



# The Millbrook Power (Gas Fired Power Station) Order

## 1.1 Introduction to the Applicant

Planning Act 2008  
The Infrastructure Planning  
(Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document provides information on Millbrook Power Limited (MPL), the applicant for The Millbrook Power (Gas Fired Power Station) Order (the Order). MPL is applying to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, (SoS) under the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) for powers to construct, operate and maintain an up to 299 MW gas fired peaking power generation plant.
- 1.2 The Project would comprise:
- a new Power Generation Plant in the form of an Open Cycle Gas Turbine (OCGT) peaking power generating station, fuelled by natural gas with a rated electrical output of up to 299 MW. This is the output of the generating station as a whole, measured at the terminals of the generating equipment. The Power Generation Plant comprises:
    - generating equipment including one Gas Turbine Generator with one exhaust gas flue stack and Balance of Plant (together referred to as the 'Generating Equipment'), which are located within the 'Generating Equipment Site';
    - a new purpose built access road from Green Lane to the Generating Equipment Site (the 'Access Road' or the 'Short Access Road');
    - a temporary construction compound required during construction only (the 'Laydown Area');
  - a new underground gas pipeline connection, approximately 1.8 km in length (the 'Pipeline') to bring natural gas to the Generating Equipment from the National Transmission System (the 'Gas Connection'). The Gas Connection also incorporates an Above Ground Installation (AGI) at the point of connection to the National Transmission System; and
  - a new electrical connection to export power from the Generating Equipment to the National Grid Electricity Transmission System (NETS) (the 'Electrical Connection'), comprising an underground double circuit Tee-in. This would require one new tower (which will replace an existing tower and be located in the existing Grendon – Sundon transmission route corridor, thereby resulting in no net additional towers). This option would require two SECs, one located on each side of the existing transmission line, and both circuits would then be connected via underground cables approximately 500 m in length to a new substation (the 'Substation').
- 1.3 The Generating Equipment, Access Road and Laydown Area are together known as the 'Power Generation Plant' and are located within the 'Power Generation Plant Site'. The Power Generation Plant Site is approximately 12.5 ha in area.
- 1.4 The Power Generation Plant, Gas Connection, and Electrical Connection, together with all access requirements are referred to as the 'Project'. The land upon which the Project would be developed, or which would be required in order to facilitate the development of the Project, is referred to as the 'Project Site'. The Project Site is approximately 48 ha in area. The Project is described in more detail in Chapter 3.

- 1.5 The Project is proposed at and in the vicinity of the former clay extraction pit at Rookery South, near Stewartby, Bedfordshire. The boundary of the Project Site falls within both Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and Bedford Borough Council (BBC) areas.
- 1.6 The Generating Equipment, Access Road and Laydown Area are together known as the "Power Generation Plant", and are located within the Power Generation Plant Site.
- 1.7 The Power Generation Plant, Gas Connection, and Electrical Connection, together with all access requirements are referred to as the "Project" and are all required for the generation of electricity and subsequent export of that electricity to the NETS. The land upon which the Project would be developed, or which would be required in order to facilitate the development of the Project, is referred to as the "Project Site".
- 1.8 The Project, comprising an electricity generating plant with an average gross electrical output in excess of 50 MWe, falls within the definition of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under Section 15(2)(c) of the PA 2008. It is, therefore, necessary for MPL to apply to the SoS for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to construct, operate and maintain the Project under Section 31 of the Act.
- 1.9 Background information on the DCO application process is provided below.
- 1.10 This document also identifies the suite of documents that comprise the application (the "Application") that MPL has submitted to the SoS for a DCO (i.e. the Order) in respect of the Project. The Application is made pursuant to Section 37 of the PA 2008.

## 2. **PROJECT DETAILS**

- 2.1 MPL is seeking to develop the Project at and in the vicinity of Rookery South Pit located near Stewartby, Bedfordshire.
- 2.2 A brief description of the elements that comprise the Project is set out below. More detail on these elements can be found in Section 3 Chapter 3 of the Environmental Statement (ES) (Document Reference 6.1).

### Generating Equipment

- 2.3 To generate up to 299 MWe, one Gas Turbine Generator would be used, with an emission flue stack which would be between 32.5 m and 35 m in height. The Generating Equipment would further be composed of; an electrical transformer compound, a natural gas receiving station n emergency generator, water tanks, control room, fin-fan coolers and support buildings and structures. The location of the Power Generation Plant is shown on the Land Plans (Document Reference 2.5) and the various components that comprise the Power Generation Plant are shown on the Works Plans (Document Reference 2.6).

