



Hearing Transcript

Project:	Norwich to Tilbury
Hearing:	Preliminary Meeting (PM) – Part 1
Date:	10 February 2026

Please note: This document is intended to assist Interested Parties.

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The video recording published on the Planning Inspectorate project page is the primary record of the hearing.

00:00:05:18 - 00:00:39:28

Good morning. Before I begin, can I just confirm with the case team that I can be heard clearly and that live streaming has commenced? Thank you. It is now 10:00, and I would like to welcome you all to this preliminary meeting relating to the application by National Grid electricity Transmission for the Norwich to Tilbury project. My name is Susan Hunt. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered town planner, and I've been appointed by the Secretary of State to be lead member of the panel to examine the application. I'm now going to ask the other panel members to introduce themselves.

00:00:40:27 - 00:00:45:24

Good morning. My name is Christopher Butler. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered town planner.

00:00:47:22 - 00:00:52:22

Good morning everybody. My name is John Hockley. I'm a planning inspector and also a chartered town planner.

00:00:55:08 - 00:00:59:10

Good morning. I'm Matthew Sims, I'm the planning inspector and a chartered civil engineer.

00:01:02:16 - 00:01:06:13

I'm Kenneth Stone. I'm a planning inspector and a chartered time planner.

00:01:08:24 - 00:01:41:13

Thank you. I can confirm that all members of the examining authority have made formal declaration of interests, and there are no known conflicts of interest with regard to any of us examining this application. And together, we constitute the examining authority or pay for this application. There are other colleagues from the Planning Inspectorate here today who you might have seen. They're both here in Ipswich and online. Uh, case managers are Sian Evans and Lily Robins and they're supported by case officers.

00:01:42:00 - 00:01:52:00

It is the case team who you should contact regarding the application process and in general. And for today's arrangements and any online connection issues you may have.

00:01:53:20 - 00:02:02:07

In addition, there are technicians from CVS international here in the room who you've seen at the back. And they're managing, recording and live streaming of the events.

00:02:03:29 - 00:02:37:14

Today's meeting is a blended event, meaning some of you are present with us at the hearing venue in Ipswich, and some of you are joining us virtually via Microsoft teams. We'll make sure that however you decided to attend today, we'll give you a fair opportunity to participate. And you should also be aware that the meeting is being recorded. Just a few housekeeping matters for those attending in person. There are fire exits both at the front and the back of the room, and the meeting point in the event of an alarm, would be the South Stand car park.

00:02:37:20 - 00:02:39:20

There are no planned drills today.

00:02:41:21 - 00:03:11:21

Everyone remember to settle their devices to silence online. Participants should have cameras switched off and microphones muted. We've had no requests made for special measures today. If you do need assistance, please speak to the case team. If at any point today you can't hear us or there's something you wish to raise with the examining authority, virtual attendees should use the raised hand function on teams. But just be aware there might be a delay before we can acknowledge this.

00:03:14:28 - 00:03:40:13

It's been explained by the case team what to do if you lose connection. If you're online, we will have a break after about 90 minutes at an appropriate time. And if any breaks are needed before this, you should alert the case team. And we understand there are representatives of the media here today and you've made yourselves known to the case team. We don't mind you filming the start of the events as long as it's not disruptive.

00:03:42:03 - 00:03:50:01

Is there any questions about general technology or housekeeping type matters for today's meeting before I move on?

00:03:52:11 - 00:03:53:01

Nope.

00:03:54:21 - 00:03:55:11

Okay.

00:03:57:11 - 00:04:30:08

So to assist in keeping the proceedings focused and as efficient as possible, today we issued there's an annex B to our rule six letter which was dated the 13th of January. And that's in the examination library reference PD 009. That was the letter which invited you to this meeting. And it also had a number of other annexes in it. But it's an annex B that sets out an introduction to the preliminary meeting. So we trust that you've all read this in advance. So we won't go through that in detail today.

00:04:30:24 - 00:04:33:17

And it will not be displayed on the on the screen.

00:04:35:23 - 00:04:58:28

Information about the application is on the Planning Inspectorate National Infrastructure Planning website. Hopefully you've all been on that already. And there's a link to the dedicated page for the Norwich to Tilbury project in our in our letter, and we strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with that website, because this is how we'll be using it to communicate with everybody throughout the examination and provide access to documents.

00:05:01:12 - 00:05:14:08

Just a note about our privacy notice. There's there's a link to that in our letter that explains about the personal data of our customers and how it's handled in accordance with the principles set out and data protection laws.

00:05:15:27 - 00:05:50:23

And if you participate today, as I've said, it's you should be aware it's being filmed, your comments will be recorded and the digital recording will be published and retained, usually for a period of five years. And that's from the Secretary of State's decision. So we're subject to the general data Protection regulations. And if you feel it's necessary to refer to sensitive information, just to remind you to try not to do that while you're being filmed. You should encourage encourage you instead to contact our case team where you can put it in writing, and it can be appropriately redacted before being published.

00:05:53:27 - 00:06:19:11

So there's an agenda in annex A of our rule six letter. It'd be helpful if you had that in front of you, just to guide you through the meetings. Date will not be displayed on the screen. Thank you. So over to Mr. Sims who's going to ask those of you who are participating in the preliminary meeting today to introduce yourself. Thank you.

00:06:19:15 - 00:06:52:03

Thank you, Mr. Hunter. So as with all hearings for examinations of nationally significant infrastructure projects, a recording of today's meeting will be made available on the website as soon as practicable after the meeting has finished. To assist the recording and the transcript which will accompany it, please ensure that you speak clearly into a microphone stating your name and who you are representing every time before you speak, please. For those sitting in front of a microphone, it's pretty standard. Please press the large button on the base plate when you speak. When the red light is on, you're speaking and you're active.

00:06:52:05 - 00:07:25:23

Then simply press the button to turn it off when you finish speaking. If you do happen to find yourself speaking into one of our two roving microphones, which will be brought to you by a member of the Planning Inspectorate case team, please just start speaking into the microphone. There's no need to press any buttons. It's very simple. The Case team has provided us with a list of those interested parties who have expressed a wish to be heard today, at this point, to the agenda, I'd normally ask everyone to introduce themselves and the agenda item they wish to speak on. But given the number of participants and because we have a limited time, I'll ask each.

00:07:25:25 - 00:07:56:02

I'll ask the applicants, councils and the main statutory organisations in the interest groups that intend to speak to introduce themselves. And then I will simply read out the remaining parties names of those people who wish to speak. For those people who do end up speaking that I haven't introduced, when you do First, speak into the microphone. Please. Just introduce yourselves to us then. Please. So when I give you the appropriate prompt, please introduce yourself stating your name.

00:07:56:04 - 00:08:12:22

And if you represent anybody who you are representing and which agenda item you wish to speak on, please could you also state how you wish to be addressed, i.e. Mr.. Mrs., miss or miss? Um, so I'm going to start with the applicant, please.

00:08:14:28 - 00:08:48:00

Uh, for the transcript, I'm Russel Harris KC and I'm for the applicant. May it please you panel. Ma'am. Panel. Uh, my name is Russell Harris KC I'm instructed by CLP, uh, and in particular by Christine Drage. I'm accompanied by senior members of the team Liam Walker who's the portfolio director, Simon Pepper, who's the project director, And Ian Fletcher, who is the DCO manager.

00:08:48:06 - 00:08:52:22

Um, I'm used to being called Mr. Harris, but anything else will do.

00:08:53:20 - 00:09:13:11

Thank you very much. And I assume if any other members of your team do participate, they'll introduce themselves. At that time. They will. Thank you very much. Um, I'll now ask the local councils at local authorities and councils to introduce themselves. And I'm going to start with the county councils. And can I ask Essex County Council to make their introductions, please? I believe, um, Emma Dring is online.

00:09:14:02 - 00:09:27:09

Yes. Good morning sir. My name is Emma Dring of Council representing Essex County Council and instructed by Michelle Nicol. And I think we've got various members of our team either online or some in the room as well.

00:09:27:29 - 00:09:38:00

Okay. Thank you so much. You're you're not quite as clear as we would possibly like. So, um, if you could have a look at that whilst you're not introducing yourself, that'd be fantastic. But thank you very much.

00:09:38:02 - 00:09:38:17

Thank you.

00:09:38:19 - 00:09:42:19

Um, so can I have Suffolk County Council, please.

00:09:44:05 - 00:10:11:04

Thank you sir. My name is Michael Bedford, King's counsel. Mr. Bedford is adequate or sufficient. I'm instructed by Suffolk County Council and I'm accompanied by various members of the team. But I expect I'll do any speaking that needs to be done today. So far as your agenda items is concerned. As you will know from our, um, response, it's effectively agenda item for matters on the timetable.

00:10:11:06 - 00:10:16:23

Thank you very much. That's very kind. Um, and Norfolk County Council, I believe, are on the line as well.

00:10:17:21 - 00:10:36:04

Yes. Good morning sir. My name is Richie Parekh. I've of council. I'm instructed by Norfolk County Council. I also have members of my team on hand. Should they be needed? And in terms of agenda item. Similarly to Mr. Bedford, the main reps that we wish to make or an agenda item for on the examination timetable.

00:10:37:15 - 00:10:48:23

Thank you very much indeed. Um, so I'm going to turn now to the city and district councils and, um, I believe in the room, um, is Braintree District Council.

00:10:50:29 - 00:11:04:27

Says um Matthew Wilde, principal planner representing Braintree District Council. Uh, Mr. Wilde is fine. Um, and just wanted to have speaking rights. I don't want to don't wish to speak on a particular item today unless called upon. Thank you.

00:11:04:29 - 00:11:05:14

Thank you.

00:11:05:16 - 00:11:06:01

Very much.

00:11:06:03 - 00:11:07:15

Uh, Chelmsford city council?

00:11:08:28 - 00:11:09:17

Yes. Thank you.

00:11:09:19 - 00:11:22:16

Sir. Ruth Mather from Chelmsford city Council. Um, Mrs. will be fine. Um, we're here just to have speak and rightfully to respond to any questions matters that come up affecting the council. Thank you.

