



Meeting note

Project name	A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet
File reference	TR010044
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	13 January 2021
Meeting with	Highways England
Venue	Microsoft 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.

Submission timeline

Highways England (the Applicant) confirmed that it had revised its submission date from the end of January 2021 to late February 2021.

The Inspectorate enquired about what information the Applicant could provide to explain the reason for the revised timeline. The Applicant clarified that it wanted to take a short amount of additional time to account for constraints associated with remote-working and the health and wellbeing of its staff and other stakeholders. In these circumstances the short delay would allow for the Applicant to complete its pre-submission stakeholder engagement programme in a measured and robust way.

The Applicant noted the impacts of COVID-19 on local authority (LA) resources, and enquired as to what approach would be taken in the event that an LA was unable to complete its Adequacy of Consultation Representation (AoCR) on time as a result. The Inspectorate advised that the legislation made no exceptions for such circumstances. Whilst the Inspectorate imposes a 14-day deadline for receipt of AoCRs, it is not a statutory deadline. However, because the 28-day deadline for the Acceptance decision is statutory, the 14-day response deadline is required to allow for any AoCRs to be considered by the Inspectorate and to inform the Acceptance decision. It is therefore for LAs to put in place appropriate mitigation measures/delegations to ensure that the 14-day deadline is honoured.

Preparation for submission

The Applicant provided an update regarding the preparation of its application documents and confirmed that it intended for them to be published on the National Infrastructure Planning website following Acceptance. The Applicant confirmed that, in the event that they were requested by the Inspectorate during the Acceptance process, its pre-application consultation responses were saved in a central location and ready to dispatch.

The Inspectorate advised that it had encountered problems accessing the draft geographic information system (GIS) shapefile that the Applicant had provided and was therefore unable to confirm whether the shapefile was compliant. The Applicant stated that it would investigate and work with the Inspectorate to resolve the problem after the meeting.

The Inspectorate requested an update regarding any action the Applicant had taken in response to advice previously issued in respect of the presentation of utilities works in its Works Plans. The Applicant confirmed that the advice had been fed back to the team preparing the plans and was being implemented, with the aim being to optimise readability and understanding of the utility diversions proposed.

The Applicant confirmed that it was in the process of organising the payment of the Acceptance fee.

Update to Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG)

The Applicant queried what the Inspectorate's expectations were in terms of the work required to address the Department for Transport's Route Map for updating TAG. The Applicant set out that sensitivity testing was likely to be undertaken. The Inspectorate stated that it would consult on the enquiry internally and respond to the Applicant in writing as soon as possible.