### Electrical Connection

- 2.4 To function, the Generating Equipment requires an electrical connection to export the electricity generated to the NETS. The Electrical Connection would comprise all the necessary elements to enable power to be exported from the Generating Equipment to

the NETS, such as a new substation (the 'Substation'), a new underground electrical connection and Sealing End Compounds (SECs).

- 2.5 This comprises one underground 400kV double circuit Tee-in, requiring one new transmission tower, which would replace an existing tower, and be located in the existing Grendon – Sundon transmission route corridor, therefore resulting in no net additional towers. The Electrical Connection would also require two SECs, which will be located on either side of the existing transmission line. Underground cables would be approximately 500 m in length buried in four trenches typically 5 m apart, to a new substation.
- 2.6 The Electrical Connection would be constructed, owned and operated by NGET.

#### Laydown Area

- 2.7 A temporary Laydown Area for the storage of plant and equipment during construction would be provided adjacent to the Generating Equipment Site.

#### Access Road

- 2.8 Permanent access to the Generating Equipment and Substation would be required for construction and operation. An agricultural access track is already in existence at the Project Site, linking Green Lane to Rookery South Pit. On reaching Rookery South Pit, the Access Road (Work no. 2A) would use an access ramp to enter into Rookery South Pit and cross through the base of the pit until it reaches the Generating Equipment Site. The Access Road would be constructed along the route of the existing agricultural access track and would be constructed of tarmac bordered by a concrete kerb. It would be 6 m wide allowing for two-way traffic.
- 2.9 The Covanta RRF Project also includes provision to upgrade this track to a tarmac road. Should this road be developed as part of the Covanta RRF Project prior to the development of this Project, it would be suitable to meet both the needs of the Project and the Covanta RRF Project. In this instance, there would be a requirement for a short section of new Access Road ('Short Access Road') (Work no. 2B) of up to 1.4 km in length connecting the end of the Covanta RRF road to the Generating Equipment Site.

#### Gas Connection

- 2.10 The Gas Connection (Work Nos. 3 and 4) would bring natural gas to the Generating Equipment from the existing high pressure gas NTS feeder 9, east of the Millbrook Proving Ground approximately 1.45 km south of the Generating Equipment Site. The Gas Connection would be composed of an AGI comprising of a Pipeline Instrumentation Gauge (PIG) Trap Facility alongside a Minimum Offtake Connection (MOC), and an approximately 1.8 km long gas pipeline laid to the gas receiving station in the Generating Equipment Site.
- 2.11 The MOC would be constructed, owned and operated by National Grid Gas while the PIG Trap Facility would be constructed, owned and operated by MPL.
- 2.12 Schedule 1 to the draft Order (Document Reference 3.1) sets out the formal description of the Project. This description is shown on the Works Plan (Document Reference 2.6).