00:11:22:22 - 00:11:26:11

Thank you. Um, do we have anyone from South Norfolk District Council?

00:11:29:26 - 00:11:32:21

We did have some last minute non-attendance.

00:11:33:22 - 00:11:35:12

Yes. Yes, sir.

00:11:35:14 - 00:11:45:15

My name is Claire Curtis, on behalf of South Norfolk Council. We'd like to speak possibly on item four. And Mrs. Curtis is fine.

00:11:45:25 - 00:11:50:12

Thank you very much. And I believe on line is Baber district council.

00:11:52:22 - 00:12:02:20

Good morning sir. Thank you. Brian Curtis for Baber district council and also Mid Suffolk district Council. Please and may want to speak on item for Miss Curtis. Thank you.

00:12:03:18 - 00:12:35:18

Thank you very much. Um, can I just check? Is there potentially an issue with the the speaker that we are hearing from? Because that's the third person that we've had trouble hearing from online, or was that another potential online connection problem? If I could get a message back. That would be great. Thank you very much. So I was half speaking to the the audio team there. Thank you very much for information. I believe Colchester City Council and Tendring District Council are registered as observing only and not speaking. I have a hand up in the audience.

00:12:35:20 - 00:12:47:13

So, um, I am going to come to people that haven't been registered. So I'll come back to you in just one moment. And I finished with the formal introductions. Um, just turning to the parish council. We have Ardley Parish Council.

00:12:47:29 - 00:13:03:12

Uh, good morning sir. Um, Simon bailiff council. Um, I'm instructed by Audley Parish Council and to save you time also little Bromley parish council. Thank you. Um, Mr. Bell is absolutely fine. Um, and we're primarily here to speak on items three, four and six.

00:13:04:02 - 00:13:07:06

Thank you very much. Um, first of all, parish council.

00:13:19:26 - 00:13:21:12

And Birstall parish council.

00:13:27:11 - 00:13:28:27

Sorry, is that Mr. Peterson?

00:13:32:03 - 00:13:36:06

Again, we're having we're having potential connection problems with you, Mr. Peterson. I might come back to you.

00:13:41:01 - 00:13:44:21

Thank you. Barnwell parish council.

00:13:53:13 - 00:13:55:10

And Fordham parish council.

00:14:02:28 - 00:14:07:12

Hello. My name is Mike Hamilton from Fordham Parish Council.

00:14:09:17 - 00:14:13:21

And my camera doesn't seem to be working. Can you see me and hear me?

00:14:13:28 - 00:14:26:03

We can certainly hear you, but we. We can't see you. Okay, but, um, we know you're there, so, um, we'll we'll take your introduction and we'll we'll move on. Hopefully we. There we go. We can see you now.

00:14:26:07 - 00:14:40:27

Yeah. I'm not entirely sure which agenda item. I wish to speak on behalf of Fordham Parish Council and Colchester Archaeological Group regarding the environmental and archaeological. Archaeological heritage of the sites coming through our parish.

00:14:41:14 - 00:14:45:04

Thank you. Thank you very much. We have Lawford Parish Council.

00:14:56:04 - 00:14:58:02

No one from Norfolk. Thank you.

00:15:04:21 - 00:15:10:22

Okay. We'll come back to people if we at the end, if we need to wrap up. Thurston and Hampton Parish Council.

00:15:12:24 - 00:15:16:11

We have a hand if we can have a microphone. To the gentleman with a hand, please.

00:15:20:24 - 00:15:25:04

Hello. My name is Eleanor. I'm the parish clerk at Thurston and Hampton Parish Council.

00:15:25:08 - 00:15:29:23

Thank you very much. And we have the northwest and southwest Chelmsford Parish Council group.

00:15:35:08 - 00:15:37:04

Good morning, sir. I'm John.

00:15:37:06 - 00:15:55:18

Blake. Mr. Blake will be fine. And I'm representing, uh, nine parish councils around the, uh, Chelmsford area. And, um, the item that I think we would wish to speak to is item for the examination timetable. Thank you.

00:15:55:22 - 00:16:06:15

Thank you very much. I do have a virtual hand up, but it's a very small icon, so I can't see the gentleman who's put that hand up in the. But if you could turn your video on, please.

00:16:07:20 - 00:16:10:28

I think that's me. William Peterson, Birstall parish Council.

00:16:11:16 - 00:16:12:18

Thank you very much.

00:16:13:25 - 00:16:22:00

Yeah. I was just to say I'm observing this session, speaking at the open, hearing the next session. Uh, and William Peterson's fine. Thank you.

00:16:22:02 - 00:16:38:29

Thank you very much indeed. Um, those are the listed, uh, local authorities I have that have registered to speak today. Is there any that I have missed that are in the room? I know I said I'd come back to you if we could have the rugby. Mike, please. To that gentleman.

00:16:41:02 - 00:16:43:11

Good morning. My name is. Can you hear.

00:16:43:13 - 00:17:25:19

Me? My name is Jacob Yashima. I'm representing Tendring District Council. Uh, you can refer to me as Mr. Yashima. I think the confusion may have come in. We originally registered some local councillors to address the panel today as well. But we've been advised by the case officer that it's not the correct platform for them to address, uh, the examining authority. So I asked them to. Can we please keep our slot? Um, anyway, we are, um, um, I'm here to represent the council and, um, the directly and indirectly affected local communities.

00:17:25:25 - 00:17:36:06

Um. I'm proposing to speak to any specific items at this stage, but I'm happy to answer any questions depending on my wish to have. Thank you.

00:17:36:09 - 00:17:38:02

Thank you very much. That's very helpful.

00:17:39:24 - 00:17:55:16

Thank you. I'll now move on to statutory organisations and other organisations and interest groups that have given notice of their intention to speak. Firstly, we have National Highways Online and can I also include National Highways lower Thames Crossing at this point and ask you all to introduce yourselves please.

00:17:59:26 - 00:18:00:14

Good morning.

00:18:00:16 - 00:18:01:09

I'll go first.

00:18:01:11 - 00:18:01:26

My name is.

00:18:01:28 - 00:18:02:13

Julie.

00:18:02:15 - 00:18:03:00

Russell.

00:18:03:02 - 00:18:05:17

And I'm a principal associate at Gowling.

00:18:05:19 - 00:18:06:18

W lg.

00:18:06:20 - 00:18:21:18

I'm instructed on behalf of National Highways as the Strategic Highway Authority. Um, I don't anticipate it will be necessary to speak, but I'm here. In any event, just in case that that would be helpful to the panel. Thank you.

00:18:23:03 - 00:18:26:14

Thank you. And National highways, lower Thames crossing.

00:18:29:12 - 00:18:45:28

Thank you sir. I'm Monica Wagler from TLT. Representing National highways. Uh, in their capacity as the promoter of the Lower Thames Crossing project, which is separate to the, um, to Julie, who's representing them as the Strategic Highways Network.

00:18:46:04 - 00:18:51:16

Thank you. We were aware of that, but thank you for the clarification. Um, and we have Natural England on line, I believe.

00:18:55:27 - 00:19:06:15

Good morning sir. My name is Jamie Melvin. I'm here behalf of Natural England. There are no specific items on which we wish to discuss, but we're happy to feel questions from the panel that's required.

00:19:06:28 - 00:19:13:13

Thank you very much. Uh, now, can I ask the British Pipeline Agency to introduce themselves, who I believe are also online?

00:19:16:20 - 00:19:46:18

Good morning sir. My name is Emily Tetley Jones. I'm a director at Field Fisher LLP. Uh, Miss Tetley Jones is fine. I'm joined by Rosa Simpson of Fisher LLP. Miss Simpson is fine. We wish to speak to agenda item three, the initial assessment of the principal issues. And we represent the British Pipelines Agency as agents for United Kingdom Oil Pipelines Limited.

00:19:47:02 - 00:19:50:13

Thank you. And finally, pylons, East Anglia.

00:19:51:00 - 00:19:52:08

Good morning, Madam Chair.

00:19:52:10 - 00:19:57:09

Um, sir Charlie Banner KC for pylons East Anglia. Um, Mr..

00:19:57:11 - 00:20:00:12

Banner, in this context. Um, I'm accompanied.

00:20:00:14 - 00:20:01:00

By Richard.

00:20:01:02 - 00:20:01:21

Buxton.

00:20:01:23 - 00:20:02:08

And Rosie.

00:20:02:10 - 00:20:03:05

Pearson.

00:20:03:07 - 00:20:12:07

Although it's probable that I'll be the only speaker, um, today for us, principally on item four, possibly on item three. But you've got our points on item three from our letter.

00:20:12:12 - 00:21:05:28

Thank you very much. Um, we've also representatives from, uh, Essex Police, Suffolk Police, East Sussex and Suffolk Police Association present, but not registered to speak. As I said earlier, the number of interested parties have registered to speak and others to observe only as I mentioned earlier. Due to a large number of people here and via Microsoft teams, I will now just mention those who have registered to speak in person or via Microsoft teams, and this list is in no particular order. So we have Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, Deborah Blackman, Gareth Presley, Charlotte Banks, Carl Owen, Alexandra McAdam, Paul Whittle, Christopher Beaumont, Gillian Whittle, Joanne Elliott, Richard Davis, Caroline Holmwood, David West, James Navy, Lux Moore, Adam Whipps, Doctor Ben Knighton and Bartleby of the General Aviation Awareness Council, Matthew Day and Daniel Shephard.

00:21:06:00 - 00:21:21:03

We also have two non interested parties registered, being Anna magee and Hugh Miller. Is there anybody that has registered to speak or has turned up now intended to speak that I haven't mentioned either? Firstly, in the room

00:21:22:18 - 00:21:26:06

I have one hand up. If I could have the microphone, please.

00:21:30:26 - 00:21:35:23

Hello, is Eleanor Aston and Hampton Parish Council? We did register to speak.

00:21:36:16 - 00:21:47:08

Thank you very much. That's that's helpful to know. And, um, virtually via Microsoft teams, if you could put a hand up if you haven't been called and you have registered to speak.

