



Meeting note

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| File reference | TR010018 |
| Status | Final |
| Author | John Pingstone |
| Date | 19 March 2014 |
| Meeting with | Highways Agency |
| Venue | Pinsent Masons Offices, London |
| Attendees | Highways Agency Martin Clarke – Highways Agency Jeremy Damrel – Highways Agency Tom Henderson – Pinsent Masons Robbie Owen – Pinsent Masons The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) Kay Sully – Senior Case Manager John Pingstone – Case Officer |
| Meeting objectives | Highways Agency to provide an update to the Planning Inspectorate on pre-application activities for the proposed A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme |
| Circulation | All attendees |

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) explained that a note of the meeting would be produced and published as advice under s51 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) (PA 2008).

Progress Update

The Highways Agency (HA) described the history of the project, including the fact that a non-statutory options consultation had been undertaken previously (in October 2013) which laid out various alternative proposals for improving the stretch of the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon. In addition it was explained that the possibility of tolling had been removed from the currently proposed scheme, based on feedback from consultees received in response to the non-statutory options consultation.

A request for a scoping opinion has recently been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and the opinion will be issued within the statutory 42 days. Formal consultation under ss42, 47 and 48 of PA2008 is likely to commence in April and conclude in June. Submission of the application is currently planned for autumn 2014.

The Inspectorate queried whether any special category land might be subject to compulsory acquisition. It was thought by the HA that there may be special category land affected; work was underway to confirm the position.

Consultation

The HA is engaging in on-going dialogue with key stakeholders including local authorities, environmental bodies and affected landowners.

The Inspectorate queried whether the results of the non-statutory consultation would be recorded in the consultation report. The HA stated that their consultation report would cover non-statutory consultation as well as statutory consultation. During the non-statutory consultation, an online questionnaire received approximately 1400 responses. However, the questionnaire was based on scheme proposals which included tolling (prior to tolling being removed from the scheme) and therefore it may not be representative of public interest in the current scheme or of current public opinion, which the HA intend to ascertain through the statutory pre-application consultation planned to run from April to June 2014.

Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

The draft SoCC had been provided to the Planning Inspectorate prior to the meeting, and the Inspectorate provided comments on the draft. It was noted that the description of the project within the SoCC included the de-trunking of part of the existing A14 trunk road, and the Inspectorate queried whether consent for this would be included within the Development Consent Order (DCO) or achieved through a separate consenting process. The HA confirmed that it was intended that consent for the de-trunking would be sought through the DCO, as previous DCO projects had included de-trunking provisions.

S48 notice

The Inspectorate pointed out that the HA should ensure that the description of the applicant's name was consistent throughout the documentation, and also that the HA should ensure that all of the requirements of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 are met, including inserting details of copying charges (if any) at document deposit locations.

Scoping Opinion

The HA queried whether the Scoping Opinion would take into account the relevant parts of the draft National Networks National Policy Statement (NPS). The Inspectorate suggested that this would be the case but that clarification would be sought on this.

It was noted that the National Networks NPS was likely to be designated during the DCO examination period for the project and that this may result in written questions from the Examining Authority (ExA) in order to provide parties with the opportunity to comment.

Other Consents

The HA stated that they are likely to pursue some consents outside of the DCO and that they were aware of the Consents Service Unit (CSU) within the Planning Inspectorate and would consider using the CSU.

Future Actions

The HA asked which draft documents it would be appropriate to share with the Inspectorate. It was suggested that most documents could be shared other than the Environmental Statement (ES), as resources are not available to review a document of this length and complexity.

With regard to submitting a completed s55 checklist with the DCO application, the HA suggested that they had not planned to follow this approach and the Inspectorate confirmed that whilst it would be useful for the HA, as applicant, to use as a checking exercise prior to submission of the application, it was not necessary to submit a completed section 55 checklist with the application.

With regard to the next meeting it was agreed that it would be held towards the end of May 2014.

Specific decisions / follow up required?

The Planning Inspectorate to provide written feedback on the s48 notice and SoCC; this was subsequently, provided on 20 March 2014.