

Approach to casework during the pre-election period

The Planning Inspectorate always aims to issue decisions and recommendations promptly. However, in the run-up to the General Election we are concerned to ensure that decisions or recommendations relating to proposals which have raised sensitivities or interest in an area cannot be deemed to have influenced the election in any constituency or, more broadly, across the country, or have been used to electoral advantage by any interested body.

Whether a decision or recommendation should be held back until the election results have been announced is a judgement taken by senior managers in the Planning Inspectorate on the circumstances of the case. We shall of course ensure that any such delayed decisions or recommendations are issued promptly after the election.

National Infrastructure Casework

As National Infrastructure Examinations are required to comply with a statutory time limit, once the Preliminary Meeting has been notified and the Examination Timetable has been set the examination is expected to run to the published timetable.

Local Plans

All scheduled local plan examinations and hearing sessions will continue during the pre-election period and new examinations will also begin.

However, in order to avoid making announcements that could be politically sensitive, the Planning Inspectorate will not be issuing any letters regarding the soundness or legal compliance of local plans, or final reports (including for fact check), until after the election. The fact check report is the version of the report the Planning Inspectorate sends to the LPA to check for factual errors or inconsistencies. The final report is issued after this process has been completed.

All of the above has been agreed in consultation with MHCLG as our sponsor department.