00:21:51:04 - 00:22:21:22

Just checking. There's nobody on the second page. No. Okay. Thank you very much. Um, before I finish, may I just remind you that if you do wish to speak during the course of this morning's proceedings, for example, to make comments in response to representations made by others, you should raise your hand either physically or using the function within Microsoft Teams. So are there any other comments on this agenda item before I move on? Thank you very much. This is very kind. This concludes the item.

00:22:21:24 - 00:22:24:19

And I pass back to Mrs. Hunt for agenda item two.

00:22:26:03 - 00:23:00:04

Thank you, Mr. Sims. So the proposed development is a nationally significant infrastructure project, or NEP for short and for the purposes of the Planning Act 2008. And it's for this reason, the application falls to be determined by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and net zero. Therefore, just to emphasize that it is the Secretary of State that makes the decision on the application, not the examining authority. This is important that you're clear in your understanding of the examination process.

00:23:00:19 - 00:23:15:19

Links to guidance notes were provided in the rule six letter dated the 13th of January. And if there's anything you're unsure about, I please do ask the case team. So I'm going to briefly explain what this meeting is about.

00:23:19:06 - 00:23:53:05

So annex B of our rule six letter. It explained the purpose of the preliminary meeting and a number of other matters. And I'd like to reiterate and make it clear that the purpose of today's meeting is to focus on the way in which the application for the Norwich Tilbury projects is proposed to be examined. Therefore, we will only be inviting discussion about procedural aspects of the examination. The meeting today is not the place to discuss either merits or concerns that you may have regarding the application.

00:23:53:19 - 00:24:01:26

These matters can only be considered once the examination of the application begins, and that happens following the close of the preliminary meeting.

00:24:04:15 - 00:24:44:29

So the first opportunity for interested parties to talk to us about the issues that you may have with, with the application will be at one of the open floor hearings this week. There are three of them taking place this week, one in each county. Firstly in Suffolk this afternoon and tomorrow morning at the same venue that we're in now, and then in Norfolk, in Norwich, in Essex, in Orsett on Thursday. And we trust this has given interested parties a good opportunity, with a good choice of dates and to have their say at one of these hearings, either in person or virtually on Microsoft Teams.

00:24:45:09 - 00:24:55:15

They will not be specific to the county that they're being held in. So if one date doesn't suit you and you don't have to join the hearing, which is nearest to where you live.

00:24:58:12 - 00:25:21:17

We have had a good number of people registered to speak at these hearings, and agendas have been published with speaker running orders and their own examination library references to the agendas are EV two, zero zero, one, three and four. And please contact the case team if you've not registered to speak at an open floor hearing and you think you may wish to do so.

00:25:25:10 - 00:25:41:17

So tomorrow afternoon, again here in Ipswich, where we are now, we will have our first compulsory acquisition hearing. An agenda and an agenda for that was published on Friday the 30th of January. Examination library reference EV 2002.

00:25:43:04 - 00:26:15:01

So these type of hearings are for those whose land or rights are affected by the proposed development. And they're known as affected persons, and they are listed in the book of reference. It is primarily for the examining authority to question the applicant about its strategic case, and there will be other later hearings where objections by affected persons relating to individual plots will be heard. And we'll explain more about this later in the meeting under item six of the agenda.

00:26:17:00 - 00:26:58:07

And on Friday morning the 13th, we have our first issue specific hearing. And we hold issue specific hearings to allow us, as the examining authority, to ask questions and explore topics which we feel could not be examined as easily through written questions in writing alone. So the hearing on Friday is to allow us to explore and ask those specific questions, which will be mainly directed at the applicant, and it's to ensure that we have a clear understanding of some of the fundamental issues at an early stage in the examination, and this includes high level issues of site selection and alternatives.

00:26:59:01 - 00:27:06:24

The agenda for this meeting was published on Friday the 30th of January, and that's reference EV 2005.

00:27:11:11 - 00:27:44:21

So again, just to make it clear to interested party, the hearing on Friday is for the examining authority to ask the applicant. We're going to be asking them to explain certain elements of the proposed

development. So to generally aid our understanding of it at the start of the process. And some of those questions and the presentation from the applicant will have arisen from the relevant representative representations that we received. And a high proportion of those did mention the matter of alternatives.

00:27:46:09 - 00:28:10:27

All of the relevant representations have been published on our website. They've been there since 27th of November, which has given a good period of time for people to look at them. The applicant should be well aware of the comments that have been raised, so we'll be able to give a summarized verbal response to those in respect of high level alternatives matters, and they should be followed up in writing at deadline one.

00:28:13:17 - 00:28:53:21

So in view of this, I'd just like to highlight the issue specific hearing one on Friday is only taking place over half a day, and it will be for the applicant to present their case and explain their approach. It will not be the most appropriate hearing for to allow parties to raise wider concerns, nor ask questions of the applicants. Interested parties should instead set out their concerns on alternatives and other matters at the open floor hearings, which are taking place over the next few days, as I just mentioned, and or in writing at the next deadline.

00:28:56:28 - 00:29:25:10

So to say if you have registered to speak, issue specific hearing one but on upon reading the agenda or what you've just heard what I've said about the specific nature of Friday's hearing. You decide you do not need to speak. Please let the case team know, and we'll come back to this later in the meeting when we will discuss the format of future hearings. That's under item six.

00:29:27:04 - 00:29:40:00

So hopefully by the end of this meeting, you will be assured that there will be sufficient opportunities throughout the six month examination for you to express your views to us.

00:29:42:18 - 00:30:22:27

There are some other specific matters I'd just like to cover before we move on to item three. As a matter of professional courtesy, I'm advising the parties that planning inspectors across England are currently participating in industrial action, and that's in the form of action short of a strike. This includes not working beyond our conditioned working hours, which are 37 hours a week, and that includes travel time. This industrial action relates to an ongoing trade dispute over pay and job evaluation, and the action does affect the panel of the examining authority.

00:30:24:00 - 00:30:35:01

The period of industrial action started in December and it runs until the 23rd of May, so it's around six months. Therefore, there may be some impact on this examination.

00:30:36:29 - 00:30:58:07

We'd therefore like to urge all participants in today's preliminary meeting and throughout the week to keep to the advertised agendas and timings, because we will not be able to extend the hearings either

into shorter breaks or into the evenings. We will be doing the the full amount of breaks and we'll be finishing on time.

00:30:59:25 - 00:31:10:07

And you will also be aware that we are holding hearings in multiple locations this week. This will involve a lot of travel between venues for ourselves and for their parties.

00:31:11:28 - 00:31:43:11

Therefore, regardless of the industrial action, we all need to be mindful of this and whilst ensuring what we've heard, what we need to hear and enable a robust consideration of the applicants. So we just like to highlight if any participant in this week's hearings is affecting the efficient running of the event, taking up too much time in submissions, they will be asked to shorten their submissions and is invited to submit their comments in writing at the next deadline.

00:31:44:10 - 00:31:56:11

And just to remind everybody that written comments have no less weight than those made verbally, and each session will be closed on time. Thank you for your understanding.

00:31:59:05 - 00:32:32:00

I just want to move on to the matter of the change. Request an application just to explain how the change process works in relation to application development. Consent. The application has submitted notification to us that they are planning to make some changes to the application, and these are in two separate areas of the site. The notifications provide a brief description of where the proposed changes would be, and there are plans which detail the proposed changes to the order limits.

00:32:32:02 - 00:33:32:07

And there in the examination library at A.S. 049 and A.S. 050. We did respond to this notification, provided some initial advice to the applicant in relation to the procedural implications of that on the 19th of December, and that's reference PD 008. And just to stress that our response was not an acceptance of any such changes. We can only consider if the proposed changes can be formally accepted and considered as part of this examination, if and when we are supplied with detailed information, and this will include the outcome of the consultation on those changes which the application, which I understand the applicant is currently conducting, and the applicant responded to this to set out their consultation in their letter of 24th December, which is reference as 051.

00:33:32:22 - 00:34:08:14

So just just to make clear, it's not unusual for a change to be submitted to for an application of this kind. And in this case it has been. It looks like it will be submitted at an early stage in the examination. So we told the applicant that if they can supply the detailed information on the changes that they're proposing and the results of their consultation by the date set out in their requests. We think there will be sufficient time in the examination to examine the change, and that includes time for all parties to make representations on it.

00:34:10:02 - 00:34:25:00

But until we've formally accepted any changes, we will not be considering them in this examination. That means they will not be discussed and raised at any of the hearings this week, including the compulsory acquisition hearing or the issue specific hearing.

00:34:27:05 - 00:34:41:07

So if we do accept any changes to the application, we will ensure there will be enough time for you to raise any comments or concerns you may have had, because there will be enough time for us to thoroughly examine them during the examination.

00:34:44:08 - 00:34:57:18

Before I move on, can I just ask the applicant to give us an update on the targeted consultation that they've been carrying out, and particularly in relation to who they've consulted. Just a brief summary, please.

00:35:00:00 - 00:35:44:21

Russell Harris KC, for the applicant. Yes, ma'am. We made the application, as you said, and you gave the Ace numbers. I don't need to repeat those. You also gave us advice on the nature, depth and extent of the consultation which we followed to the letter to in principle. So to to face to face, um, consultations have taken place. Uh, they were sparsely attended, it's fair to say, but that wasn't a surprise. We are considering the consultation responses now and are anticipating making the application for a change, which so far we've dealt with entirely in line with the advice on change control.

00:35:44:23 - 00:35:48:15

And we propose to do that by deadline for.

00:35:57:11 - 00:36:01:08

Is this? Is this still the same date that was set out in the original letter?

00:36:01:11 - 00:36:21:08

Yes, yes it is. Um, if we can go quicker, we shall. But it depends upon the consultation responses, which we will take into account and decide whether to make further changes. Obviously, the consultation has to be meaningful, but it's the same date that was set out in the letter. Yes. And for the reasons set out in our response.

00:36:21:12 - 00:36:22:14

Okay. Thank you.

00:36:26:18 - 00:36:38:17

So moving on. There are some more general observations I'd like to make about the examination process. And this is in the interest of ensuring this is as productive and as efficient as it can be.

