



## Meeting note

<b>File reference</b>	TR030004
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	6 July 2021
<b>Meeting with</b>	Oikos Marine and South Side Development (OMSSD)
<b>Venue</b>	Microsoft Teams Meeting
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Project Update
<b>Circulation</b>	All Attendees

### Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

#### Introduction

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. The Inspectorate introduced changes to the case team.

#### Project update

The Applicant is currently analysing responses to the statutory consultation. The consultation report is under development, with relevant points and comments being categorised under topic headings. The environmental assessment topic chapters and accompanying work are being finalised. Prior to submission, the completion of assessments and addressing points raised in the consultation will be prioritised. Meetings are ongoing with the statutory consultees and local authorities. The Applicant explained that these would be used to seek clarification on consultation responses where necessary, explain any further action being undertaken and seek acceptance where possible. The Environmental Statement (ES) is scheduled for completion in August 2021. The Applicant confirmed it considered setting out the themes of consultation responses in the relevant chapters of the ES. This was a similar approach taken when referencing scoping comments in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). The aim was to assist with cross checking and evidencing the regard had to responses.

The Applicant is in the final stages of drafting its Application documentation and ensuring it is presented to the necessary standards. Early drafts are expected by mid-

August, which would then be reviewed for consistency. The Applicant planned to send the Inspectorate a draft of its electronic index for review. The Inspectorate queried the proposed timeframes for draft document review. The Applicant would review the submission timescales and whether this could be accommodated.

The Inspectorate advised that examples of first written questions and videos on its website provided useful introductions to the Examination process and depth of questioning involved. The Inspectorate advised that the Applicant should provide specific questions and direct the Inspectorate to any novel approaches when submitting the draft Development Consent Order and Explanatory Memorandum for comment.

The Applicant explained that the Castle Point local plan examination was underway. This included a site-specific draft policy, which allocated the site for port related uses. The Inspectorate advised that any Examining Authority (ExA) might be interested in the local planning authorities (LPA) view on compliance with local policy.

The Applicant explained that elements of the scheme had been refined since the PEIR.

1. Following ongoing analysis and discussions, the disposal of dredge arisings was now proposed to be onshore rather than offshore. The relevant assessments in the PEIR for marine disposal options were, therefore, not expected to form part of the final project assessment reported in the ES. Onshore disposal facilities on the River Thames were fully consented and able to accept dredge materials. Discussions had been held with relevant operators about the type and volume of waste, and timescales.

2. The PEIR contained two options for a fire water system at the site. The project was, however, proceeding with the option that involved the construction of two new fire water tanks. The other option of taking water from the River Thames was, therefore, not being taken forward.

3. The proposal includes the provision of a marine loading arm for liquid bulk products on the existing Jetty 1 at the Facility. It had now been determined that this requires a small piled platform on the jetty head, the implications of which would be assessed in the ES. This was a slight variation from the PEIR.

The Applicant is in the process of finalising the decisions made on options presented in the PEIR through ongoing design work.

Discussions regarding flood risk defence matters continues between the Environment Agency and the Applicant, albeit that the Applicant believes they have addressed all matters satisfactorily.

The Applicant is continuing to seek Natural England's (NE) view on its mitigation proposals/package. Options for ecological mitigation packages are being considered, which have due regard to, amongst other things, the fact that the proposals will affect one of two current on site mitigation sites provided under previous planning permission. The Applicant has been seeking advice from its ecologists on these offsite ecological proposals. The Inspectorate advised the baseline information should be clearly set out in the ES.

Part of the consultation with NE in respect of the ecological improvements involved consideration of land located to the north of the Oikos site. NE have queried whether this land was used by wintering birds and whether this was in any way functionally linked to any European Site (albeit that the nearest European site is some way away from the site – c3km). Wintering bird surveys have been completed indicating that such bird use is low, and the Applicants ecologists are satisfied that there is not an issue in this regard.

The applicant's offsite ecology package has been refined as a result of NE's consultation responses, particularly in respect of provision for terrestrial invertebrates and reptiles. The Inspectorate highlighted the Examination of the West Burton C project, which contained mitigation for reptiles on site and could be useful to review.

### ***Application documentation format***

The Applicant has completed an audit of Application documentation against the Inspectorates guidance note. It identified a small number of appendices to the ES which do not meet the requested house style, particularly font size/type. The Inspectorate advised that the file needed to be of an openable size and the content should be accessible and readable. The Inspectorate advised electronic submission was acceptable and should an ExA require any information in hard copy, notice would be given to allow for printing.

The Applicant does not anticipate Compulsory Acquisition being required as part of this application. It queried whether a book of reference, statement of reason and funding statement would be required if there is no CA. The Inspectorate confirmed it would reflect on this question and will subsequently provide advice.

### **Update from the Inspectorate**

In relation to the virtual events (Preliminary Meetings and Hearings) that have been held in place of physical meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic; the Inspectorate is trialing blended examinations for selected cases. This can be a combination of a physical meeting and also IT based participation, or provision for separate physical events and separate IT/virtual events. The findings of the trials will be reviewed and further updates will be provided. At the time of this meeting, the approach to virtual events has not changed.

### **Summary of actions/follow-up**

The following actions were agreed:

- The next meeting would be arranged for the end of August 2021.
- The Inspectorate would respond to the above query about the requirement for a book of reference, funding statement and statement of reasons.
- The Inspectorate reminded the Applicant of the requirement to submit a shapefile 10 days prior to submission of the application.
- The Applicant agreed to update the Inspectorate regarding any changes to the anticipated submission timeframe.