visits |

If you would like to order copies or you require further information about any of these issues, please contact the Planning Inspectorate:

The Planning Inspectorate, Major Casework Directorate, Temple Quay House, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN

Email: Nlenquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk

Telephone: 0303 444 5000

Web: <http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

Alternatively, for independent planning advice, you may wish to contact Planning Aid:

Planning Aid England Advice Line 0330 123 9244

Email: advice@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

General enquiries: 020 3206 1880

Email: info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

Planning Aid for London: 020 7247 4900

Email: info@planningaidforlondon.org.uk

Planning Aid England Wales: 02920 625 000

Web: www.planningaidwales.org.uk