PRE-INQUIRY NOTE

THE ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ARMY AND NAVY JUNCTION (CLASSIFIED ROAD) (SIDE ROADS) ORDER 2026
THE ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL (ARMY AND NAVY) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2026
THE ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL (SANDON PARK AND RIDE) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2026

PINS Ref: SOS/TRN/10002

Introduction

1. The Inspector appointed for the Inquiry is Stephen Normington BSc DipTP MRICS MRTPI FIQ FIHE. He has been appointed by the Secretary of State to hold the Inquiry in relation to the above Orders.

2. The Inspector will hear the case for Essex County Council (the Acquiring Authority), any supporters, the objections and any relevant representations. He will then issue a decision based on the gist of the evidence and submissions heard at the Inquiry, and all the written evidence received (including any objections or support from members of the public).

The Inquiry

3. The Inquiry will open at 10.00am on **Tuesday 24 November 2026** and is expected to sit for 3 days. However, a contingency additional sitting day on **Friday 27 November 2026** should also be reserved to accommodate any overrun.

4. The Inquiry will be held at Essex County Council, 4th Floor, County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford CM1 1QH

5. In due course could the Council advise on the following matters:

   - The name of the contact the Inspector on arrival at the venue on the morning of the Inquiry.
   - Provision of a retiring room for the Inspector use at the venue throughout the Inquiry.
   - The web address for the hosting of Core Documents and other Inquiry Documents (see beow).

Procedure at the Inquiry

6. The procedure at the Inquiry will follow the Compulsory Purchase (Inquiries Procedure) Rules 2007.

7. The Acquiring Authority (Essex County Council) will be asked at the Inquiry whether it has complied with all of the statutory requirements.

8. The order of presentation of cases will be:

- The Acquiring Authority will go first with an opening statement of no longer than 15 minutes duration. It will then set out the reasons for the compulsory purchase orders and side road orders which is being put forward calling any witnesses in turn, to whom any questions of clarification from objectors or supporters can be put. The Acquiring Authority will then be given the opportunity to clarify any responses given during questioning.

- Any persons present who supports the compulsory purchase order will be given the opportunity to make their cases next and can be questioned by objectors. They will then be able to make a final address to the Inquiry.

- Objectors to the Orders will be given the opportunity to speak next (presenting any alternatives as appropriate) and they then may be questioned by the Acquiring Authority.

- Objectors will be able to make a final address to the Inquiry at the end of the above matters relating to their objection. The Inquiry will then proceed to the next objector.

- When all objectors have been given the opportunity to be heard, any persons present who oppose the compulsory purchase order will be given the opportunity to make their cases next and can be questioned by the Acquiring Authority. They will then be able to make a final address to the Inquiry.

- Closing statements will form the final part of the Inquiring starting with the objectors and persons opposing the compulsory purchase order followed by any persons supporting the compulsory purchase order and then finally closing submissions from the Acquiring Authority.

- The Inspector may have questions during or after any stage in the proceedings.

9. The Inspector would be grateful if the parties could consider whether this running order would be suitable. Although the Inspector has copies of each objector's grounds for objection, it would be helpful for the Inspector to be advised of any objectors who know, at this stage, that they would wish to speak at the Inquiry and whether they intend to be represented by an Advocate. The names of relevant objectors who wish to speak at the Inquiry should be made know to the Planning Inspectorate by no later than **5pm** on **Friday 30 October 2026**. Thereafter, the Inspector will provide an Inquiry Programme by **13 November 2026**.

10. Copies of the opening and closing statements should be provided in writing to the Inspector prior to the commencement of the relevant session.

11. The Inquiry will be conducted on the basis of openness, fairness and impartiality. With this in mind, people should not try to speak to the Inspector outside of the Inquiry. Anything that needs to be said to the Inspector should be said in the Inquiry, where everybody else has the opportunity to hear and to comment on it.

