

# Development consent for our major road schemes



# What is development consent?

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) are major infrastructure projects such as new harbours, roads, power generating stations (including offshore wind farms) and electricity transmission lines. These need **development consent** before construction can start.

Under the Planning Act 2008, development consent is granted through a Development Consent Order (DCO). This gives permission to construct and maintain projects categorised as NSIPs.

Some of our major road projects are NSIPs, which means we need to apply for and get a DCO before we can start construction.

We submit a DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate, the government agency responsible for operating the planning process for NSIPs. Before we do this, we hold consultations as part of our wider engagement activity. This is in advance of the request for representations and the examination of the application that the Planning Inspectorate organises once it accepts an application.

## How do I have my say on road projects that affect me or my community?

We engage and consult with relevant local authorities, anyone with an interest in the affected land, statutory consultees such as the Environment Agency, local communities and our customers on the proposals for all our major road projects.

Where we consult the local community under the Planning Act, we work with the relevant local authorities to prepare a statement. This sets out how we will consult people living near the project. To ensure people are aware of consultations that affect them and how they can take part, we place notices in local and national press to advertise the consultation.

We sometimes carry out consultation in stages. This is so that feedback can influence the type, geographical route and design of the project that we take forward. Sometimes that may mean that having consulted, we announce a preferred route for a project. We will then carry

out further consultation to inform the proposals before we finalise our DCO application.

During our consultations, stakeholders and customers can respond to our pre-application consultation. This gives you an opportunity to influence and improve the project, as well as tell us whether you agree or disagree with it.

The best time to influence and improve a project is before the DCO application. There is limited time and scope for change after an application is made. This is because of the maximum time legally allowed for an examination.

To ensure transparency, we publish a consultation report to set out how we have considered responses following each round of consultation. We must include a consultation report in our application to the Planning Inspectorate for the DCO.



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