00:36:41:02 - 00:37:11:12

Again, just to stress that it's primarily a written process and the examination is not a public inquiry like a planning appeal. And as a result, we do expect the majority of information and evidence to be provided to us in writing. Therefore, if you feel that you have not been given a full opportunity to

make any oral representations at today's meeting or a hearing, for example, due to the time constraints that I mentioned, you should provide them in writing that they'll have no less weight.

00:37:14:14 - 00:37:52:23

In terms of deadlines. We'll come on to talk about the examination timetable shortly. It's item four of the agenda. But just I'd like to highlight the importance of ensuring the information is submitted in accordance with those set deadlines. Because the examination can only proceed smoothly and efficiently if all parties meet the deadlines, provide submissions that are as comprehensive as possible. Late submissions restrict the ability of other parties to respond to the information, and that can lead to unfairness in the process and the potential for costs to be awarded.

00:37:53:26 - 00:38:03:05

So it's important for everybody to note that if you do submit something late, there's always the possibility that it may not be accepted into the examination.

00:38:06:03 - 00:38:27:24

In terms of resolving disagreements, where there's disagreement between parties on matters we ask all sides engage in a positive and timely manner to seek resolution as soon as possible, and that includes progressing statements of common ground as proactively as possible and demonstrating progress with land negotiations and protected provisions where relevant.

00:38:33:13 - 00:39:08:22

Just another note on costs. So just to advise all parties involved in the examination process that they are expected to meet their own costs. However, costs can be awarded where a timely application for an award, of course, is made by an interested party and or an affected person, and the party against whom the award sought is considered by the examiners authority to have acted unreasonably, and that unreasonable behaviour has caused the party applying for the award of costs to incur unnecessary or wasted expense during the examination.

00:39:12:03 - 00:39:43:28

Final point to mention here is the importance of our website. I've already mentioned the Norwich to Tilbury project page, and it's there that you'll find all the information and documents about the application, including the examination library and that that contains all of the application documents, written submissions and procedural documents. Each time a deadline passes, the documents that have been submitted will be added to the examination library. So they're available for everybody to see.

00:39:44:01 - 00:39:52:10

And so we strongly advise you to familiarize yourself with the website, because we will be using it to communicate with you throughout the examination.

00:39:54:23 - 00:39:58:00

So just want to make it clear that

00:39:59:18 - 00:40:10:02

everyone's clear in their understanding of the process. And if there's anything that you need clarity on and now is your opportunity to ask. So

00:40:11:29 - 00:40:20:11

are there any questions about the way in which we propose to examine the application? Just on the points that I've already mentioned,

00:40:21:28 - 00:40:22:27

Mr. Banner.

00:40:22:29 - 00:40:33:18

Thank you, Madam Chair. I had one question about Friday and alternatives. Would you like me to deal with that now, when you get on to issue four? I don't mind either way.

00:40:33:20 - 00:40:38:24

There's an item on the agenda about future hearings and yeah, that will come up with that. Thank you.

00:40:38:26 - 00:40:39:11

Thank you.

00:40:46:03 - 00:40:47:13

No more. Hands up!

00:40:50:15 - 00:41:00:13

Okay. I will now hand over to my colleague, Mr. Butler, who will take us through item three of the agenda. And that's the initial assessment of principal issues. Thank you.

00:41:02:07 - 00:41:37:25

All right. Thank you very much. Um, so the initial assessment of principal issues we generally abbreviate to IAP or IAP. Um, for those of you with copies of our rule six letter dated the 13th of January, uh, it would be useful to have annex C in front of you. Uh, because we won't be displaying it on a screen. Um, we have produced the IAP to let you know what we think the principal issues are. After taking into account the application documentation or documents, the comments in the relevant representations and other submissions we have received.

00:41:38:02 - 00:42:08:27

Um, we've taken on board the comments that were also received at procedural deadline. A which we will cover later. Um, we've also set out in NCSC that the national policy statements, or NPS and the issues contained within them will be an integral part of the examination. Uh, just for information, a revised suite of NPS for energy, uh, which we will refer to as the 2025 Approved amendments, were published on 6th January 2026.

00:42:09:12 - 00:42:52:08

However, transitional provisions apply and applications accepted for examination prior to their final publication, including this application. The the previous suite of NPS would apply. So that's the 2024 suite of NPS will have effect. Uh, however, the examiner authority considers that the approved

2025 amendments will be important and relevant matters in the consideration of this application, a procedural decision related to the approved 20 2025 amendments is likely to be discussed later in this meeting under Agenda Item five, which was the examining authority's procedural decisions.

00:42:52:29 - 00:43:23:00

In our list of IRP, we have set out the examples of generic impacts that will be covered. And these are therefore part of the principal issues that we will consider. Uh, the specific issues we have identified in annex C have been compiled alphabetically, and they're not in an order of importance. The purpose of the IRP is to identify broad subject matters, to guide us in forming a provisional view as to how the application is to be examined.

00:43:23:10 - 00:43:40:16

It's not intended to be a comprehensive or exclusive list of the issues that will be subject to examination. The examining authority will have regard to all important, relevant matters during the examination and when it writes its recommendation to the Secretary of State after the examination has concluded.

00:43:42:02 - 00:43:59:20

I would like to emphasize that the IFP is an initial view, and does not stop the examining authority from examining other issues later, at later stages in the process. For example, issues related to the changes to any application that may be made at some point in the future.

00:44:01:08 - 00:44:08:25

The IFP is not is not likely to be amended or republished as a result of this meeting. Um,

00:44:10:16 - 00:44:42:07

it's an important document, and we're just looking to ensure that we thoroughly examine the issues that are to be looked at. The bullet points under each heading are quite high level, and they're not specific to certain parts of the proposed development, nor geographical areas. This is purposeful given the extensive scale of the order limits. It would not be possible to list every part of the order limit where an issue has been raised. I would like to highlight that we are not considering any detailed or site specific issues at this stage.

00:44:42:09 - 00:44:54:14

Although you are welcome to raise more detailed issues in the comments at a future open floor hearing, either one this week or future event should further open floor hearings be arranged

00:44:56:06 - 00:45:17:20

before I go through each of the responses received? Um, as relevant to this agenda item, can I ask if, uh, can I ask the applicant where can I wear an interested party is speaking? Would you like to respond collectively at the end, or would you like to respond after each one has spoken?

00:45:18:17 - 00:45:22:09

Russell Harris KC for the applicant at the end, please.

00:45:23:01 - 00:45:39:23

Thank you very much. Uh, so starting with our first person that was I've got on my list here to speak, sir Bernard Jenkin MP And your request to speak on agenda item. This agenda item, which was the IEP. Um. Are you here?

00:45:45:22 - 00:46:29:19

I'm getting no indication either in the room or online. Uh, in that case, I'm going to move on to the next person that's registered to speak, and I'll come back at the end to Sir Bernard Jenkin if he's present. Um, in terms of the procedural decision, a response is from Essex County Council, Suffolk County Council, Babergh District Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and the General Awareness Aviation Council. Essex County Council indicated that they, in regard to the IEP, does not imply an order of prioritization or importance, and on that basis it considered the list does not omit anything or put anything unfairly on which the Council feels it necessarily necessary to comment.

00:46:30:06 - 00:46:48:26

Um. Suffolk County Council, Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council submitted jointly, taking a similar approach to Essex County Council, advising they consider the IP as a full council account of the issues, enabling sufficient breadth of discussion throughout the examination.

00:46:51:00 - 00:47:32:01

In terms of the General Awareness Council. They advised they agreed with the IP in the rule six letter, particularly in terms of the need to examine safety and security and socio economic, recreation and tourism issues. We've also noted that the request, with regard to an issue specific hearing regarding impacts on general aviation, airfields and activities, and there will be a point on an opportunity later in this agenda item to raise any points related to that request. I'm assuming none of these councils that I've just mentioned wish to add anything, unless they raise their hand in the room or switch the camera on if they're joining us virtually online.

00:47:32:03 - 00:47:39:15

I'll just pause for a second, getting no indication. So I'm going to move on. Uh, the next

00:47:41:01 - 00:47:50:00

council I've got is a parish council. Birstall parish council, uh, Mr. Peterson virtually. Uh, are you on line with us, Mr. Peterson?

00:47:51:08 - 00:47:51:23

Yes.

00:47:51:25 - 00:47:57:04

I'm online. Uh, I don't believe I'm due to speak at this session. I'm due to speak at the open hearing.

00:47:57:06 - 00:48:17:20

No. That's fine. I just wanted to double check with you because initially I had you down for speaking on items three and eight. But my comments were going to come to the point that I thought it was better for your comments to be placed in an open floor hearing anyway, so if that's what you are doing, I'll move on unless you object. No thank you, but.

00:48:17:22 - 00:48:18:13

That's.

00:48:18:15 - 00:48:19:15

Fine.

00:48:22:09 - 00:48:23:14

For the open hearing.

00:48:24:06 - 00:48:26:13

Sorry you broke up there. Can you repeat?

00:48:29:02 - 00:48:36:23

Yeah. Sorry. I'm just saying that what I'm saying at the open hearing may have an impact, but, uh. But it's for the open hearing, not for this session.

00:48:36:25 - 00:48:55:27

That's fine. Thank you very much for your time. I'll move on then. Uh, Fulton Parish Council. Um, I note that the parish council comments, uh, included not being certain about which agenda items you wanted to raise your comments under, but you listed this item and item eight. Uh, are you present with us?

00:48:57:12 - 00:49:03:09

Oh, uh, Mike Hamilton, Mercy Fordham Parish Council and Colchester archaeological group. Yes, I am.

00:49:03:13 - 00:49:33:15

Yeah. Um, Mister Macy, before you continue. Um, I just wanted to go through your comments. Um, basically raising concerns with regard to the, uh, national grid, not changing the pylon route and avoiding important archaeology. Uh, you went into more detail about that, but you also said that you were concerned about impact on new wetlands that have just been created to attract wildlife. Um, those points are something that should be picked up in an open floor hearing.

