Planning Inspectorate

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To: All Interested Parties

Our Ref: TR050008

Date: 21 October 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

Planning Act 2008 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – rule 13 and 16

Application by Oxfordshire Railfreight Limited for an order granting development consent for the Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange

Notification of hearings and accompanied site inspection

The examination timetable at annex A of the Examining Authority's (ExA) rule 8 letter, dated 8 October 2026, included reserved dates for hearings.

We are now writing to advise you that the following hearings will be held under sections 91, 92 and 93 of the Planning Act 2008. The hearing(s) will be blended events, with participants attending either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Hearing	Date	Start time	Location
Compulsory acquisition hearing 2	**Tuesday 10 November 2026**	**Registration and seating available from: 9.30am** **Virtual registration process from: 9.30am** **Event start: 10.00am**	Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa, Green Lane, Chesterton, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 1TE and By virtual means using Microsoft Teams Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be

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			provided in advance to those who have pre-registered
Open floor hearing 1	**Tuesday 10 November 2026**	**Registration and seating available from: 1.30pm** **Virtual registration process from: 1.30pm** **Event start: 2.00pm**	Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa, Green Lane, Chesterton, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 1TE and By virtual means using Microsoft Teams Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered
Issue specific hearing 3 on environmental matters, including ecology, ground conditions, landscape and visual, mineral and waste, transport, water, and the draft Development Consent Order	**Wednesday 11 November 2026**	**Registration and seating available from: 9.00am** **Virtual registration process from: 9.00am** **Event start: 9.30am**	Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa, Green Lane, Chesterton, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 1TE and By virtual means using Microsoft Teams Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered
NOTE: If any of the above hearings are no longer required then notification will be published as soon as practicable on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website, providing reasonable notice to interested parties of the decision to cancel.			

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Applicant's notification duties

The applicant is reminded of its duty to notify and publicise hearings under rule 13(6) and 13(7) of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010.

Purpose of hearings

Please refer to The Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say for information about the purpose of open floor, issue specific and compulsory acquisition hearings.

Registration and requests to participate in hearings

Please register using the event participation form by 2 November 2026 if you intend to participate in the hearings and provide all the information requested. If you have any difficulty completing the form please contact the case team.

Please note that by attending the event either in person or online you are agreeing to be filmed for the purposes of the online live stream of the event and the recording of the event which will get published on the project webpage. A limited number of seats will be available for observers who wish not to be filmed at the event. Please contact the case team to notify them if you prefer not to be filmed at the event. A transcript of the event will also be published on the project webpage after the event.

Any request to participate in a hearing should include the following information:

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top of any letter or email from The Planning Inspectorate);
- email address (if available) and contact telephone number;
- name and unique reference number of any person/organisation that you are representing (if applicable);
- for blended events, confirmation of whether you will participate virtually or in-person;
- confirmation of the hearing(s) you wish to participate in, the agenda item(s) on which you wish to speak and/or brief details of the topic(s) that you would like to raise;
- for compulsory acquisition hearings, the plot number(s) of the relevant land provided in the book of reference and the land plans; and
- the examination library reference number (with paragraph/page number where appropriate) of any documents you wish to refer to.

Joining instructions for hearings will be issued by the case team via email shortly before the hearing dates.

Please contact the case team if you require any support or assistance to attend any hearing, either virtually or in person.

If you simply wish to observe any of the hearings then you can either:

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1. Watch a livestream of the event - a link to the livestream will be made available on the project webpage shortly before the event is scheduled to begin; and/or
2. Watch the recording of the event which will be published on the project webpage shortly after the event has finished.

Alternatively, you can attend the physical event at the venue to observe the proceedings; however, to ensure there is adequate seating capacity at the venue we request that you register your attendance to observe only by **2 November 2026** using the **event participation form**. Please note that it may not be possible to participate on the day if you have not registered your wish to speak by **2 November 2026**

Attendees

We would find it helpful if the following parties could attend ISH3:

- Cherwell District Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Environment Agency
- National Highways
- Network Rail
- Natural England
- Smith and Sons (Bletchington) Limited
- Biffa Waste Services Limited
- Gallos Brook Campaign
- Richard Allen
- North Oxfordshire Resident Action

Hearing agendas

The agendas and any detailed arrangements for the hearings will be published on the project webpage at least five working days before the hearings. However, the actual agenda on the day of each hearing may be subject to change at our discretion. There may not be an agenda for the open floor hearing.

