



National Infrastructure Planning Association

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MONDAY 6 JULY 2026

programme
&
participants

#NIPAConf26

CLIFFORD CHANCE
10 UPPER BANK STREET
CANARY WHARF, LONDON E14 5JJ



PROGRAMME

9:30 Welcome and Introduction

Steve Norris, Chair, NIPA Council

9:35 Implementing the National Infrastructure Planning Reforms

Anna Payne, MHCLG

**9:55 Infrastructure Planning Service Update:
Performance and Practice**

Dr Pauleen Lane CBE and David Price, The Planning Inspectorate

10:25 Infrastructure Strategy and Policy: The Whitehall Panel

James Harris, NISTA

Samantha Collins-Hill, DfT

Alex Bush, MHCLG

Grace Rosinski, DESNZ

Robbie Owen, NIPA Board Director and Secretary & Pinsent Masons **CHAIR**

11:00 MORNING COFFEE

11:30 Working with Local Government *

Matt Fox, Pinsent Masons

Joanna Camille-St.Marie, National Grid

Mark Williets, North Kesteven District Council

12:00 National stakeholders in the NSIPs regime

Luke Wormald, Historic England

Rebecca Coales, Environment Agency

James Seymour, Natural England

Anna Sutherland Bamber, Icen **CHAIR**

12:30 Reflections

Andrew Tait KC, Francis Taylor Building

12:50 LUNCH AND NETWORKING

**13:50 NIPA's Insights IV: Delivering Meaningful Consultation
under the Planning Act 2008**

Hannah Hickman, UWE

Katie McClymont, UWE



PROGRAMME

14:15 Caselaw update: Hot topics in the courts!

Nick Grant, Landmark Chambers Gethin Thomas, 39 Essex Chambers
Jonathan Welch, Francis Taylor Building
Michael Humphries KC, NIPA Board Director and Treasurer &
Francis Taylor Building **CHAIR**

15:00 The NIPA Prize 2026

Viral Desai, AtkinsRéalis Peta Donkin, Arcadis Jordan Martin, DWD

15:15 AFTERNOON TEA

15:45 Project Showcase: Delivery in Action!

Martyn Fulcher, East Suffolk County Council
Andy Rutter, Suffolk County Council John Galloway, National Grid
Liz Wood-Griffiths, Thames Tideway Tunnel Alex Higgin, Quod **CHAIR**

16:20 NIPA's Policy and Practice Working Group

Peta Donkin, Arcadis and David Grattan, Grattan Planning,
NIPA Council members and Co Leads of the Working Group

**16:35 Streamlining HRA and EIA: Implementing recommendations
of the Fingleton Nuclear Regulatory Review 2025**

Mustafa Latif-Aramesh, TLT

17:00 Leadership in National Infrastructure Planning

Tom Carpen, NIPA Board Chair

17:15 DRINKS RECEPTION

18:30 CLOSE

SPEAKERS



Alex Bush

MINISTRY FOR HOUSING, COMMUNITIES, & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Alex is the Deputy Director responsible for major infrastructure planning in MHCLG. Key areas that her team lead on include: development and implementation of NSIP reforms, including those legislated for in the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025; delivery of MHCLG led recommendations in the Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce review; and delivery of the Nature Restoration Fund in partnership with DEFRA and Natural England. In her previous role, Alex led on the development and parliamentary passage of the Planning and Infrastructure Act and she has also spent time in the Number 10 Policy Unit advising the Prime Minister on housing, local government and communities.



Joanna Camille-St.Marie

NATIONAL GRID

Joanna is a senior lawyer at National Grid in the Property and Planning team. With experience in planning law, compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) and Nationally significant Infrastructure Projects. She has developed expertise in navigating complex legal issues in the planning and development space. She has a particular interest in Biodiversity Net Gain and community benefits and is committed to ensuring that solutions support both environmental and community goals.



Tom Carpen

THAMES WATER • NIPA BOARD CHAIR

Tom is an infrastructure planning specialist with over 20 years' experience across major energy, transport and water sectors. As Consents and Environment Lead for Thames Water's Strategic Resource Options, he oversees planning and consenting for major projects, including the proposed White Horse Reservoir for the South East (formerly known as SESRO). Tom has been closely involved in the Development Consent Order (DCO) process since its introduction in 2008, working at the Planning Inspectorate,

SPEAKERS

advising developers, and as senior policy lead in Government contributing to DCO reforms. He is also NIPA Board Chair.



Rebecca Coales

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Rebecca leads the Environment Agency's Priority Tracked Service, providing strategic coordination and support to major infrastructure and housing projects seeking environmental permits and licences. With 14 years' infrastructure experience, she has worked across the full project lifecycle, from Development Consent Order (DCO) pre-application through to construction. Rebecca has supported some of the UK's most significant infrastructure schemes, including Hinkley Point C, Sizewell C and the Lower Thames Crossing. She specialises in navigating complex regulatory processes, fostering collaboration, and helping projects achieve timely, proportionate environmental outcomes.



Samantha Collins-Hill

DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT

Sam is Deputy Director for Transport Planning in the DfT and has been in her current role since August 2025, with planning policy responsibility and operational responsibility for transport infrastructure consenting processes. Before this, Sam was Deputy Director for London Partnerships and Delivery, with oversight of the strategic relationship between Government and London on transport matters, and working closely with Transport for London and the Greater London Authority to deliver a long-term funding model. Sam previously spent 14 years in the Home Office in a range of policy and strategy roles, including as Deputy International Director.