00:49:33:17 - 00:49:52:10

It's not specific to the initial assessment of principal issues. Uh, we do cover both archaeology under heritage and, um, impact on wildlife and biodiversity, etc.. Um, is it something that you would prefer to speak to under an open floor hearing?

00:49:52:21 - 00:50:07:05

Yeah, I have booked to go to the open hall, uh, hearing at the time I booked on this one because I wasn't sure whether, um, it would be relevant. But looking at listening to you earlier, I see that, um, it's not for local concerns.

00:50:07:12 - 00:50:11:22

Okay. Thank you very much. In that case, I'll move on. But thank you for attending.

00:50:14:00 - 00:50:14:22

Um.

00:50:16:24 - 00:50:28:14

We've had PDA procedural decision A responses from great Hawksley Parish Council and Halton Saint Mary's Parish Council, but I don't believe either are in attendance today, is that correct?

00:50:30:28 - 00:50:34:17

I'm getting no indication, so I'm going to move on.

00:50:36:28 - 00:50:54:27

Lawford parish council. Um, we've read the comments from Lawford Parish Council and the fact that you wish to speak under agenda items three and seven. Um, are you present? Um, I've got you in person in the room. Um, is there anybody from Lawford Parish Council here that wishes to speak?

00:50:58:24 - 00:51:03:11

I'm getting no indication, so I'm going to move on.

00:51:06:14 - 00:51:50:04

Uh, moving on to the British pipeline agency Field Fleischer LLP. Um, miss Tetley Jones. Um, I have you indicating you wish to speak on this item in regard to, uh, in summary, cumulative effects, good design, health and well-being, and safety and security. Again, before you speak, can I just remind you the purpose of the preliminary meeting? Uh, as we've already set out, as well as the purpose of the initial assessment of principal issues, um, from the list that I've briefly summarized above, I note cumulative effects, good design, health and well-being, and safety and security already listed in the IIP.

00:51:50:19 - 00:51:58:04

Um, bearing this in mind. Woodfield Fisher LLP. Still need to speak on behalf of the British Pipeline Agency in regard to this agenda item, please.

00:52:03:21 - 00:52:08:04

Getting no indication they did join us at the start of the meeting. So.

00:52:10:21 - 00:52:14:15

On the basis I'm getting no response, I'm going to move on.

00:52:15:01 - 00:52:27:10

So, sir, if I may, I just, uh, Phil, Phil Taylor, uh, representing British Pipeline agency. Um, yes, that sounds sensible. Uh, your suggested approach. So we can leave that sort of a later item.

00:52:27:24 - 00:52:41:19

Okay, perfect. Thank you for your time. Um, National highways and lower Thames crossing project. Uh, there's two separate entities. Um,

00:52:43:11 - 00:53:15:01

you've made a procedural decision, a response. Um, and I've noted that the headings of interaction and coordination with other insects on nationally significant infrastructure projects and major planning applications, uh, is considered to be too broad to fall under cumulative effects. Uh, and I also note that you consider interactions and coordination with the lower Thames. Crossings should be specifically identified as a heading in relation to cumulative effects.

00:53:15:12 - 00:53:44:10

Um, supporting your view. You've highlighted specific considerations, such as compatibility between the applicants project and the Lower Thames Crossing project. Overlapping of land powers and construction effects and operational operational effects. Is anybody here from I know, I know you're here because you've registered and spoken already, but from anybody from National Highways or the Lower Thames Crossing project. Would they like to speak in regard to this item, please?

00:53:46:09 - 00:54:23:24

Yes, sir. I would like to. Um, it's Monica Wales from TRT. Sorry, on behalf of the Lower Thames Crossing project. So I know what you have just said, and I don't wish to repeat all of that, but I think it's important, um, to just put this into a bit of context. So the as the examining authority will be aware, the RTC project was consented in 2025 and is now in its delivery stage. Um, and the LTC team has some concerns relating to the impacts of the applicant's project on the delivery of the LTC project.

00:54:23:27 - 00:54:58:12

Um, whilst we welcome the applicant's confirmation, as already mentioned, that it will be pursuing option B as per its submission, I think we would really like to clarify that although the LTC team does prefer this option, um, in comparison to option A, it only addresses a small amount of issues in the SOC between the parties, and a lot of issues remain outstanding. Um, whilst both parties are working collaboratively, collaboratively and meeting regularly, um, there is much work still to do.

00:54:58:15 - 00:55:31:09

Um, and again, as you as you noted, the low times cross. Well, the interaction and coordination with CIPs is noted under the cumulative effects uh wider heading in the in NCSC. However we feel that that needs to. We feel that the LTC project needs to be given greater prominence. Um, as there are complications here. Um, that the applicant's project clauses to the LTC and there is a potential adverse impact on the LCS delivery.

00:55:32:03 - 00:56:14:03

Um, in particular, in addition to to what you have just said, um, we think the following matters need to be looked at in particular. So, as mentioned, the compatibility between the applicant's proposed permanent works and the location of the works consented by the LTC, DCO. The overlap of land powers and the compatibility of construction proposals and programs, and the subsequent effects of those. Um, we therefore request that the interface between the applicant's project and the LTC is given principal issue status in its own right, given the importance and the complexity of the interface.

00:56:14:29 - 00:56:37:21

One further thing to just mention is that we welcome the examining authority to request from the applicant of the interrelationship document, which should assist us, the Lower Thames Crossing

Project and the Examining Authority in appropriately assessing the impact of the applicant's project on the LTC DCO. That's all for now, sir.

00:56:38:04 - 00:57:10:27

Thank you very much. And that's all understood. Thank you. I won't comment on that any further at this point in time. Um, we'll discuss that. And, um, obviously we've already indicated that the, um, the IRP isn't going to be amended as a result of our conversations. It's a it's a standalone document at point in time. Um, but we will take on board what you've said with regard to the issues. And I've got a full understanding that, uh, and indeed anticipate that the low intends crossing will be a major issue within the whole project anyway.

00:57:10:29 - 00:57:12:14

So thank you for your time.

00:57:12:21 - 00:57:13:17

Thank you.

00:57:16:22 - 00:57:39:05

Uh, next I have ScottishPower renewables. Um, that had given a general indication that they were interested in all all agenda items. Um, do you wish to speak on agenda item three, the IRP? Um, that's a mr. Miller. I don't think Mr. Miller registered at the beginning or was indicated as being present. So I'll give a pause and see whether or not he's present.

00:57:41:18 - 00:57:49:21

No, I'm going to move on then. In that case. Um, Highlands, East Anglia limited. Um, Mr. Banner?

00:57:49:23 - 00:58:05:17

Thank you sir. Um, you will have seen from our letter that we're content with the headings that you've listed for the IP. We've given you some suggestions as what we would think are appropriate sub issues to explore. Um, which you will have read unless you've got any questions. I have nothing to add to that.

00:58:06:09 - 00:58:28:26

No, I've got nothing to add. I've listed them all out. I won't read them. Now that you've said you've. You've said that, um. And indeed, I don't think it actually adds anything. I would expect the applicant to respond to your list of effectively questions within those subheadings as well, uh, at the next procedural deadline. So we'll see what happens at deadline one.

00:58:28:28 - 00:58:29:21

Thank you.

00:58:31:15 - 00:59:05:01

And, uh, in that case, uh, I'm going to move on. I don't have any other companies or organizations registered to speak or have interested individual interested parties that have indicated they wish to speak on this item. Um, before I go on to those interested parties have registered to speak on this item. Uh, I'd remind everybody that we're not examining the application today. The examination doesn't

commence until this preliminary meeting closes. Um, we're here solely to consider how this application should be examined.

00:59:05:13 - 00:59:45:23

Um, helpful guidance on this was available. Is available on the National Infrastructure website and was attached to the appendices in our all six letter. In terms of the IFP. We are considering what has been identified as principal issues as included within the IFP list and whether those principal issues should be expanded, added to, removed or reduced. Um, we are considering matters raised. Um, and I would emphasize all important matters that have been raised will be all matters that have been raised that are considered important and relevant during the the examination will be considered.

00:59:46:13 - 01:00:16:15

Uh, having read these submissions, I feel that we've we've covered most of what's been raised in the subsequent individual, uh, interested parties comments that procedural deadline a and in registering. Um, but I would like to ask those parties if they still would like to speak. Um, I have registered, uh, a Charlotte Banks. Um, Richard Davies, Matthew day, Joanne. Elliott, Caroline. Homewood.

01:00:16:17 - 01:00:36:21

James. Naseby. Lux Moore, uh, Carl Owen, Gareth presley, uh. Christopher. Vermont, David wass, uh, Adam Whipps, Julian Whittle, and Paul Whittle. Are any of those present either virtually online that still wish to speak on item three?

01:00:40:12 - 01:00:45:25

But nobody in the room indicating and I can't see anybody indicating online

01:00:47:17 - 01:01:03:11

I've given a sufficient pause. So in that case, I'm going to assume that they no longer wish to speak on agenda item three. All right. I'm just going to flick through all my notes on each individual one, which is quite long.

01:01:14:21 - 01:01:19:04

Have I missed anybody that was registered to speak that still wants to speak?

01:01:21:28 - 01:01:22:24

Simon Bell.

01:01:23:00 - 01:01:24:00

Counsel for.

01:01:24:02 - 01:01:51:06

Ardley Parish Council and Little Bromley Parish Council. Probably should just flag that. My clients are also here. I introduced them formally at the start of it, and for completeness, I did say we wish to speak on item three. I apologize. That's. That's fine. Having listened to the conversation, actually we don't have anything further to add, but some of the points that we raised in our response to the rule six letter full kind of squarely under item four and item six so far, raised those then.

01:01:51:08 - 01:02:04:06

Okay. Thank you for your time. And I do apologize. I did make a note that you had registered to speak, and I even checked it on our register. So it's my my fault I didn't call on you at the parish council stage, so I do apologise. Um.

01:02:08:01 - 01:02:23:24

So thank you very much for everybody that has commented. We've made a note of those comments and we'll take them on board. Um, I'm going to hand over for the next agenda item now, which is agenda item four. And oh, the applicant. Does the applicant want to come back? I apologize for that as well. So keen to get through it.