Attendance at the Inquiry and dates for the submission of statements of case and evidence

12. The Acquiring Authority has already submitted its Statement of Case and Statement of Reasons to support the Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO), copies of which should have been sent to each objector. The Inspector is also in receipt of a Written Submissions in objection from:

    Army and Navy CPO

    G & S Marriage
    Great Baddow Parish Council
    Louise Flavell on behalf of Great Baddow Parish Council
    Cadent Gas Limited
    Aldi Stores Limited

    Sandon Park and Ride CPO

    R, C, P, & AG Speakman

13. **Proofs of Evidence from Essex County Council** (The Acquiring Authority) and supporting documentation must be submitted no later than three weeks before the Inquiry opens, that is by **5.00pm on Tuesday 3 November 2026**. The Inspector requests that the Acquiring Authority confirms the name of the Advocate who will be leading the case at the Inquiry.

14. **Any Proofs of Evidence from objectors and supporters**, together with supporting documentation, must also be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate Case Officer no later than three weeks before the Inquiry opens, that is by **5.00pm on Tuesday 3 November 2026**. As mentioned above, the Inspector requests that the objectors confirm the names of any Advocates who will be leading their respective cases at the Inquiry.

15. Any Rebuttal Proofs of Evidence from the Acquiring Authority and supporting documentation must be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate Case Officer and objectors no later than one week before the Inquiry opens, that is by **5pm on Tuesday 17 November 2026**.

Site Inspection

16. It is the intention of the Inspector to view the sites on an unaccompanied basis from public vantage points before the Inquiry opens. He will also carry out a formal and accompanied inspection on public and private land with permission during the Inquiry and will need to be accompanied by a representative of each party. At this stage it is envisaged that the accompanied site visit would occur in the morning or afternoon of **Thursday 26 November 2026**.

17. If there are any particular locations which any party wishes the Inspector to visit informally before the opening of the Inquiry, details, together with appropriate plans, should be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate Case

Officer at least one week before the opening of the Inquiry, that is by **5.00pm on Tuesday 17 November 2026**. By this date, the parties should also advise of any health and safety issues that may affect the site visit i.e. the need for any PPE.

Format of Evidence to be Presented

18. The Council's opening statement and closing submissions should be produced in writing. An electronic copy of the opening and closing submissions should also be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate Case Officer, prior to their oral presentation, as these may form the basis of the reporting of the Acquiring Authority's case. Other parties' representations should be in writing, with electronic copies wherever possible.

19. All documents should have page and paragraph numbers and use metric units. Proofs and appendices should be bound separately and indexed. They may contain drawings, diagrams or document extracts. Appendices need only contain those extracts of another document that are relevant. Documents should be A4 size or A3 folded to A4 wherever possible.

20. Where proofs of evidence are more than 1500 words long, summaries are required. Generally, only the summary will be read at the Inquiry. Summaries should not be more than 1500 words or 10% of the proof whichever is greater. They should contain the main points to be relied upon, and they may form the basis of the reporting of the cases.

21. Although only the summary will usually be read at the Inquiry, questioning will be allowed on the whole of the proof. Direct answers to questions will be expected and answers should be heard without interruption.

22. Proofs of evidence should be concise and brief, with no repetition either within the proof or between witnesses. They need not recite national, regional or local policies or guidance unless a short quotation is needed to make a particular point.

23. Those seeking modifications to the Order should provide a general description of what it is they are seeking, a detailed justification and any detailed drafting amendments.

Interpretation Service

24. The parties are asked to consider whether any persons who are known to be participating in the Inquiry would likely require the service of an interpreter. It will be a matter for the Acquiring Authority to organise any such interpreter that may be required for the duration of the Inquiry.

Access to Core Documents and Inquiry Documents

25. It is expected that the Acquiring Authority will take responsibility for the hosting of all Core and Inquiry documents and to ensure that these are made accessible to all those participating in the Inquiry, including the Inspector. In this regard the Acquiring Authority is requested to provide the web address of where such information may be accessed to the

objectors and the Inspector by no later than **5.00pm on Tuesday 27 October 2026**. The Inspector also requests that A3 size, or larger, hard copies of the CPO Maps are provided to him on the opening day of the Inquiry.

26. The Acquiring Authority is also requested to consider whether any objectors may require hard copies of any documents. It will be a matter for the parties to liaise on this matter as the Inspector will assume that access to all relevant information in the appropriate format has been made available to all parties prior to the opening of the Inquiring.

Stephen Normington

INSPECTOR

12 October 2026