



# How to have your say to the IPC

## **Advice note eight:** How to have your say about a major infrastructure proposal

### **Introduction**

This advice note will help people who are affected by a major infrastructure proposal to understand how and when to have their say to the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC).

The IPC is the independent public body that considers whether permission shall be given to developers to proceed with building major infrastructure projects, such as new harbours, power stations, railways, roads, airports, electric lines, gas pipelines, wind farms and reservoirs.

We consider a developer's application, by looking at all the evidence, including Government policy, environmental issues and the views of the public, in order to judge whether a development should be allowed to go ahead.



### **This note explains:**

- The importance of registering to have your say on an application
- How to tell us what you think
- How to take part in the examination
- How your views will be taken into account
- How to keep track of the latest infrastructure proposals.

### **Register to have your say**

If you would like to have your say to the IPC about a major infrastructure proposal – the first step is to register. Only once you have registered, will you have the opportunity to take part in the examination process.

### **Registering may enable you to:**

- Have your say to the IPC in writing
- Attend and speak at the preliminary meeting
- Request an open floor hearing
- Speak at a public hearing.

### **How will I know when to register?**

You cannot register before an application has been submitted to the IPC. The opportunity to register and have your say on a project only arises after we have received an application and accepted it as adequate to proceed to examination.

The developer will publicise the fact that an application has been accepted by the IPC for examination. They must include notices in a local newspaper and a national newspaper, as well as close to the proposed site of the

development. The developer may also choose to notify you in other ways, for example, through their own project website.

Registration is time-limited. You will always be given at least 28 days to register to have your say on a project, but a deadline will be set giving a date on which registration will close.

The IPC will also help to ensure that people have the information they need to take part fully in the IPC process. If an application is accepted, we will circulate information locally to ensure that people know how to contact us, how to register and how and when to have their say on a project. Information about the status of each project will also be available on our website, including details of how to register.

You must register separately for each project on which you wish to have your say. Registering is simple and easy to do online at: [www.independent.gov.uk/infrastructure](http://www.independent.gov.uk/infrastructure)

Alternatively, you may request a copy of the registration form from our helpline on: 0303 444 5000.

### **Take part in the examination**

By registering to have your say about a proposal, at the appropriate time, you will be entitled to:

1. **Put your views in writing** – When you register your interest in an application, you will have the opportunity to provide us with a summary of your views.



Later, you will have a further opportunity to provide a more detailed written account of your views. All comments will be published on our website and you will also be able to respond to other people's views of the proposal. If you do not have internet access, copies of comments can be made available to you, on request from the IPC.

**2. Attend the preliminary meeting** – People who are registered will be invited to attend and take part in the preliminary meeting. At this meeting, you will be able to make suggestions about how the examination should be run.

At the meeting or shortly after, the IPC Commissioner(s) will decide how the examination will be run, the issues it will focus upon and the timetable for the examination process.

**3. Request that an open-floor hearing be held** – If you have registered, you will be entitled to request an open floor hearing at which you can express your views to the Commissioner(s).

**4. Have your say at a public hearing** – When you register to have your say, you can also tell us whether or not you would like to speak at any open floor hearing or any hearing about specific issues. For compulsory acquisition hearings, only the people affected will be invited to speak. Hearings will be held at a local venue wherever possible and all will be open to the public.

## **How your views will be taken into account**

In making the decision or a recommendation to the Secretary of State, the IPC will weigh all the evidence, including the views of members of the public. If you register to have your say on a proposal, you can be sure that your views will be part of the evidence the IPC considers.

## **Who makes the decision?**

National Policy Statements (NPSs) set out the Government's objectives for the development of major infrastructure in a particular sector (such as energy or transport) and say how these will contribute to sustainable development.

Draft NPSs have not yet been adopted. If the NPSs which apply to a proposal are adopted before the point of decision making on a project, the IPC will make the decision.

If the relevant NPSs have not been adopted at the point of decision making on a project, the IPC will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State, who will make the decision.

## **How will I know when a decision has been made on an application?**

The process of considering an application will take up to a year, from the point of accepting an application for examination, to the decision itself.

All decisions will be published on the IPC website.



### **What decisions can be made?**

Whether it's an IPC or a Secretary of State decision, the outcome will be one of the following:

- To refuse development consent
- To grant development consent
- To grant development consent with conditions (these are known as 'requirements').

### **Can I challenge a decision?**

You may challenge a decision. A legal challenge must be made in the six-week period following the decision. It can be made whether a decision has been to grant development consent or refuse it.

### **Independent planning advice**

Planning Aid England provides free, independent and professional planning advice to individuals and communities who cannot afford to pay professional fees.

To find out if you are eligible for their services, contact them by telephone on: 0121 214 2915 or email: [enquiries@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk)

Planning Aid Wales offers a free Helpline service to assist 'eligible' members of the public and community groups needing help with a planning matter. To find out if you are eligible visit: [www.planningaidwales.org.uk/how-paw-can-help/advice](http://www.planningaidwales.org.uk/how-paw-can-help/advice) or telephone: 02920 625000 (Helpline operates from: 10.00am to 1.30pm – Monday to Friday).

### **Further information**

The Infrastructure Planning Commission, Temple Quay House, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN

Email: [ipcenquiries@infrastructure.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ipcenquiries@infrastructure.gsi.gov.uk)

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Web: [www.independent.gov.uk/infrastructure](http://www.independent.gov.uk/infrastructure)