01:02:23:26 - 01:02:51:14

No. Well, and so we um Russell Harris KC for the applicant. Can I just say first we agree with those who are happy with the Abbey. Um, and second, in terms of the lower Thames crossing, the interactions with Lower Ten Crossing, we think are capable of being encapsulated within the existing ERP as, as you said, under the headings you read out. They can and can. I assure the lower Thames crossing will be explored during the examination process fully.

01:02:51:16 - 01:03:09:15

Okay. Thank you. Thank you and apologies for not coming straight back to you on that end item. Even after I asked you whether that's what you wanted me to do. Um, okay. So thank you very much for everybody's contribution to agenda item three. I'm going to hand over to Mr. Stone now who will take us through the time table. Thank you.

01:03:10:26 - 01:03:12:00

Thank you very much.

01:03:13:19 - 01:03:49:24

Draft timetable is set out in detail in annex D of our rule six letter, dated the 13th of January. And it would be useful if you have that in front of you. As we've said in a number of occasions, it won't be displayed on the screen. Uh, the timetable, the draft timetable covers the whole period of the examination. This is for six months to the date of the completion, which is Monday the 10th of August. Uh, the draft timetable includes dates for future hearings and accompanied site inspection and deadlines for submission of written documents.

01:03:49:27 - 01:04:24:20

It also includes the dates on which we propose to issue documents, such as our written questions, and the proposed schedule of changes to the draft development consent order. The timetable is just provisional at the moment. We will be listening to everything that you say today, and we will also take into account all the written submissions that have been made before finalising the timetable. It is our intention to issue a final timetable as soon as possible following on from this meeting, and that will be in our letter.

01:04:27:02 - 01:05:09:13

The draft timetable currently proposes eight deadlines. I don't intend to go through all of these now, but if you do intend to contribute to the examination, it would be a good idea to familiarize yourself

with the details of those. I'll just seek to highlight some key points from the draft timetable. So firstly, items 2 to 8 in that draft timetable set out the hearings that will be taking place this week, which include various open floor hearings, a compulsory acquisition hearing on strategic matters, and our first issue specific hearing which will be on the scope of the development, the proposed development and alternatives.

01:05:10:20 - 01:05:48:00

We have identified dates reserved for future hearings if they are required, and these are shown at items 14 and 18. And these are in which, commencing the 27th of April and week commencing the 22nd of June, the type of hearings and the coverage will be notified, along with agendas following responses to various deadlines. And as issues emerge on which we need to hear oral evidence. These hearings are likely to include a further compulsory acquisition, hearing or hearings, and issue specific hearings.

01:05:48:10 - 01:06:11:02

We will try to give as much notice as possible as we firm up on the hearing tapes and the matters to be discussed at those hearings. Uh, in all reality, this is likely to be around about eight weeks notice before the hearings, uh, when we publish the agendas. But we will seek to try and do that earlier, if at all possible.

01:06:12:20 - 01:06:58:27

Uh, if you do want to attend any hearings, uh, I would strongly recommend that you read annexes B and E of our rule six letter thoroughly so that you understand the different types of hearings, the reasons behind the hearings and the procedures around those. Uh, as mentioned earlier, there are eight substantive deadlines at which parties will be required to make their submissions on the specified matters. Deadline. One is currently set for 30 to 20 6th of February, is the first substantive deadline on six important submissions to inform the examination and this includes parties written representations.

01:06:59:05 - 01:07:24:11

Comments on the relevant representations submitted and the local impact reports from local authorities. It also seeks any updated statements of Common Ground requests to be heard at specific types of hearings and requests to attend, and locations for future site inspections, as well as some of the reports and documents which we would find helpful.

01:07:27:10 - 01:08:00:20

The deadlines during the examination require the submission of various documents, giving parties the opportunities to comment on evidence and documents submitted by other parties at the previous deadline. The deadline for submission of information is 2359 on the date identified in the deadline. We will not normally accept receipt of information or evidence outside of the deadlines. During the examination, the Tsar will publish a number of documents.

01:08:01:05 - 01:08:42:26

These include its written questions to the parties, and these can be directed to the applicant, to local authorities, statutory undertakers, statutory parties or interested parties within the timetable or first set of written questions will be published on the Friday the 20th of March, with a response programmed presently for deadline three being Tuesday the 7th of April. Our second set of written questions,

currently programmed for publication on Friday the 22nd of May, again with responses to be provided by deadline five Tuesday the 9th of June.

01:08:44:22 - 01:09:27:25

The XAT proposes to publish a report on the implications for European sites, or if it is determined that one is required. On 7th July. Along with our commentary on or schedule of changes to the Draft Development Consent Order. This is identified at item 20 in the draft timetable. We have received a number of submissions at procedural deadline. A which includes comments on that draft timetable and where they have specifically raised specific issues on the deadlines or dates within that, and I'll seek to go through those now, firstly from the applicant.

01:09:29:25 - 01:10:01:13

It is noted in their comments that they view that the overall programme set by the timetable is achievable, reasonable and proportionate within this context. They have suggested a number of changes to the draft timetable in respect of specific dates. Their letter of the 27th of January, 2026. Examination Library Reference PDA 001 sets out the detail of the requests under justification behind those.

01:10:01:26 - 01:10:18:06

In summary, they have suggested that the deadline one should not be changed. Deadline two they have suggested that it is an extension of two working days, moving the deadline to from Thursday to 12th of March to Monday the 16th of March.

01:10:20:02 - 01:10:34:15

In respect of the publication of our first set of written questions. They have sought an extension of two working days, moving the publication date from Friday the 20th of March to Tuesday the 24th of March

01:10:36:06 - 01:10:46:12

on deadline. Three they have sought for an extension of one week, moving the deadline from Tuesday the 7th of April to Tuesday the 14th of April

01:10:48:10 - 01:11:02:28

with respect to the publication of our second written questions. They have suggested that this be brought forward by two working days from Friday the 22nd of May to Wednesday the 20th of May.

01:11:04:29 - 01:11:17:00

Deadline six should be brought forward by 4 or 5 working days from Tuesday the 7th of July to Wednesday the first or Thursday the 2nd of July.

01:11:18:18 - 01:11:49:08

In terms of the publication, by the Examining authority of the Draft Development Consent Order and the release, they suggest that that should be brought forward by 4 or 5 working days from Tuesday the 7th of July to Wednesday, the first or Thursday the 2nd of July in respect of deadline seven. They have said suggested that is brought forward but yet working days from Tuesday 28th to 30 to 16th. Deadline.

01:11:49:10 - 01:12:02:21

It should be brought forward by seven working days, from Thursday to 6th of August to Tuesday the 28th and deadline. Nine an additional deadline be added for Thursday the 6th of August.

01:12:04:26 - 01:12:28:05

We have read and seen your comments and reasoning and will consider these matters when finalizing the timetable, which will be published with our letter as soon as practicable after the preliminary meeting. But for the purposes of today, are there any other matters that you would wish to draw to our attention, or to supplement the comments that you made in that letter to us?

01:12:29:05 - 01:13:09:13

Russell Harris KC for the applicant, Parliament has set a six month timetable for examination of one of the largest dsos to date, and it starts tomorrow. Um. We therefore accept fully that there is very little room for manoeuvre in that context. And as an applicant, we take the view that we should and will panel do all possible to facilitate your tasks. You ask for timetable suggestions and we responded, as you said on the 27th, um, as you are correctly identified, there are two main limbs to our suggestions.

01:13:09:16 - 01:13:46:11

The first is we have two more working days and a weekend. Importantly, uh, to deadline two. So we ask for Thursday the 12th to move to Monday the 16th. That's the most important thing we ask for, because that would allow us a little more time to respond to the local planning authority authorities. Lars, um, at the minute, we would maybe have something in the region of 7 or 8 days to respond to 12. layers which run, we are told, and properly because they're important matters to hundreds of pages.

01:13:46:13 - 01:14:20:26

That's the first thing we think it's reasonable to give us that little extra time. But I'll come back to. But what if in a second, in terms of the creation of a new deadline? That's the second theme of what we asked in summary, and really is responsible for the shuffling around of the other deadlines, too. Um, we thought that it would be appropriate to have a final wrap up deadline, particularly in relation to, um, crown land and those other things that sometimes are hanging over at the end of an examination.

01:14:21:02 - 01:14:52:13

Um, and that's why we suggest it. Um, uh, we don't say it's essential and we'd all survive without it. Um, so what I say overall, um, ma'am panel, is that having regard to all of the constraints that you've already identified. Um, if having considered the matters and all the parties consultation responses to the timetable, you decide to stick broadly with the original timetable because of the constraints that everybody's mentioned.

01:14:52:15 - 01:15:00:07

We will stand ready to present the applicant's case as fully and as helpfully as we can within those constraints.

01:15:09:17 - 01:15:12:05

I hope that's helpful. That's all from me.

01:15:12:10 - 01:15:14:05

Thank you very much. It's very helpful.

01:15:18:24 - 01:15:39:09

Does anybody have any comments that they wish to make on the applicant's suggestions that they would wish to make a comment on? Bearing in mind I'm about to come on to the other issues that other parties have raised in terms of specific deadlines, Specifically three and five, which is the issues that move people. Mr. Paris.

01:15:40:08 - 01:16:13:21

Thank you, Sir Michael Bedford, Suffolk County Council. Uh, so I don't say anything about the various intermediate deadlines, but you'll come on to those as a separate point because we've raised those. But just on that position about the final, uh, deadline. Uh, I think the position in terms of our experience of examination practices, uh, it varies as to whether actually, uh, there is a separate final deadline for only the applicant to submit material to the examining authority or not.

01:16:13:23 - 01:16:59:13

So that's really a matter I think we would leave with you to exercise your judgment on. Um, but the thing that we think is, is certainly important is that were you to give the applicant a deadline after the other parties, it shouldn't work in a way that prejudices the other parties. So therefore you do have to shuffle in those circumstances the position so that, um, all of the matters that at the moment we are expected to respond to at deadline eight, that obviously does include what will be new material coming into the examination at deadline seven.