Procedure at hearings and post hearing submissions

The procedure to be followed at hearings is set out in The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010.

Participation in a hearing will be subject to the ExA's powers of control. It is for the ExA to determine how the hearing will be conducted, including the time allowed at the hearing for the making of a person's representations. The hearing will be managed in the interests of ensuring fair access to the hearing for all parties, and to ensure that the submissions of all invited persons are fully heard within the allotted time. For issue specific hearings interested parties (IPs) may be invited to make oral representations at the hearing on the specific issues being examined at the hearing as set out in the agenda.

All hearings are recorded. The recordings and transcripts will be made available on the project webpage as soon as practicable following the hearing. The recordings allow any member of the public who is interested in the application and the examination to find out what has been discussed at a hearing. It is therefore important to note that anyone

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speaking at the hearing will need to introduce themselves, including any organisation or groups that they represent, **each time they speak** to ensure that someone listening to the recording after the hearing is clear who was speaking.

As the recordings are retained and published, they form a public record that can contain personal information to which the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies. Please refer to our 'Privacy Notice' for further information. Participants must do their best to avoid making public any information which they would otherwise wish to be kept private and confidential. If there is a need to refer to such information, it should be in written form. Although this will also be published, personal and private content can be redacted or removed before it is made publicly available. Any person who is unclear on this point should ask the case team for guidance before they place personal and private information into the public domain. The Planning Inspectorate's practice is to publish the recordings and transcripts and retain them for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision on the development consent order (DCO). If you actively participate in the hearing, it is important that you understand that you will be recorded and that the recording and transcript will be made available in the public domain.

The evidence presented orally at hearings should be included in post hearing submissions and submitted at the relevant deadline in the examination timetable.

Accompanied Site Inspection

We also write to advise you that an accompanied site inspection (ASI) will be held under rule 16 of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 on the following date:

Event	Date	Time	Meeting Place
Accompanied site inspection (ASI)	Thursday 12 November 2026	Meeting time for safety briefing from the applicant and introduction by the ExA: **9.00am** Departure time: **9.15am**	Bicester Hotel Golf and Spa, Green Lane, Chesterton, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 1TE

Please note that the Examining Authority's (ExA) inspection of sites is **not** an opportunity to provide any oral representations on the project or discuss evidence. It is an opportunity for the ExA to look at the physical features that can be seen on, or from, the sites. Participants may be invited by the ExA to point out specific features or sites of interest.

Joining the ASI
If you wish to attend the ASI and did not confirm your attendance at deadline 1, please let the case team know by **completing the event participation form by 2 November 2026,** providing telephone contact details (preferably mobile telephone) so that we can contact you should the ASI run late or need to be cancelled with minimal notice.

Please also let us know of any mobility needs that may affect transportation.

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Participants are asked to assemble promptly as the ExA will not wait for parties who are not present at the start time.

For logistical and safety reasons, capacity on the transport that will be used for the ASI may be limited. Priority will be afforded to the Planning Inspectorate staff, the applicant, local authorities and relevant statutory parties. In the case of a large number of attendees any interested parties who express a wish to attend the ASI for its duration may be contacted by the case team to discuss the option of meeting the ExA at relevant locations in the itinerary instead.

Clothing
The inspection is likely to include some walking on uneven or wet ground. The Planning Inspectorate therefore advises attendees to wear clothing that is suitable for the weather and sturdy footwear. At times during the ASI it will be necessary to wear a high visibility vest or jacket. Attendees who have their own high visibility vest or jacket should bring it with them. For anyone who does not have either a high visibility vest or jacket, the applicant will provide a vest for use during the course of the ASI.

Sites on private land
Access onto private land is at all times by permission of the person controlling it; householders, occupiers and landowners may refuse to allow some persons accompanying the ExA onto their land. Under those circumstances, the ExA will decide whether or not to proceed with that part of the inspection and may ask those refused access to wait outside.

Refreshments
Please note refreshments will not be provided.

Cancellations
Please note that in the unlikely event that the ASI is cancelled we shall endeavour to contact attendees beforehand, but we ask that you regularly check the project webpage.

Further information about site inspections can be found in The Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: 'The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say'.

The final itinerary for the ASI will be published on the project webpage approximately one week in advance.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the case team at: oxfordshiresrfi@planninginspectorate.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully

Adrian Hunter

Adrian Hunter
Lead member of the panel of Examining Inspectors

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This communication does not constitute legal advice.
Please view our 'Privacy Notice' before sending information to The Planning Inspectorate.

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