NOTICE OF PRE INQUIRY MEETING (Rule 15)

This correspondence is to notify you that a Pre Inquiry Meeting is to be held for the Crown Development Application ref CROWN/2025/0000002, site known as 'Sevington Inland Border Facility'.

It provides you with information to enable you to participate in the Pre Inquiry Meeting (PIM) at **9.30am** on **Tuesday 11 November 2025** in advance of the forthcoming inquiry for the above case, should you wish to.

Please read it carefully as it contains important joining instructions.

You should note that it is **not** an opportunity to air any views in relation to the planning merits of the case or your respective positions. You should also be aware that the appointed Inspector presides at the PIM and determines the matters to be discussed and the procedure to be followed.

You will find a copy of the Statement of Matters on the Application website: CROWN/2025/0000002 - Application information – Find a Crown Development Application Before, and in preparation for the PIM, it may be helpful to read this document.

All documents for which planning permission is sought are published on the above website; and this is usually uploaded as soon as possible. It can, therefore, be useful to all parties to monitor the 'Find a Crown Development Application' website regularly (link above) so they can see these documents soon after they have been uploaded. For ease of use, the 'Documents' section of the website is listed in 'newest first' order. All documents submitted in relation to the Inquiry stage (such as the Statement of Matters) will generally have the prefix 'INQ' to help.

Should there be any change in circumstances, relating to the application, the parties should make us aware of these prior to the PIM.

The Rules set out that *(a) the applicant, (b) the relevant local planning authority, (c) any statutory party, (d) any other person known to be entitled to appear at the inquiry, and*

(e) any other person whose presence at the meeting appears to the inspector to be desirable, should be notified of the PIM. For transparency, a copy of this notification of the PIM, to whom it has been sent*, will be published on the Application website. To re-iterate, the PIM is to discuss the administrative arrangements for the forthcoming Inquiry only, and not to discuss the planning merits of the scheme.

I wish to attend – what do I need to do?

Unless you are the Applicants or local planning authority; Ashford Borough Council, you **must register** to attend the PIM with the Crown Development Team at the Planning Inspectorate. This is so that we can ensure that you have the correct link to the meeting. You can register by emailing us, using the subject line *'Interested Party - I wish to attend the PIM for Sevington Inland Border Ref 0000002'* and including brief reasons

for you wishing to attend if you are not an identified party in the notification Rule 15 table. This will assist the Inspector in presiding at the meeting.

Please note that the PIM is separate from the Inquiry, and you will need to let us know for both events if you wish to attend either or both and you are not the Applicants or Ashford Borough Council.

Preparing for the PIM

The Meeting will be held via Microsoft Teams.

Attendees may join by video or audio. There is also the option of dialling in from a telephone.

Actions required by participants on the day of the PIM

- Please access the virtual event 5 minutes before the scheduled start time. This gives time for the Case Officer to admit everyone to the event and for any joining issues to be resolved.
- You will be held in a silent 'lobby' until the Case Officer is able to admit you.
- For those joining via the internet on a computer or smartphone, please follow this link:
  Please email crownapplications@planninginspectorate.gov.uk should you wish to attend the PIM, including brief reasons for you wishing to attend if you are not an identified party in the notification Rule 15 table below.
- Alternatively, if you are joining via telephone, please dial the telephone number in the above link, entering the stated conference ID when prompted, followed by the # key using your telephone keypad.
- IMPORTANT NOTE: If you wish to hide your telephone number from the other participants, please dial 141 before dialling the number above (other methods may apply on certain mobile carriers/telephones). You should also note that joining by telephone to the 020 number that will be used will incur charges. You should check actual rates with your provider https://www.gov.uk/call-charges
- Once admitted to the PIM, you will then be able to follow the proceedings by video link, audio link or telephone.
- The Inspector will lead the proceedings and will invite you to speak when it is your turn.
- The Teams chat function will not be available for participants of the PIM.
- The 'raise hand' function can be used to signify to the Inspector that you wish to speak. Use the same button to turn this off once you have spoken at the Inspectors discretion.

- As an attendee, your 'share screen' function will not automatically be enabled. However, the Inspector will have the ability to enable that function during the PIM on an ad hoc basis is they consider it helpful to allow all parties to view a particular document that is being referred to at a particular time if it is considered appropriate and necessary to do so. You should familiarise yourself with use of that function in advance if you wish to use it.

What if things go wrong?

Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, you may lose connection to the meeting. If you experience problems with your connection during the PIM, please try and re-join by the same means immediately. If that is not successful, you should alert the Case Officer by email using the above contact details. They will attempt to help you to re-join the PIM. It may be that if you initially joined by video, you can re-join by audio or by telephone to help limit the effect of any technical issues that you may have been experiencing.

If you have any further queries, please contact us at crownapplications@planninginspectorate.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Crown Development Case Team
Planning & Environmental Applications Service

*The following parties have been specifically notified in accordance with Rule 15:

Party	**Reason**
Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) agents for; Department for Transport (DfT), Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and His Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC)	*(a) the applicant*
Ashford Borough Council	*(b) the relevant local planning authority*
National Highways Limited South Eastern Power Networks PLC	*(c) any statutory party*

Kent County Council	(in this case identified on application form as landowners)
Kent County Council (as a county council, including functions such as LLFA, Local Highways Authority, Archaeology and heritage, Ecological Advice Service) Sevington with Finberry Parish Council and Mersham Parish Council (as the council(s) of the parish in which the land is situated and having made representations pursuant to Article 21 of the CDAO25) Historic England	*(d) any other person known to be entitled to appear at the inquiry* (Rule 19(1)) *Note: Mersham Parish Council is included as this parish appears to cover areas of land which are included within the 'blue line' area and to which parts of the s106 unilateral undertaking relate*
Ward Member for the Mersham, Sevington South with Finberry ward. Kent Downs National Landscape Team CPRE Ashford The Village Alliance Canterbury Diocesan Board of Finance Limited Environment Agency Natural England Southern Water Local residents who have registered to speak at the inquiry, as of 27 October 2025.	*(e) any other person whose presence at the meeting appears to the inspector to be desirable* *Note: these persons are considered desirable to be at the meeting as they have submitted detailed written representations and/or indicated that they wish to speak at a Hearing/Inquiry in their written representations. Their presence at the PIM is* ***optional****.* *Although no other parties have indicated that they wish to submit a Statement of Case at this stage, if we are notified and agree to such request, these parties will also be informed of the PIM.* *Attendance at the PIM for these persons is discretional and does not necessarily mean that you will have an opportunity to speak should you wish to. Nonetheless, attendance to observe can be helpful.*