



# Preliminary Meeting Note

**Application:** East Northants Resource Management Facility Western Extension

**Reference:** WS010005

**Time and date:** Wednesday 2 February 2022 at 10:00am

**Venue:** Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting

This meeting note is not a full transcript of the Preliminary Meeting. It is a summary of the key points discussed. Details of the application can be found at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/east-midlands/east-northants-resource-management-facility-western-extension/?ipcsection=docs>

## 1. Welcome and Introduction

Simon Warder welcomed those present and introduced himself as the Examining Authority (ExA) to examine the East Northants Resource Management Facility Western Extension application.

The ExA explained his appointment was made by delegation from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on 10 December 2021.

The ExA explained that he would be examining the application, made by Augean South Limited (the Applicant), before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State who will decide whether an Order granting Development Consent for the proposed project, which is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), should be made.

The ExA explained the purpose of the Preliminary Meeting (PM) and noted that the Examination will commence after the PM closes.

The ExA confirmed that all documents and submissions received and accepted during the Examination will be published on the project-specific page of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

## 2. Recording of the Event

The full recording of this Preliminary Meeting is available on the National Infrastructure Planning website and can be accessed [here](#)

## 3. General Data Protection Regulation

The ExA explained the Planning Inspectorate's duties under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Further info relating to the GDPR can be found in the Planning Inspectorate's [Privacy Note](#).

#### **4. Attendance**

The meeting was attended by the Applicant and its representatives and representatives of North Northamptonshire Council and the Cecil Estate Family Trust. All attendees introduced themselves. Full details can be found in the recording and transcript of the Preliminary Meeting.

#### **5. Examination Process**

The ExA briefly explained the Examination process under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). Details can be found in [Annex B](#) of the [Rule 6](#) letter of 6 January 2022. Further information on the examination process can be found in the [Advice Note 8.4](#).

The ExA emphasized the need for Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) between the Applicant and stakeholders.

Claire Brook (CB) representing the Applicant confirmed that there are ten SoCG's and that good progress was being made. She also confirmed that the Applicant will pursue a SoCG with Anglian Water.

The ExA asked for an update on the progress of any Local Impact Reports.

Phil Watson (PW) representing North Northamptonshire Council stated that the council knows what needs to be done and confirmed that they anticipate submitting the report by the deadline in the draft examination timetable.

The ExA stressed the importance of ensuring that information is submitted in accordance with the deadlines set out in the timetable; the ExA has discretion to accept late submissions into the examination, but this should only be in exceptional circumstances. Late submissions restrict the ability of other parties involved in the examination to respond to the information and can therefore jeopardise the examination timetable. It's important to note that late submissions may not always be accepted into the examination.

#### **6. Initial Assessment of Principal Issues**

The ExA explained the purpose of the Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (section 88 of the PA2008), which can be found in [Annex C](#) of the [Rule 6](#) letter of 6 January 2022 and asked for any observations on them.

No comments were made by any of the parties in attendance.

#### **7. Examination Timetable**

The ExA made the following points on the draft timetable:

- The Rule 8 letter, including the finalised timetable and first written questions (ExQ1) will be issued no later than 9 February 2022.
- A further round of written questions (ExQ2) is provided for in the timetable, if required.
- Provision is included in the timetable for requests for further information (Rule 17), if required.

- Deadline 1 (23 February 2022) is the deadline for Interested Parties to confirm their wish to speak at Hearings, for suggested locations for the ExA to include in the Accompanied Site Inspection and for those receiving correspondence by mail to receive future correspondence electronically.
- Deadline 2 (4 March 2022) is an important deadline by which Written Representations, Local Impact Reports, responses to Written Questions (ExQ1) and SoCG's are required.

CB, representing the Applicant, asked if an updated Guide to the Application document will be required at every deadline or if the examination library would be sufficient.

The ExA stated that where various versions of documents are submitted during the course of the examination, the advantage of having a continuously updated guide, is that this allows all stakeholders to see what version of a document was current at a given point in time and how it has changed since.

The ExA suggested that the Applicant take a sensible approach and provide an updated guide whenever there are completely new documents, significant changes to existing documents, or changes to a significant number of existing documents.

CB stated that this was something that they could provide.

The ExA asked the Applicant about their written comments regarding a degree of flexibility in the deadline for agreeing the SoCG's.

CB stated that they had prepared SoCG's for the Environment Agency, Natural England and North Northamptonshire Council and that these had been sent to the relevant parties.

CB noted that these organisations may require that the SoCG's go through extra layers of approval before they are signed off and that this could impact them being finalised by Deadline 2 (4 March 2022).

CB suggested that with this in mind, could the later Deadline 3 (16 March 2022) be considered for these SoCG's.

The ExA suggested that draft versions of these SoCG's could be provided by Deadline 2, as it would indicate areas where there was agreement between parties. The drafts could then be updated during the course of the Examination.

CB stated that the Applicant would be providing updates through the examination period on the progress of the SOCG's.

The ExA asked PW, representing North Northamptonshire Council, for its views on the suggested approach.

PW agreed that the approach was suitable, as it would allow for all matters to be determined.

## **8. Hearings and Site Inspections**

The ExA explained that the draft timetable in the Rule 6 letter advised that all hearings would be held virtually. Since then, however, the government's COVID restrictions and public health advice have been relaxed, so it would potentially be possible to hold some, or all of the hearings in a more traditional manner.

There appears to be limited public interest in the application so far, and so it may in fact be appropriate to stick with virtual events. The ExA welcomes the views of all Interested Parties, including those who are watching the livestream or recording, on their views on the merits of virtual or physical in-person hearings.

[Annex B](#) of the Rule 6 letter of 6 January 2022 explains the purposes and procedures for participating in Hearings and virtual events. Advice notes [8.5](#) and [8.6](#) provide further information.

The draft timetable includes provision for Issue Specific and Open Floor Hearings on 29 - 31 March 2022; Open Floor Hearings will only be held in the event that one is requested by an Interested Party. The deadline for doing so is Deadline 1 (23 February 2022).

The ExA will review the need for further hearings as the examination progresses. Time is reserved for these on 8 June 2022.

The ExA undertook an Unaccompanied Site Inspection on 20 January 2022 from public land, which has given him an understanding of the site and application land. A [note of this site inspection](#) has been published.

The ExA stated that he anticipates that the Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) can take place, however subject to a change in COVID restrictions or specific concerns raised, this may need to be reviewed.

The ExA has considered the logistics of attending an ASI if there only virtual Hearings held and may move the date of the ASI to allow attendees time to travel to the site. Any changes will be covered in a revised timetable.

The ExA advised that suggestions for locations for the ASI should take into consideration the locations he has already visited on the Unaccompanied Site Inspection.

## **9. Procedural decisions**

The ExA clarified the procedural decisions made under section 89(3) of the PA2008 and asked for any observations.

These procedural decisions can be found in [Annex E](#) of the [Rule 6](#) letter of 6 January 2022.

No comments were made by any of the parties in attendance

The ExA asked attendees for any further comments.

No comments were made by any of the parties in attendance.

The ExA thanked the attendees for their participation and reiterated that the Examination will start on the following day, 3 February 2022.

The meeting ended at 10:50am.