



Examination of Places for Everyone

Joint Development Plan Document

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IN15: Guidance Note for Participation and Observing Hearing Sessions

Introduction

The examination hearing sessions will commence at 09.30 on 1 November 2022 at the former Manchester Fire and Rescue Training Centre, Cassidy Close, Manchester M4 5HU.

Guidance on taking part in local plan examinations is available in the following document which all participants are encouraged to read:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-in-local-plan-examinations>

This note sets out more detailed practical advice about observing and participating at the Places for Everyone Joint Development Document hearing sessions.

Venue information

Information about getting to the venue by public transport, car parking and nearby cafes and shops is available at:

<https://www.hwa.uk.com/site/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Venue-information.pdf>

Everyone attending the venue will be required to sign in at reception for health and safety reasons.

Examination programme

The programme for the first four weeks of hearings (matters 1 to 12), along with the participants for each session, is set out in IN13 published on 13 September 2022:

<https://www.hwa.uk.com/site/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/IN13-with-programme.pdf>

A provisional programme and lists of participants for the remainder of the hearing sessions (matters 14 to 32), starting on Tuesday 17 January 2023, was set out in IN12 published on 9 August 2022. The programme is not currently expected to change significantly, and revised lists of participants for those sessions will be published nearer the time.

Agendas

An agenda for each hearing session will be published a few days in advance confirming the issues and questions that will be discussed. These are unlikely to change significantly from the previously published programme but we will, for example, clarify when any supplementary questions that we have published will be discussed.

Observing

The hearings are public events and all sessions will be broadcast live and be available to view subsequently during the examination via links on the GMCA and examination websites.

There will also be the opportunity to view the sessions live on a large screen in a room at the venue. Due to limited space, and the large number of participants, it will not be possible to observe sessions in weeks 1 to 4 from within the actual hearing room. We may review this arrangement for later sessions in 2023, when participants numbers are expected to be lower, if practicalities permit.

Participating at the hearing sessions

Participants invited to each session should arrive at the venue between 08.45 and 09.00 (or before 13.30 for sessions that start at 14.00) in order to allow a prompt start.

Water will be provided for all participants. Please do not bring food or hot drinks into the hearing room.

Each participant at every session will normally have one seat at the table (with the exception of GMCA who will have up to four), along with one seat behind for one colleague. A limited amount of “hot seating” will be allowed within a session if a participant considers it essential that a different person acts for them in relation to a particular issue. However, this must be kept to a minimum to avoid disruption to proceedings. If you intend to hot seat, please advise the Programme Officers before the session starts.

Where a consultant or agent is listed as a participant, they should confirm with the Programme Officers a few days in advance of the hearing session the representor(s) they are participating on behalf of. They should also clarify that when they first introduce themselves in the session (see below).

Conduct of the hearing sessions

The hearing sessions are an important part of the examination and will help us determine if the Plan is legally compliant and sound and, if not, how it could be modified to ensure that it is. The hearings will allow us to focus on particular parts of the Plan and relevant evidence that we need to ask questions about. Not all parts of the Plan will be discussed at the hearings as for some we will have all of the information that we need in writing.

Each session will be led by one of us, supported by one or both of the others. We will start with some opening comments about procedural matters, and ask all participants to introduce themselves and, if relevant, clarify who they are representing.

After introductions and having dealt with any procedural matters, we will go through each of the agenda items in turn throughout the course of the session. We will focus on the key things that we need to understand better, based on our reading of the Plan, evidence, representations and written statements. We will start with some questions to the GMCA, and then allow other participants to contribute after we have heard the responses to those.

As we will have read all of the written statements before the relevant session, participants should not read out or summarise what they have submitted. When you wish to speak, upturn your name plate and we will invite you to do so at an appropriate time. When asked to speak, you should turn on your microphone and say who you are. Contributions should be short (normally no more than one or two minutes in duration) and directly related to our specific questions or respond to points made by other participants. There is no need to repeat or say you agree with points made by others.

We will give the GMCA the chance to sum up their position at the end of each item on the agenda before moving on to the next.

Local plan examination hearing sessions are formal events, with appropriate conduct. We will treat all participants with fairness and respect and expect others to do likewise. Participants may only speak when invited to do so and must not interrupt others.

Adjournments

Morning sessions will start at 9.30am promptly and will normally finish around 1pm for lunch. On days when there are separate afternoon sessions, they will start at 2pm promptly. We will normally have adjournments for around 20 minutes around 11am and 3pm. Afternoon sessions will normally finish around 5pm, but we may carry on later if necessary. The timing of adjournments and lunch breaks in all day sessions may vary.

Documents

Free wifi will be available at the venue to provide access to the examination library online. Paper copies of documents will not be available at the venue, and therefore all participants should ensure that they bring what they need to allow them to access any documents they think they may need to refer to. If any participant feels they need help with accessing documents on the examination website they should contact the Programme Officers.

The deadlines for submission of written statements have passed and no further written material should be submitted unless specifically requested by us. Participants should not expect to introduce new documents during the hearing sessions.

Proposed main modifications

Since submitting the Plan for examination, the GMCA has proposed some main modifications to it. This is normal practice in examinations and is intended to help us decide how best to modify the Plan if necessary to ensure that it is sound. The GMCA's first schedule of proposed main modifications was published on 1 July 2022 [PMM1], and these were referred to in our matters, issues and questions and could be commented on in representors' written statements. The GMCA has subsequently proposed further main modifications in its written statements, and an updated comprehensive schedule will be

published before 1 November. Each of the proposed main modifications will be discussed at a relevant hearing session.

We will consider whether the GMCA's proposed main modifications (and those suggested by representors) are necessary and would make the Plan sound. We can only recommend them if that is the case, and there may be other recommendations that we identify as being necessary during or after hearing sessions. We cannot recommend changes to the Plan to "improve" it unless we think the relevant part is not sound as submitted. And we can only make recommendations about the actual content of the Plan, not related matters.

Any potential main modifications that we intend to recommend be made to the Plan will be subject to public consultation (similar to that carried out under regulation 19) before we formally include them in our final report. Such consultation will normally be carried out after the completion of the programmed hearing sessions.

Action points

If we identify during hearing sessions that main modifications are required, or that further work needs to be carried out by the GMCA and/or others, we will usually make that clear during the session. The GMCA should keep a note of all such matters. We will probably issue an Action Point Note at the end of each week of hearings to confirm what we have asked for.

It is also possible that there are some matters that we need longer to think about, and we may set out interim thoughts in a separate note at a later date.

Queries

Any queries about this note should be taken up with the Programme Officers.

William Fieldhouse Louise Gibbons Steven Lee

18 October 2022
