



## Meeting note

<b>Project name</b>	Lower Thames Crossing
<b>File reference</b>	TR010032
<b>Status</b>	Final
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	11 October 2019
<b>Meeting with</b>	Highways England
<b>Venue</b>	Temple Quay House, Bristol
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Project Update
<b>Circulation</b>	All attendees

### Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

### Project Update

The Applicant provided an update in relation to the project which is due to be submitted to the Inspectorate in summer 2020, and on the progress on several application documents.

The Applicant indicated that they wished to submit draft documents for review to the Inspectorate; they suggested that given the length of the scheme, focusing on one section of the proposed development might be most helpful. The Applicant wondered if an area from the south portal including part of the tunnel underneath the River Thames, the exit at the north portal, ending at the A13 junction might be suitable.

The Inspectorate noted that the following draft documents were typically submitted for review: draft Development Consent Order (DCO), Explanatory Memorandum, Book of Reference (BoR), Statement of Reasons (SoR) and Land and Works Plans for that particular section of the scheme, involving river works, construction work and creation of new highways. The Applicant hoped that the Consultation Report (CR) would be at an advanced stage of drafting for any review and welcomed feedback on how information was being presented.

The Inspectorate suggested that the Applicant might consider thinking of matters/questions (focusing on novel power sought or requirements) to be considered before the Inspectorate reviews the submissions, and look at section 51 advice given on draft documents for M25 junction 10/A3 Wisley interchange improvement: [M25 junction 10/A3](#). The Inspectorate emphasised that Schedule 1 of the draft DCO must match what is in the draft Plans to ensure consistency between the documents and accuracy in what

development is proposed. The Applicant stated that they will be very clear what information will be provided for the review, and what response they would seek, and would provide electronic copies of the draft documents only.

## **Consultation**

The Applicant requested advice regarding the principle of the structure of their Consultation Report, noting that the document will need to represent the high volume of consultation responses received so far, especially to avoid a degree of repetition, and to establish a system of 'grouping' of all similar issues referred to by the consultees. The Inspectorate advised that this approach could be helpful provided that the 'grouping' process was carried out in a transparent manner and did not obscure important or specialist points or unduly smooth the detail of significant matters. For issues that had very large number of respondents then the Inspectorate noted particular care should be taken to differentiate between genuine single points with a mass response (such as from petitions) and lots of people responding on similar topics but with different or multi-faceted points. Additionally, it would be helpful where there are number of s42, s47 and s48 responses to provide cross-referencing to some examples in the consultation responses, this could assist with sampling if necessary. If the documentation is carried out in digital format then direct links to the consultation responses could usefully be done to make any sampling quicker.

The Applicant explained that they were intending to prepare a more narrative based document in respect of the consultation process, similar to a Non-Technical Summary. The Inspectorate were interested in the idea but queried how it would relate to any submitted application documents.

## **Future engagement**

The Applicant suggested that another meeting before end of the year to consider draft DCO might be useful. The Applicant advised that following the non-statutory and statutory consultation and receiving a huge volume of responses, some new land interests have been identified. This had resulted in reissuing the existing consultation material, concluding later in October 2019.

The Applicant confirmed continuous engagement with the Statutory Consultees, and initial work on issues to feed into the Statements of Common Grounds (SoCG), such as environmental matters, mitigation etc.

The Inspectorate queried the number of NSIPs to be included in the DCO and the nature of any associated development. The Applicant confirmed that they are developing more information about utilities crossing the site but expect that they would be considered as significant associated development rather than separate NSIPs.

## **Specific decisions**

The Applicant and the Planning Inspectorate agreed to arrange the next meeting in early December 2019.