

THE HEREFORDSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE LOCAL PLAN

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Examination webpage:
<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan-1/minerals-waste-local-plan/3>

INSPECTOR'S EXAMINATION GUIDANCE NOTE 2

Purpose

1. This Note is intended to set out the joining instructions and our expectations for participants who have a specific reason and need to join sessions remotely or anyone wishing to observe. It is also relevant for the final session which will be held virtually.

Joining instructions

2. The Hearing will be using Microsoft Teams. This provides video conferencing services similar to Zoom and other popular applications. Microsoft Teams can be installed for free on most computers and smartphones.
3. The Programme Officer (PO) will email those participants with an invitation to join the Hearing session. Participants should join using the electronic link in their invitation.
4. As a public hearing anyone wishing to attend to observe should contact the PO for an invitation.
5. Anyone intending to join via video link using a PC, Apple Mac, iPhone or Android, you should download and install the Microsoft Teams application. If this is not possible, you can join using a Chrome browser on your desk top computer (not on your mobile phone). Some people with older devices, or who use corporate devices, which prevent downloads being installed could experience problems. In this case, either use an alternative or contact your corporate systems administrator. Please do familiarise yourself with Microsoft Teams before joining the Hearing sessions. You will be responsible for making sure your IT equipment and internet connection are functional and that you have everything in place and working to enable you to join the Hearing via Microsoft Teams.

6. If anyone is unable to use the Teams application or Teams on the web, they can join by calling a phone number. The phone number and conference ID will be displayed in the meeting invitation, dial the number shown to join, and enter the conference ID when prompted. If a participant joins via this route, they will enter the lobby until they are admitted into the session.
7. If anyone joining the meeting wishes to not have their telephone number displayed, they can dial 141 before the number within the invitation. This will give a unique number and NOT display their personal number.
8. As Microsoft regularly changes and updates the Teams software, the best place to find current instructions and tutorials is on the [Microsoft Teams Website](#).

Troubleshooting

9. Poor audio or visual quality is most likely caused by a slow Internet connection. Sometimes turning off your camera can help to improve audio quality as there is less data to transfer. You should also consider turning off any other devices in your home or office that may be placing heavy demands on your Internet connection (such as games or TV streaming devices).
10. If you wish to use an external camera, microphone or speakers (instead of those built into your device) you may need to configure these separately within Teams. On most versions of Teams, the relevant options are likely to be found in the 'device settings' menu. You can also change the speaker volume from here (your device may be on full volume but unless the Teams volume is set high enough you won't be able to hear anything).
11. If you experience electronic interference during a session, try moving your mobile phone away from your computer. If you experience other connectivity issues, try switching off some other devices which share your Wi-Fi, or move closer to the router.
12. If you are unable to join, or lose connection, try again to join using the link provided in your invitation. The Hearing session may continue in your absence. Transferring from Wi-Fi to mobile data or making a Wi-Fi hotspot using a mobile phone are other contingencies that you may wish to use. If none of these resolves the issue, please contact the PO.

Conduct

13. Local Plan Examinations are a formal event, with appropriate conduct. All participants, their views and evidence are treated with fairness and consideration, and participants do not interrupt each other. You should dress in a manner that respects the important nature of the event and make your contribution respectfully. You should use the formal pronouns such as Mr, Mrs, Miss and so on, not first names. The Inspectors are addressed as either Inspector or Mr Palmer/Dr Bust.
14. You should have made appropriate arrangements to ensure that your working environment is quiet, and that the Hearing (and your ability to concentrate on it) is not disrupted by external noise and unnecessary distractions. It is a good idea to have a jug and a glass of water or soft drink with you during the hearing

session, but eating, snacking and drinking out of bottles is not appropriate when participating. Comfort breaks will be taken at appropriate points.

15. To limit background noise, participants are asked to mute their microphones when they are not speaking.
16. Participants are encouraged to use their camera when speaking to the Inspectors as this improves communication and better replicates the conditions of a physical event. However, please ensure that your face is well lit and clearly visible.
17. Please do not speak unless you are invited to by the Inspectors. The preferred way of indicating that you wish to speak is through the 'raised hand' button within the Teams application. If this option is not available to you, the Inspectors will make alternative arrangements.
18. Those who use Microsoft Teams, Zoom and other video conferencing software may have grown used to the idea that people can come and go during virtual meetings. However, that does not apply to examination hearings. Please ensure that you can attend the session to which you are invited from start to finish. Leaving the screen midway through a session, coming and going, and leaving early, are not respectful to the Hearing, and you may miss the opportunity to speak or to come back on a particular point that is of concern to you.
19. The chat facility in Microsoft Teams will not be used. It does not form part of the formal Hearing procedure and any posts will not be viewed by us. You should consider whether you are likely to need to confer with another person (Agent, Legal Representative, Colleague etc) during the event. If so, agree how you intend to do this, for example SMS, Email, WhatsApp etc, before the event.
20. To make the best use of the Hearing time and to avoid disruption, we suggest that you join the Hearing session on Microsoft Teams around 15 minutes before the session is due to start (10.00am for morning sessions and 14.00 for afternoon sessions). The PO is responsible for admitting participants into the Hearing session, you must wait to be admitted. You will be held in a waiting lobby until you are admitted into the Hearing session by the PO.
21. Anyone observing should keep their camera off and microphone muted.

Privacy

22. The event will be managed in accordance with the privacy policy of Herefordshire Council and further details about the privacy policy are available through the PO. Please do not make your own recording of the Hearing.
23. Your image will be alongside others participating remotely and feature on a large screen in the Hearing venue for the Inspectors and all other persons present to see. If you do not wish your image to be viewed, please turn your camera off before entering the Hearing session. You must ensure that no-one else appears on your camera unless it has been otherwise agreed, and you should clear your background of personal information. If you prefer, Microsoft Teams allows you to blur your background or use a corporate background, but please do not use any of the other backgrounds that are available on Microsoft Teams. You must not

share any personal information during the Hearing, either yours, or anyone else's.

Close of the Examination

24. The Examination will remain open until our Report is submitted to the Authorities. However, no further representations or evidence will be accepted after the series of hearing sessions have finished unless we specifically request them. Late or unsolicited material may be returned by the PO.

Nick Palmer

Rachael A Bust

INSPECTOR

INSPECTOR

4 November 2022