- 2.13 In addition to seeking consent in the Order for the Project, MPL is also seeking compulsory acquisition powers in order to acquire land, the temporary use of land, permanent new rights, impose restrictions and to suspend and/or extinguish rights, restrictions, easements or servitudes in order to facilitate the construction and operation (including maintenance) of the Project. The Land Plans (Document Reference 2.5) show the land to be acquired, the land to be used temporarily, the land over which new rights are to be acquired and restrictions imposed and the land in relation to which it is proposed to suspend and/or extinguish rights, restrictions, easements or servitudes. The Book of Reference (Document Reference 4.3) describes this land in more detail and the Statement of Reasons (Document Reference 4.1) explains why compulsory purchase powers are being sought in the Order.
- 2.14 Consultation on the Project has been carried out by MPL since May 2014, taking the form of multiple stages of non-statutory consultation and two phases of statutory consultation. At all stages, MPL has consulted regularly with Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council, being the host authorities for the Project, as well as key stakeholders. In addition, MPL has actively engaged with landowners and those interested in the land affected by the Project. The Consultation Report (Document Reference 5.1) details the consultation carried out on the Project, the results of that consultation and how MPL has had regard to the consultation in finalising its proposals for the Project.
- 3. THE APPLICANT**
- 3.1 MPL is the applicant for the Project. MPL is registered in England (Company Number 08920458) and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Drax Group plc (Drax), Company Number 05562053.
- 3.2 MPL's registered office is at Drax Power Station, Drax, Selby, North Yorkshire, United Kingdom, YO8 8PH.
- 3.3 Drax is responsible for generating 7% of the UK's electricity, predominantly via Drax power station in Selby. Drax is one of the UK's largest energy producers and is committed to helping to reduce carbon emissions, displacing more coal off the system and providing additional system support to plug the gaps created by intermittent renewables and boost security of supply.
- 3.4 Drax acquired MPL from Watt Power Limited (Watt Power) in 2016. Stag Energy Development Company Ltd (Stag Energy) previously provided management services to Watt Power in relation to MPL. Stag Energy continues to provide resources to MPL through a management services agreement. Stag Energy was founded in 2002 and the company draws on a depth of experience within a team that has created and delivered over 10,000 MW of power generation and related infrastructure projects across the globe, of which 2,500 MW has been delivered in the UK.
- 3.5 Drax currently has three other power generation projects which have either already been granted consent under or are being brought forward through the PA 2008 process. They are: Progress Power Ltd at Eye Airfield in Suffolk ([www.progresspower.co.uk](http://www.progresspower.co.uk)): Hirwaun Power Ltd at Hirwaun in South Wales ([www.hirwaunpower.co.uk](http://www.hirwaunpower.co.uk)): and

Abergelli Power Ltd at Abergelli in South Wales ([www.abergellipower.co.uk](http://www.abergellipower.co.uk)). The first two listed projects were granted Development Consent in July 2015.

- 3.6 MPL is committed to the development of assets to support the UK Government's drive to a low carbon economy. MPL recognises the need to balance commercial issues with the environmental benefits and concerns relating to energy projects and believes this balance can be responsibly delivered. The Project would be designed and developed to high quality, safety and environmental standards.
- 3.7 Further information on the companies referred to above is provided at [www.millbrookpower.co.uk](http://www.millbrookpower.co.uk) or [www.drax.com](http://www.drax.com).
- 3.8 MPL has appointed the following as its external consultants in respect of the Project:
- 3.8.1 WSP – engineering services;
  - 3.8.2 Peter Brett Associates – environmental and planning services;
  - 3.8.3 Carter Jonas Limited – land referencing services;
  - 3.8.4 Sheppard Robson Limited – architectural consultants;
  - 3.8.5 Taylor Keogh – public relations; and
  - 3.8.6 Pinsent Masons LLP – legal services.

#### **4. THE DCO PRE-APPLICATION AND CONSENTING PROCESS**

- 4.1 As stated above at paragraph 1.6, the Project, comprising an electricity generating plant with an average electrical output in excess of 50 MWe, is an NSIP and therefore requires a DCO under the PA 2008. Accordingly, MPL has carried out pre-application consultation on the Project in accordance with Part 5, Chapter 2 of the PA 2008 including the consultation required under Sections 42, 47 and 48 and the notification and other duties under the PA 2008 and applicable Regulations. In addition, MPL has had regard to and complied with relevant guidance issued by the SoS and the Planning Inspectorate in carrying out its pre-application consultation. The Application is accompanied by a Consultation Report (Document Reference 5.1) which explains the pre-application consultation carried out as well as the regard that MPL has had to consultation responses in formulating the Application.
- 4.2 The Application seeks powers to construct, operate and maintain the Project as well as powers to compulsorily acquire land, rights and other interests in order to facilitate the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project. The draft Order (Document Reference 3.1) contains these powers, which are explained in the Explanatory Memorandum (Document Reference 3.2).
- 4.3 Applications for DCOs are made to the Planning Inspectorate, which examines and then reports on the proposals to the relevant SoS. In the case of the Project, the Planning Inspectorate will examine the Project and report (together with a recommendation) to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, who will then decide whether or not to make the DCO.



4.4 Further information on the processes that the Planning Inspectorate follows after submission of the Application by MPL is provided in section 0 below. Reference should also be made to the information on the Planning Inspectorate's website (<http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk/>).

## 5. **THE APPLICATION DOCUMENTS AND THEIR COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

5.1 Table 1 below provides a guide to the documents that MPL is submitting as part of this Application. As well as providing a list of the main application documents, it also identifies where documents are submitted in order to comply with a relevant legislative or policy requirement.