01:16:59:15 - 01:17:32:04

And we absolutely do need a fair opportunity to respond to that material. And therefore it's very much a case of you've got to if you shuffle, you've got to shuffle in sequence and therefore not disadvantage the other parties in the way that they're responding, so they don't lose the opportunity to respond to any material that comes in at the prior deadline, so that if, as it were, our final opportunity to submit material to you, was at deadline eight.

01:17:32:09 - 01:17:58:21

We absolutely must have a fair opportunity to, um, have considered the material that comes in at deadline. Uh, seven. So that's the main point is it's a choreograph point, but you can't play with one bit of the jigsaw without it impacting, uh, on another part of the jigsaw. So I think that's the, the main concern that we would emphasize to you on, on the applicant suggestion.

01:17:58:23 - 01:18:00:19

Understood. Thank you.

01:18:09:17 - 01:18:13:25

I have a hand up with the initials E, d.

01:18:17:11 - 01:19:00:04

Sir. Emerging, um, Essex County Council. Um, just endorsing what Mister, Mister Bedford just said about the implications of the extra deadline. Obviously a matter for you. I think the particular concern that we had identified related to deadline six and the applicant's proposal to bring that deadline forward. I think it's a written it's currently the 7th of July and the draft timetable, and the proposal is to bring it forward to the 1st or the 2nd of July. I think the concern we have with that is that that deadline will be for, in part, um, the post hearing submissions following that second week of that's been reserved for potential hearings.

01:19:00:16 - 01:19:35:02

Um, and I think it would have compressed the time for those for any submissions to really just a few working days. And now that may, may or may not be an issue. But I think the problem we've got is at the moment. Um, as outlined, um, earlier on, there's not really any certainty right now about what those hearings, if they do take place, what topics they might cover. Um, and so if they don't cover points that we feel we need to say anything much about, then obviously the compression of the timetable isn't a concern, but, but, but it may be a concern for others and it may be a concern for us if it does.

01:19:35:04 - 01:19:53:13

If those hearings do include topics that, you know, we have a lot to say about. So that's just a separate deadline to the point raised by Mr. Bedford, but a similar kind of concern about the implications of adding in a further deadline and ensuring that that that doesn't have unfair consequences for others. Thank you.

01:19:54:27 - 01:20:00:22

Thank you very much for the comment. We will take those on board whenever we are finalizing the timetable.

01:20:07:18 - 01:20:08:03

Okay.

01:20:08:05 - 01:20:46:05

So could I, sorry. Michael Bedford, could I just add just a further comment on that same topic as a point for you to perhaps consider that if you left those closing stages deadlines as they are at the moment, that wouldn't stop you if you were otherwise in favor of the applicant's point about them having a final say of having what I might call an intermediate deadline. That is to say, a date between the current deadline aid of the 6th of August and the close of the examination on the 23rd

01:20:47:20 - 01:21:00:09

of 23, on the 10th of August. And so you could incense flecks around that to give the applicant that intermediate time before you get to the close of the examination.

01:21:04:05 - 01:21:22:24

Thank you very much. As we see, there are a number of factors which pull in various directions for the timetable and why it becomes a complicated matter before I move on till I go back to the applicant. Do you have any comments that you wish to make on any of the comments that you've heard?

01:21:23:09 - 01:21:33:27

Nothing. No. Thank you. Um, we were interested in what Mr. Bedford said about that, and we'll consider that and provide you a response in writing, if we may.

01:21:34:10 - 01:21:35:15

Thank you very much.

01:21:41:29 - 01:21:58:19

If you are going to make any comments in writing, I would draw to your attention that we would wish to release our rule letter on the draft timetable as soon as practicable. So obviously, if you have got any written comments and they would need to be fairly immediate.

01:21:58:21 - 01:22:02:29

Well Russell Harris KC for the appellant, it will be today. Thank you.

01:22:05:18 - 01:22:35:20

Okay. So if we can go back on to other comments that have been made by other parties through the procedural, uh, deadline, a um, Chelmsford City Council has noted that some of the response times to the examining authorities questions are affected by bank holidays and suggested additional time be given. Um, and I'll go through a number of parties now because that seems to be a consistent theme with parties.

01:22:35:22 - 01:23:23:21

So Essex County Council, in its procedural deadline, a response 003 in the examination library, has made some general comments about the hearing agendas, uh, and in respect of the progression of statement of common ground with the applicant, and that the applicant should be aware of those and take account of those in respect of the draft timetable. They've commented on the time for responses to the examining authority's written questions, and proposed that deadline three is moved from Tuesday, the 7th of April to Friday the 10th of April, and the deadline for five is moved from Tuesday the 9th of June to Friday the 12th of June Norfolk County Council

01:23:25:12 - 01:24:03:20

through its procedural deadline. A response 006 requests that deadline one stays as it is. That deadline two, they have acknowledged, appears relatively short, given that the applicant should have been given sufficient time to respond to the local impact reports and to ensure that they are substantively addressed and in respect of deadlines three and five. They similarly point to the period, including bank holidays, and suggest that deadline three is also moved from treated 7th of April to Friday.

01:24:03:22 - 01:24:16:01

The 10th of April and deadline five is moved from Tuesday the 9th of June to Friday the 12th of June to give greater time to respond to the examining authority's written questions.

01:24:18:19 - 01:24:56:01

Suffolk County Council, Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council have made a joint submission not under PDA 008 and in which they highlight concerns with deadlines three and five as

well. This concern this time will be given for responses to examining authority's written questions, suggesting that the deadlines are moved similarly to the others. That deadline three is moved from Tuesday the 7th of April to Friday the 10th of April on deadline five from Tuesday the 9th of June to Friday the 12th of June.

01:24:56:20 - 01:25:22:22

Similarly, South Norfolk District Council have raised concerns about deadlines three and five. Um, would any of those councils wish to add further comment to or supplement the comments that they made in their PDF submissions. Can we just run through those? Chelmsford City Council, are you?

01:25:24:22 - 01:25:26:29

No, sir. We have no further comments to add.

01:25:27:01 - 01:25:30:16

Thank you. Okay. Thank you. Essex County Council.

01:25:33:05 - 01:26:03:18

And Essex County Council. Um, nothing specifically to add. Obviously the appellant proposed. Sorry. The applicant's proposed changes to the timetable would have implications for those deadlines, but it seems to be generally agreed by the applicant and by various of the parties that those deadlines, three and five, if at all possible, some more time should be allowed. So whether it's the 10th of April and the 12th of June, or some alternative dates, depending on other shuffling that happens.

01:26:04:00 - 01:26:07:22

We would endorse any such changes. Thank you.

01:26:09:01 - 01:26:09:27

Thank you.

01:26:15:12 - 01:26:17:03

Norfolk County Council.

01:26:18:16 - 01:26:41:27

Thank you, sir. Richie Barwick for Norfolk County Council. Just to reiterate the point that Miss Jane made on Mr. Bedford previously. So, um, obviously we're content for the carefully choreographed dance to continue, but, um, where deadlines are shuffled forwards. Um, we just like to account for the period that Norfolk County Council and the other councils would like in terms of deadline three and deadline five. Thank you.

01:26:43:22 - 01:26:44:17

Thank you.

01:26:46:06 - 01:26:50:04

Suffolk County council, joint council.

01:26:50:12 - 01:27:25:02

Thanks. Thank you sir. Michael Bedford, Suffolk County Council. The only point I would add, in a sense, if it helps you, uh, the examining authority for the Sealink uh, examination, which is currently underway, we're faced with a similar issue around the impact of what were then the Christmas bank holiday periods. And they very kindly, uh, in response to a similar issue that we raised then did indeed stretch, as it were. A deadline that fell on. Let's say a Tuesday. To the Friday of that week, to accommodate the fact that there was a bank holiday break which created extra pressures for dealing with deadlines.

01:27:25:04 - 01:27:30:00

So. So that's the only extra point I've made. But I think you've got the gist already from what everybody said.

01:27:42:18 - 01:27:48:02

Are there any other parties that would wish to make any further comments on the.

01:27:49:20 - 01:27:50:08

Yes.

01:27:51:12 - 01:28:30:11

Thank you very much, sir. I wanted to address you on the issue of alternatives. What you, the panel have called high level alternatives and the process for that. Having heard the comments made earlier this morning by by Madam Chair, um, we have a degree of concern about, Um, the suggestion that the high level alert has dealt with in the open floor hearing in advance of Friday's session, because it will be on Friday, that we hear from the applicant as to their, um, answers to the issues that the panel have raised for Friday's session.

01:28:30:16 - 01:29:09:14

Um, the high level alternatives, as you described them in particular, um, HVDC and or upgrading the existing infrastructure, including at Bradwell on Sea, are, as you will appreciate, fundamental to my clients and indeed many of the representations that have been submitted. And whilst they're understandably described as high level, they of course are in substance detailed and complex. And whilst we fully appreciate that oral and written um observations given the same weight, there are some issues which cannot be done justice in writing alone or by a very short superficial process.

01:29:09:16 - 01:29:40:16

And I do suggest in this context that justice must be seen to be done as well as in fact, done. Um, what I respectfully ask the panel to consider is the following is that once the applicant has given its oral representations on Friday in response to the questions that the panel will have, um, please, could we have the opportunity to respond in writing by deadline one. I don't think we'll need longer than deadline one to do that.

01:29:40:18 - 01:30:15:12

And please, could the panel leave open at least the question of whether, having received our written responses, a further issue on the issue of what you've called high level alternatives is scheduled after that. Um, and not shut out that possibility. Um, at this stage, I would suggest if all the only ish floor

time that's given to those issues is half a day that that could risk, um, either unfairness actual or perceived, or simply justice not being done.

01:30:15:14 - 01:30:19:24

Errors being made. Um, so I do respectfully invite the power to consider that.

