

24 May 2010

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to you to inform and reassure you about the future of the process for deciding applications for nationally significant infrastructure. There are 34 proposals already in the pipeline, representing a potential capital investment of many billions of pounds. The IPC recognises that ensuring the effective implementation of the more efficient process for deciding major infrastructure proposals has a huge impact on the economic, environmental and social future of the UK.

In the Coalition Agreement, the Government has confirmed its commitment to an efficient and democratically accountable fast-track process for major infrastructure projects. The Government aims to bring forward legislation next year to replace the Infrastructure Planning Commission, introducing a revised departmental structure which will put the fairer, faster decision making, that national infrastructure planning requires, on a democratic basis.

Ministers in the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) aim to make provision for new primary legislation in a Devolution and Local Government Bill. This will be introduced around the turn of the year, and subject to the will of Parliament, become law sometime in 2011.

The expertise, processes and special character of the IPC will be retained by creating a Major Infrastructure Unit as part of a revised CLG structure that includes the Planning Inspectorate. Recommendations on nationally significant infrastructure projects will be made to Secretaries of State for final decisions.

Ministers want to push ahead quickly to make these changes but most of them will need primary legislation and then some time to implement. The IPC recognises that clarity and certainty is needed for developers to underpin their commercial investment decisions. Therefore, we would like to reassure any developers who are working towards the submission of an application to the IPC, that in the meantime the existing process continues, and the examination of applications will not be delayed due to the anticipated changes. We will work flexibly with Government to ensure a seamless transfer to any new arrangements.

The IPC recognises its responsibilities in delivering the improved process, which enables faster, fairer decisions, and gives its full commitment to meeting its delivery obligations and to working constructively with developers, stakeholders and communities.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Pitt'.

Sir Michael Pitt
Chair