5.2 The legislative requirements for applications for a DCO are principally contained in the PA 2008, and the following regulations:

5.2.1 The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (as amended) (the 'APFP Regulations'); and

5.2.2 The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009<sup>1</sup> (the 'EIA Regulations').

5.3 Regulation 5 in the APFP Regulations sets out the documents that all development consent applications must include and Regulation 6 sets out the documents that particular types of development consent applications must include – those relating to generating stations are relevant to the Project. References in Table 1 below such as "Reg. 5(2)(b)" are to the APFP Regulations and those such as "S.37(3)(c)" are to the PA 2008.

5.4 Regulation 5 of the APFP Regulations includes a category described as "any other documents considered necessary to support the application" (Reg. 5(2)(q)). Similarly, Regulation 5 also allows MPL to submit other plans, drawings and sections which are necessary to describe the Project (Reg. 5(2)(o)). The documents provided by MPL and marked as relating to those two paragraphs of the APFP Regulations are therefore not statutorily required but are those which MPL considers necessary to support the Application.

5.5 The Application submitted for the Project complies with the requirements of the PA 2008, the APFP Regulations, the EIA Regulations and applicable SoS and Planning Inspectorate guidance, including in particular Planning Inspectorate Advice Note 6 (Preparation and submission of application documents, Republished October 2014).

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<sup>1</sup>Note: The Project falls under the EIA Regulations 2009 regime and not the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the "EIA Regulations 2017") regime. This is because a scoping opinion was requested from the Secretary of State under the EIA Regulations 2009 before the commencement of the EIA Regulations 2017. This means that, in accordance with the transitional arrangements at Regulation 37(2)(a)(ii) of the EIA Regulations 2017, the EIA Regulations 2009 will continue to apply to the Project.

**Table 1 Guide to the DCO Application Documents**

This table provides a guide to all documents submitted as part of the Millbrook Power DCO Application. This table will be used as a live document and will be updated when new or revised documents are submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, to provide a record of the latest version of all documents.						
Application Document Reference	Application Document Name	Statutory / Other Requirement for Document	Revision (submission version)	[To be completed if revision is submitted]	[To be completed if revision is submitted]	[To be completed if revision is submitted]
<b>Category 1 Application Form</b>						
1.1	Introduction to the Applicant and Guide to the Application (this document)	Reg. 5(2)(q)	0			
1.2	Application Form	Reg. 5(1) and s37(3)(b) Planning Act 2008	0			
1.3	Copies of Newspaper Notices	Reg. 5(2)(q)	0			
1.4	Project Glossary	Reg. 5(2)(q)	0			
<b>Category 2 Plans / Drawings / Sections</b>						
2.1	Location Plan	Reg. 5(2)(o)	C			
2.2	Existing Site Layout Plan	Reg. 5(2)(o)	C			
2.3	Indicative Site Layout					

	Plans					
	Figure 1 – Indicative Layout Generating Equipment and Electrical Connection	Reg. 5(2)(o)	D			
	Figure 2 – Indicative Layout Above Ground Installation	Reg. 5(2)(o)	3			
	Figure 3 – Indicative Layout of the Access Road	Reg. 5(2)(o)	0			
	Figure 4 – Indicative Drainage Re-alignment	Reg. 5(2)(o)	A			
2.4	Indicative Elevation Drawings					
	Figure 1 – Generating Equipment Elevation North	Reg. 5(2)(o)	D			
	Figure 2 – Generating Equipment Elevation South	Reg. 5(2)(o)	D			
	Figure 3 – Generating Equipment Elevation East	Reg. 5(2)(o)	D			
	Figure 4 – Generating Equipment Elevation West	Reg. 5(2)(o)	D			
	Figure 5 – Gas Turbine Generator Plan and	Reg. 5(2)(o)	C			

