

APPEAL REF: APP/W0340/W/25/3367152

**Land adjacent to M4, Membury Airfield, Lambourn Woodlands,
Hungerford, Berkshire (Easting 431219; Northing 17555)**

**Installation and operation of an asphalt plant and associated ancillary
development**

INSPECTOR'S PRE-HEARING NOTE

Background

1. This note is produced to help parties prepare for the hearing which has been scheduled for Thursday 2 October 2025 at 10am.
2. The hearing will be conducted by Lewis Condé BSc, MSc, MRTPI who is an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.
3. The purpose of this pre-hearing note is to explain how the event will operate in a fair, open, and transparent way and what should be done to ensure it runs smoothly.
4. A copy of this pre-hearing note, along with the responses from the main parties, which includes any supporting documentation submitted with the responses, should be made publicly available by the Council in advance of the hearing.

Hearing Arrangements

5. The Hearing will run as an in person physical event hosted by the Council at The Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5LD.

Access to Internet

6. The Inspector will require access to the internet, and electrical sockets, during the hearing to access electronic documentation and evidence in relation to the appeal. Can the Council therefore ensure that a network connection (Wi-Fi or fixed cable) will be available at the venue for the Inspector and provide any associated security credentials/passwords to gain access.

Adjournment Room

7. It is likely that adjournments will be required during the hearing. It would be helpful if the Council could arrange for a separate room at the venue for the Inspector to be able to utilise during such periods.

Participants Lists

8. In advance of the hearing main parties should provide a list of participants that will be representing them at the event, including job titles/role.
9. If available, a list of interested parties intending to appear at the event should also be provided by the Council.
10. Please could the above lists be provided **no later than Monday 29 September 2025.**

Format

11. The hearing will commence promptly at 10:00am. The Inspector will start the event in the usual way by running through several preliminary matters.
12. The Inspector will issue an agenda before the event and the content will be discussed at the hearing.
13. The hearing will be run as a structured discussion with the Inspector asking a series of questions in respect of the main issues. All parties who so wish, will be given an opportunity to speak. The Inspector will take into consideration all written submissions that have been previously made by any party. As such, there is no need to simply repeat representations that have already been made in writing.
14. There will be regular breaks, including a lunch break.

Provisional Main Issues

15. From the evidence submitted, the Inspector considers that the main issues in this appeal could relate to:
 - Whether the appeal site is a suitable location for the proposed development having regard to its accessibility;
 - The effect of the proposed development on highway safety; and
 - The effect of the proposed development on the local racehorse industry.
16. Additionally, it will be necessary to also discuss other matters that have been raised, including other areas of dispute outlined under Section 7 of the Statement of Common Ground (SOCG), as well as matters raised by interested parties. Main parties should therefore be prepared to discuss such issues.

Missing Information

17. The following policies/information has been referred to within the submitted evidence, but copies have not seemingly been provided to the Inspector:
- a) Policy DM31 of the Local Plan Review (adopted June 2025); and
 - b) A copy of an adopted plan/extract showing the extent of the Membury Industrial Estate Designated Employment Area.
18. Can the Council please provide copies of the above requested documents at the earliest opportunity and **no later than Thursday 11 September 2025.**
19. Additionally, each of the policies of the Local Plan Review that have been provided are from a document entitled '*Local Plan Review 2023-2041 version for adoption June 2025*'. For the avoidance of doubt, **could the Council please confirm whether this is the version of the Plan that has been adopted and is in use by the local planning authority?**

Late Evidence

20. Aside from any requests made within this pre-hearing note, it is not anticipated that there will be any need for additional documents to be handed up during the hearing. **You should review your cases promptly to ensure that is the case and any additional documentation should be sent urgently by email no later than Thursday 11 September 2025.**
21. There will be very limited opportunities for the Inspector (or possibly the other parties) to read any late evidence submitted on the day of the hearing. Therefore, the Inspector will not allow the introduction of new evidence by any of the parties and will only accept such evidence if there are exceptional circumstances.
22. Late evidence submitted at the hearing raises the risk of an adjournment and/or an award of costs.

Conditions

23. Suggested draft planning conditions in the event that planning permission is granted have been agreed by main parties and are detailed in the SOCG. These will inform the basis of the discussion on conditions at the hearing, without prejudice to the Council's case. Both main parties should reflect on whether each of the conditions would meet the relevant tests of a planning condition.
24. **Copies of any policy or guidance referred to within the suggested conditions should also be submitted, if not already done so.**

Costs

- 25.If an application for costs is to be made, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) makes it clear that they should be made in writing to the Inspector before the hearing. You are also reminded that in order to support an effective and timely planning system in which all parties are required to behave reasonably, the Inspector has the power to initiate an award of costs in line with the PPG.

Site Visit

- 26.The Inspector will need to visit the appeal site. This will be done once the hearing has closed and is likely to be on the same day depending on timings. At this stage, the Inspector is minded to visit on an accompanied basis, and the main parties will thus need to be available, unless it is agreed otherwise that it can be carried out unaccompanied. The Inspector will review this in light of the discussions on the day.