



Meeting note

File reference	TR010032
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	2 July 2020
Meeting with	Highways England
Venue	Teams
Meeting objectives	Project update meeting
Circulation	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 and programme update

The Applicant confirmed its Design Refinement Consultation ('D-CON'), would run from 14 July to 12 August 2020. D-CON would be a supplementary consultation focusing on new information based on ongoing design work, new technical data and consultation feedback. The Applicant noted D-CON would continue to be a 'digital first' consultation, with no scheduled public events or deposit locations in light of COVID-19 related restrictions. Mechanisms would be in place to receive consultation responses electronically, in hard copy or via a telephone service. The Applicant provided an overview of the feedback received in response to sharing its methodology for D-CON with relevant local authorities.

The Applicant confirmed that D-CON would include information about proposed amendments to the red line boundary (RLB) for the scheme. The Inspectorate queried if any new statutory consultees had been identified as result of the amends to the RLB. The Applicant explained that the amendments affected around 1500 new land interests, but no additional prescribed consultees had been identified.

The Applicant stated that its programme continued to work towards submission of the application in the autumn of 2020, ahead of road opening in 2027/28.

NSIP works

The Applicant explained that the scheme included works to overhead power lines (OHL) in the vicinity of the A13/A1089 junction. Following a process of ongoing diligence, the Applicant explained that it now considered the OHL work to constitute a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) in its own right. The draft Development Consent Order (DCO) submitted with the application would therefore include an NSIP comprising OHL development under s16 of the PA2008, in addition to the NSIP for highway-related development under s22. As a result, the Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1), the NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) and the NPS for National Networks (NPSNN) would all have effect in relation to the scheme. Compliance with the relevant NPSs would be addressed within the Applicant's Planning Statement.

The Inspectorate drew attention to different approaches to assessment, for example in relation to noise, set out in the energy and transport NPSs. The Applicant confirmed that this would be taken into consideration in the preparation of its Environmental Statement (ES).

Land interests

The Applicant provided an overview of the number of land interests affected by the scheme. The Applicant explained that a significant proportion of the site was owned by a small number of farming families. The Applicant was engaged in ongoing dialogue with those affected landowners and Statements of Common Ground (SoCG), option agreements and pre-DCO agreements were all being progressed.

The Inspectorate enquired as to the level of likely sustained objection to Compulsory Acquisition powers from affected land interests. The Applicant noted various issues that would be captured within SoCGs, including a range that would be unlikely to be resolved prior to the submission and examination of the application.

Traffic modelling

The Applicant provided a comprehensive outline of its approach to traffic modelling, which used the Department for Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG), including details of collaborative working with relevant local authorities. The Applicant had produced various documents setting out how it was preparing the traffic model. These included: Traffic Forecasting Report, Local Model Validation Report (LMVR) and Traffic Modelling Update. The Inspectorate advised that the information within LMVRs had been of particular assistance to Examining Authorities during the examinations of historic highway NSIPs.

The Inspectorate noted the interrelationships between traffic and air quality assessment and advised to the Applicant to clearly set out in its ES when the traffic model had been used to inform assumptions or conclusions.