	Elevations					
	Figure 6 – Gatehouse Plan and Elevations	Reg. 5(2)(o)	C			
	Figure 7 – Emergency Generator Plan and Elevations	Reg. 5(2)(o)	C			
	Figure 8 – Control Room/Office/Workshop Plan and Elevations	Reg. 5(2)(o)	D			
	Figure 9 – Transformer and Gantry Plan and Elevations	Reg. 5(2)(o)	C			
	Figure 10 – Demineralised Water Tank and Raw/Fire Water Tank Plan and Elevations	Reg. 5(2)(o)	C			
	Figure 11 – Fin Fan Cooler Plan and Elevations	Reg. 5(2)(o)	C			
	Figure 12 – Diesel Tank Plan and Elevations	Reg. 5(2)(o)	C			
	Figure 13 – Substation Elevation North	Reg. 5(2)(o)	2			
	Figure 14 – Substation Elevation South	Reg. 5(2)(o)	2			
	Figure 15 – Substation Elevation East	Reg. 5(2)(o)	2			
	Figure 16 – Substation Elevation West	Reg. 5(2)(o)	2			
	Figure 17 – Sealing End	Reg. 5(2)(o)	D			

	Compound Plan and Elevations					
2.5	Land Plans					
	(Sheet 0 of 3) Land Plan Key Plan	Reg. 5(2)(i)	F			
	(Sheet 1 of 3) Power Generation Plant Land Plan	Reg. 5(2)(i)	E			
	(Sheet 2 of 3) Electrical Connection Land Plan	Reg. 5(2)(i)	F			
	(Sheet 3 of 3) Gas Connection Land Plan	Reg. 5(2)(i)	E			
2.6	Works Plans					
	(Sheet 0 of 3) Works Plan Key Plan	Reg. 5(2)(j)	G			
	(Sheet 1 of 3) Works Plan	Reg. 5(2)(j)	G			
	(Sheet 2 of 3) Works Plan	Reg. 5(2)(j)	G			
	(Sheet 3 of 3) Works Plan	Reg. 5(2)(j)	G			
	Works Package 1A <sup>2</sup>	Reg. 5(2)(j)	B			
	Works Package 1B <sup>2</sup>	Reg. 5(2)(j)	B			
	Works Package 1C <sup>2</sup>	Reg. 5(2)(j)	B			
	Works Package 1D <sup>2</sup>	Reg. 5(2)(j)	B			
	Works Package 5 <sup>2</sup>	Reg. 5(2)(j)	B			
	Works Package 6 (a,c,g) <sup>2</sup>	Reg. 5(2)(j)	B			

<sup>2</sup> Note: In cases where multiple works packages overlap, a copy of individual works package plans have been provided alongside the Works Plans (and included within Document 2.6)

	Works Package 6 (b,e,f) <sup>3</sup>	Reg. 5(2)(j)	B			
	Works Package 6 (h,i) <sup>3</sup>	Reg. 5(2)(j)	B			
	Works Package 6 (d) <sup>3</sup>	Reg. 5(2)(j)	B			
	Works Package 6 (f) <sup>3</sup>	Reg. 5(2)(j)	B			
2.7	Rights of WayStreets and Access Plan					
	(Sheet 0 of 3) Key Plan	Reg. 5(2)(k)	D			
	(Sheet 1 of 3)	Reg. 5(2)(k)	D			
	(Sheet 2 of 3)	Reg. 5(2)(k)	D			
	(Sheet 3 of 3)	Reg. 5(2)(k)	D			
<b>Category 3 Draft Development Consent Order</b>						
3.1	Draft Development Consent Order	Reg. 5(2)(b)	0			
3.2	Explanatory Memorandum	Reg. 5(2)(c)	0			
<b>Category 4 Compulsory Acquisition Information</b>						
4.1	Statement of Reasons	Reg. 5(2)(h)	0			
4.2	Funding Statement	Reg. 5(2)(h)	0			
4.3	Book of Reference	Reg. 5(2)(d)	0			

<sup>3</sup> Note: In cases where multiple works packages overlap, a copy of individual works package plans have been provided alongside the Works Plans (and included within Document 2.6)

<b>Category 5 Reports / Statements</b>						
5.1	Consultation Report	Reg 5(2)(q) & s37(3)(c) PA 2008	0			
5.2	Consultation Report Appendices	Reg 5(2)(q) & s37(3)(c) PA 2008	0			
5.3	Not Used					
5.4	Flood Risk Assessment	Reg. 5(2)(e)	0			
5.5	Statement of Engagement of Section 79(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990	Reg. 5(2)(f)	0			
5.6	Details of Other Consents and Licences	Reg. 5(2)(q)	0			
5.7	No Significant Effects Report	Reg. 5(2)(g) and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010	0			