01:30:20:19 - 01:31:13:21

Thank you very much. Um, we do have item agenda six, which deals with other hearings and things of that matter in terms of the suggestion for the other. I think the suggestion there is that that will enable parties to express a view in advance of the issue so that they can ensure that those matters are already in front of the examining authority before the issue takes place. The issue is on predominantly high level matters, but evidently once a hearing is held, then there is an opportunity at the following deadline to submit written comments on the matters that have been discussed during that I said, so you would have an opportunity at that point to provide written comments for the following deadline, which I think would be deadline one.

01:31:13:23 - 01:31:53:21

Then at that stage, in terms of then moving on to future hearings, as we've indicated at this point, and will come on to you in a minute. Those agenda agendas have not yet been established, and we will consider the necessity for hearing oral representations depending on the matters that are raised with us and where we require greater explanation or understanding. So it certainly hasn't been shut down, but there is still an opportunity for us to determine at this point in time, what matters are to be discussed at those further hearings.

01:31:53:23 - 01:31:54:18

Thank you.

01:32:11:18 - 01:32:12:03

Yeah.

01:32:13:29 - 01:32:30:18

Right. Okay. Uh, just before I move on to National highways and lower temps crossing, I knew I've got a hand up. Uh, online. The initial jab. Have you got any comments that you wish to make on what you've heard?

01:32:31:17 - 01:33:05:20

Yes. Thank you. Sir. Uh, John Blake, representing the Northwest and Southwest parishes around Chelmsford, uh, group that I would, uh. I don't wish to repeat anything, sir, but, um, I wanted to very much support the points that Mister Banner had made. Um, in our case, we have carried out some very detailed, um, assessments of the other routes which were rejected or not put forward for consultation. um, and we have we've done detailed mapping work.

01:33:05:22 - 01:33:40:02

We've commissioned a landscape study which supports our view that those are actually better than the preferred route. So, um, we would share the concern that Mr. Banner raised, that these are actually quite detailed matters that, you know, unfortunately. Um, and, and we do question whether they can

be adequately dealt with, um, in the manner which was kindly, um, proposed earlier on. Um, so we would very much support the view that there should be a further specific hearing.

01:33:40:04 - 01:34:18:06

We note the constraints entirely on on the issue one on Friday. Um, and we'll listen to that with, with great interest. But it would be very useful, um, for groups such as ours who have not just high level concerns, but quite local concerns, which are well researched and validated. We feel we could be very helpful to the examiner authority in this regard, and we would ask that there could be a, um, a further hearing, um, to enable those more detailed, um, issues to be discussed.

01:34:18:19 - 01:34:19:21

Uh, thank you sir.

01:34:19:26 - 01:34:50:10

Thank you. I would just suggest or reiterate what was said by Mr. Hunt earlier on, which was that, uh, written comments and oral comments. Um, there is no difference between those. I would suggest that your written representations being submitted at deadline, one should include that level of, uh, intimate detail that you're talking about, because that's going to be much more advantageous to us to consider and review that information if it's in a written format as well.

01:34:50:26 - 01:35:07:26

Um, but obviously we will take away what has been said at today's preliminary meeting to determine what are the nature of matters that should be in future hearings, which are still to be determined?

01:35:12:02 - 01:35:12:17

Yeah.

01:35:12:20 - 01:35:13:26

Okay. Thank you.

01:35:17:25 - 01:35:18:12

Mr. Bell.

01:35:19:01 - 01:36:02:25

Thank you. Simon Bell for Ardley Parish council and Bromley Parish Council. As this issue is being discussed now, I just want to go on record saying we support Mr.. Mr. Obama's approach in all of this. You would have seen from both Little Bromley and Ardley that there are concerns about how alternatives have been treated by the applicant, and it is in particular for these two communities. You will see that later on. I'll be asking you about issues for oddly specific areas, but it is very important to the local community to be able to see and understand what works have been done in respect of alternatives, and why alternatives that they felt were appropriate appear to have been dismissed.

01:36:02:27 - 01:36:20:29

So we would say that obviously subject to you seeing the written representations and certainly will be making further written representations on this point, you should be having a look at setting up an issue

for the alternatives issue to be dealt with in the level of detail that you will probably find you need to go into.

01:36:22:27 - 01:36:23:21

Thank you.

01:36:28:09 - 01:36:37:17

I'm not seeing any other hands or any other comments. Yes, I see a hand at the back and a roving mag. Please go to that.

01:36:41:09 - 01:36:53:11

Jacob for the District Council. Just for the transcript and to put on the record, we strongly support the arguments just set out by Mr. Banner and Mr. Bell just now. Thank you.

01:36:53:13 - 01:36:54:09

Thank you.

01:37:06:18 - 01:37:11:10

All right. Thank you. I shall move on again. National highways.

01:37:13:17 - 01:37:22:10

Oh, sorry. Yes. I've got another hand on line before I move on. Um, initial a be online.

01:37:23:03 - 01:38:07:19

Thank you sir. And Bartleby, for the General Aviation Awareness Council. Um, my comments are cover a number of issues, but in the light of the recent comments you've had, our point is that across the whole route of of this, there are a number of general aviation airfields and the issues that they are facing, both in terms of the impact on them, but also in terms of the the lack of examination of the alternatives, which is why I've picked this up at this point does lend itself quite strongly, I believe, to there being a tissue specific hearing to consider those matters in an efficient way.

01:38:07:21 - 01:38:08:21

Thank you sir.

01:38:09:02 - 01:38:14:28

Thank you. I think if you wanted to raise out an item section, we're talking about other hearings. But thank you for your comments.

01:38:18:04 - 01:39:00:10

Okay. So we shall move on again. And this is any other and quick skirt around. No, that all seems good. National highways Lower Thames Crossing project submitted a procedural deadline, a comment at 013, where they noticed that there are a number of deadlines requiring updates to the Statement of Common Ground or other submissions requiring engagement with their NH LTC, and they Respectfully requested that the applicant is clear about the timescales and programs associated with such submissions to allow for these to be produced in good time for the appropriate deadlines.

01:39:00:12 - 01:39:28:27

And we heard a little bit about that earlier on. Um, they haven't suggested any amendments to the draft timetable, but we would echo the sentiment and encourage all parties to actively and positively engage to ensure that information submitted at the deadline is as full and comprehensive as is possible. Uh, do your National Highways crossing wish to supplement their comments or add anything further?

01:39:31:24 - 01:39:36:07

Thank you sir. Um, no. Nothing further to add to that. Thank you.

01:39:37:18 - 01:39:38:22

Thank you very much.

01:39:41:21 - 01:40:15:28

Uh, I then move to pylons, East Anglia. Their procedural deadline. A comment or 016 and at 0.5. In their submissions, they suggest the issues raised in their letter are examined as an issue specific hearing. They do not suggest any changes to the draft timetable. As such, the dates for the proposed hearings are included in the draft timetable, and the matters to be discussed at those hearings will evolve over time. We've also had some comments earlier on at present.

01:40:16:00 - 01:40:33:27

The timing of when the hearings are set out in the timetable and as the examination progresses, the examining authority will identify the appropriate matters to be addressed at hearings and will notify interested parties at that time. Um, Mr. Bernard, do you have anything further that you wanted to?

01:40:33:29 - 01:40:35:26

No, thank you for asking, but no, no.

01:40:35:28 - 01:40:37:02

Thank you very much.

01:40:38:29 - 01:40:48:16

Um. All parties. Does anybody have any other comments that they wish to make on the timetable before I move along a little further.

01:40:51:15 - 01:41:06:18

I don't have anything online and there's nothing in the room. All parties should be aware that there are. Oh, sorry. I've got a line at hand that's come up. Um, E.T. is the initial on the screen.

01:41:07:09 - 01:41:31:12

Apologies. Emily Jones for Phil Fisher. Uh, this is not in respect of the time table. I just wanted to apologize for not responding earlier. Uh, I don't know whether it was the settings, but I wasn't actually able to respond, and my colleague was left in the lobby, but my client did at least, uh, respond. And we've emailed, uh, separately, so apologies for that.

01:41:31:14 - 01:41:42:26

Thank you. That was that was on item three, uh, on the IRP. Did you have any comments that you want to make then, or is there something that you wanted to raise at a later agenda item?

01:41:43:07 - 01:41:53:21

Uh, I don't propose holding matters up now. I have emailed separately with the bullet points that we wanted to raise, but I don't think anyone will thank me for holding things up at the moment.

01:41:54:06 - 01:41:55:11

Thank you very much.

01:41:55:14 - 01:41:56:15

Thank you so much.

01:41:57:06 - 01:41:58:00

Thank you.

01:42:02:01 - 01:42:02:23

Okay,

01:42:04:08 - 01:42:41:00

I shall then move on again. All parties should be aware that there are many competing aspects when drafting a timetable, including several internal deadlines for the Planning Inspectorate, which also need to be built in, such as the publication of notifications of events, etc. with regard to examining authorities first written questions. This is currently timetabled to be after the initial deadlines, so that we can take into account all the information received at those deadlines, potentially reducing the number of questions we would otherwise ask and focusing our examination for the next set of hearings.

01:42:41:11 - 01:43:13:16

As such, it is difficult task to draft the timetable with which everyone is fully content with. We acknowledge, for example, the Easter holidays and the bank holidays that are within the examination timetable. We will take account of all the comments that have been made here today, and those made at procedural deadline a when producing our rule letter, which will include the final timetable and which we as examining authority decide upon.

01:43:13:23 - 01:43:44:14

As a point of clarity. Taking on board all the information that we've received to date. I will make one point that it is not our intention to move deadline one. So parties should be working towards that deadline. For I finish, I'd like to reiterate the importance of ensuring that information is submitted within the set deadlines as time for submission is always 23, 59 or 1 minute to midnight on the specified date.

01:43:45:28 - 01:43:54:21

It's also worth noting that we won't be able to accept any submissions after the completion of the examination on the 10th of August.

01:43:57:21 - 01:44:04:17

Is there anything anybody else would wish to raise before I move off this agenda item and we move on?

01:44:12:00 - 01:44:32:02

We mentioned earlier that we would take a short adjournment and we're going to take one now. Um, conscious of the time coming up to 11:45. Um, we will take an adjournment now and resume at 12:00. Hearing is adjourned.

01:44:32:04 - 01:44:32:27

Thank you.