Category 6 Environmental impact assessment and habitats regulations information						
6.1	Environmental Statement	<p>Reg. 5(2)(a) and Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009</p> <p>Document Reference 6.1 includes within it the following:</p> <p>(i) Assessment of any effects on sites or features of nature conservation (etc), at ES Section 8, Ecology and Nature Conservation, subsection 8.12 (Reg.5(2)(l)); and</p> <p>(ii) Assessment of any effects on sites or features of the historic</p>	0			



		environment, at ES Section 13, Cultural Heritage and Archaeology, subsection 13.12 (Reg.(5)(2)(m)).				
6.2	Environmental Statement Appendices	Reg. 5(2)(a) & Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009.  Document Reference 6.2 includes within it the Environmental impact scoping report and scoping opinion at ES Volume B, Appendix 1.2 (Reg.5(2)(a));	0			
6.3	Environmental Statement Figures	Reg. 5(2)(a) & (5)(2)(l) Figure 8.1, 5(2)(m) Figure 13.1) & Infrastructure Planning				

		(Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009.				
6.4	Environmental Statement Non-Technical Summary	Reg. 5(2)(a) & Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009	0			
<b>Category 7 Photographs</b>						
7.1	Photographs and Photomontages	Reg.5(2)(q)	0			
7.2	Plan Identifying Locations of Photographs	Reg. 5(2)(q)	0			
7.3	Index of Photographs	Reg. 5(2)(q)	0			
<b>Category 8 Not Used</b>						
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

<b>Category 9 Additional Information for Specific Types of Infrastructure</b>						
9.1	Grid Connection Statement	5(2)(p) & 6(1)(a)(i)	0			
9.2	Gas Connection Statement	5(2)(p) & 6(1)(a)(ii)	0			
<b>Category 10 Other Documents</b>						
10.1	Planning Statement	Reg. 5(2)(q)	0			
10.2	Design and Access Statement	Reg. 5(2)(q)	0			
10.3	Statement of Proposed Heads of Terms for an Agreement Pursuant to s106 of the TCPA 1990	Reg. 5(2)(q)	0			

## 6. THE DCO APPLICATION AND EXAMINATION PROCESS

- 6.1 After MPL has submitted the Application, the process for considering it is outlined as follows:
- 6.1.1 The Planning Inspectorate has 28 days from the date that the Application is made to decide whether to accept it for examination.
  - 6.1.2 Following acceptance by the Planning Inspectorate, MPL will carry out its post-acceptance consultation and notification duties. This includes site notice and advertisements in a local newspaper, a national newspaper and the London Gazette, all confirming certain details including that the Application has been accepted and how representations can be made about it, as well as notices to various statutory consultees.
  - 6.1.3 The Planning Inspectorate will then appoint one or more 'examining inspectors' (known as the examining authority) to examine the Application. The examining authority will consider the Application documents and the representations and invite all parties to attend a 'preliminary meeting', setting out what the examining authority considers to be the principal issues relating to the Project, and a draft timetable for examining it.
  - 6.1.4 At or before the preliminary meeting, participants may make submissions about how the Application should be examined. The preliminary meeting does not consider issues of substance relating to the Application.
  - 6.1.5 Following the preliminary meeting, the examining authority will issue an examination timetable and it is also likely to issue an initial set of written questions. The timetable will give details of deadlines for submitting written representations, commenting on others' representations, answering the examining authorities' questions and commenting on others' answers. Hearings may be scheduled at this point, or these may be programmed at a later time, and further questions and requests for information may be issued by the examining authority. Further information on participating in the examination of the Application can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website including in the Advice Notes it has issued.
  - 6.1.6 The examination period (which includes the submission of all written material as well as holding hearings and site visits) starts from the date of the preliminary meeting and must take no more than six months. This can only be extended with the authorisation of the SoS.
  - 6.1.7 Following the end of the six-month examination period, the examining authority must submit a report to the SoS within three months, who then has a further three months to determine the Application.
  - 6.1.8 Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council have a very important role to play in the DCO process. They will be invited by the Planning Inspectorate to comment on the quality of MPL's consultation process, to

produce a Local Impact Report on the Project and to make their own representations to the Planning Inspectorate on the Application.

- 6.1.9 MPL welcomes correspondence from interested parties in relation to the Project - questions relating to the examination process should be directed to the Planning Inspectorate.