Matthew Fox

PINSENT MASONS • NIPA COUNCIL MEMBER

Matt is a Legal Director in Pinsent Masons' Planning and Environment team and advises clients on all consenting matters



SPEAKERS

for large scale energy and infrastructure projects across an array of sectors, working from inception to delivery to ensure that such projects are consentable, fundable and deliverable. He is part of NIPA Council and has been playing a lead role in seeking to engender greater local government involvement in NIPA activities.



Martyn Fulcher

EAST SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Martyn is Head of Energy Planning and Coastal Management at East Suffolk Council, where he leads the assessment of energy NSIP DCO applications. With over 28 years' experience in local government, he has previously served as Director for Place and Climate Change at North Norfolk and Head of Development at Ipswich. An accomplished and respected Chartered Town Planner, he holds honours and postgraduate qualifications in Environmental Planning and is currently undertaking an MSc in Public Management and Leadership.



John Galloway

NATIONAL GRID

John is Head of Land Technical & Governance at National Grid Electricity Transmission, leading a new strategic team on land rights policy, legislative change, and guidance for critical electricity network infrastructure across England and Wales. John is a qualified real estate solicitor and was formerly Head of Land & Property at Ørsted. He brings deep expertise in complex acquisitions having acted on 16 DCOs, multiple CPOs and TWAOs, as well as securing thousands of voluntary and commercial agreements over two decades.



Nick Grant

LANDMARK CHAMBERS

Nick is ranked by Planning Magazine as the top junior at the planning bar, and is included in the shortlist of top ranked barristers



SPEAKERS

(juniors and KCs) for his residential, retail and infrastructure work. His cases include the two Supreme Court cases of Finch and CG Fry, and his DCO work has included promoting the Sunnica Solar Farm and representing Natural England in the Lower Thames Crossing examination. Nick contributed to the Banner Review of NSIP challenges and has advised on every version of the NPPF since 2023.



James Harris

NISTA

James is a Senior Policy Advisor at the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority (NISTA). His work focuses on enabling a more spatial approach to infrastructure planning. He previously worked at the National Infrastructure Commission as the lead on planning, natural capital and the circular economy. He contributed to the second National Infrastructure Assessment and studies on surface water flooding and NSIP reform. He was previously Policy Manager at the Royal Town Planning Institute and has worked in the Greater London Authority Infrastructure Coordination Team.



Hannah Hickman

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND

Hannah is Associate Professor of Planning Practice at the UWE. She joined academia in 2017 following a career in the public and private sector. Named The Planner's "Women of Influence 2026: Academia", she is a chartered RTPI member, Chair of the RTPI's Partnership and Accreditation Panel, and editor of the journal Town Planning Review. An experienced qualitative researcher, her projects span professional motivation and ethics, post-planning processes, and national infrastructure. She is currently co-investigator on the ESRC-funded URBAN RETROFIT project and has led work for NIPA on meaningful consultation in national infrastructure. She has twice been awarded the RTPI's Sir Peter Hall Award for Research Excellence.

SPEAKERS



Dr Pauleen Lane CBE

PLANNING INSPECTORATE

Pauleen is the Professional Lead for Infrastructure at the Planning Inspectorate, overseeing professional standards, policy development, and future planning. With a civil engineering degree and a PhD in computational modelling from Manchester, she has worked on major UK infrastructure projects. She has served on seven public bodies in roles such as Senior Independent Director and vice-chair. A Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers, Pauleen received a CBE for her public service.



Mustafa Latif-Aramesh

TLT

Mustafa is a Partner and Parliamentary Agent at TLT. He's currently advising on a range of nationally significant infrastructure projects, including nuclear, data centre, onshore wind and transport projects. He advises central government on planning reforms. Mustafa was appointed by the Prime Minister to the Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce, and has been appointed by the Secretary of State to the Nuclear Regulatory Implementation Panel.



Katie McClymont

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND

Katie is an Associate Professor in Urban Planning. She has extensive research experience in both UKRI research council funded projects and commissioned research projects. She is an editor of Planning Theory and Practice Journal and has been an expert reviewer for the British Academy, the ESRC, and a range of European funding bodies.

She is the joint programme leader for the Chartered Town Planner Degree Apprenticeship at UWE, and has been an external examiner at several English accredited planning schools. Her teaching focuses on questions of planning theory and community engagement in planning at both masters and undergraduate levels.

SPEAKERS



Anna Payne

MINISTRY FOR HOUSING, COMMUNITIES, & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Anna is Head of Consenting Policy at MHCLG with 20 years' experience leading policy and delivery teams across the Civil Service. She oversees reforms to the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) planning regime, supporting government objectives for growth and clean power. Her work includes implementing the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, advising Ministers, and working across government and with external stakeholders to improve the planning system. Anna began her career at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, working on media, online safety, humanitarian response, and the delivery of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic sailing events.



David Price

PLANNING INSPECTORATE

David is the Service Owner for Infrastructure at the Planning Inspectorate, where he leads the day-to-day delivery, performance, and continuous improvement of the service and its people. He has extensive experience leading teams responsible for nationally significant infrastructure projects, underpinned by an MSc in Environmental Management and a PgDip in Senior Leadership. David is a Full Member of the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals and a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) with the Society for the Environment.



Grace Rosinski

DESNZ

Grace is Deputy Director for Energy Planning Reform in the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Her team of planning policy experts work to ensure that national and local planning policies and consenting routes are effective, streamlined and support the Government's ambitions on the deployment of renewable energy infrastructure, including Clean Power 2030. Grace's planning reform team sits alongside the DESNZ Energy

SPEAKERS

Infrastructure Planning Delivery team who manage Development Consent Orders.



Andy Rutter

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Andy Rutter is the Development Manager at Suffolk County Council and a Chartered Town Planner. Andy started in local government planning in 2016, is the former national Chairman of the Young Planning Officers Society and currently sits on the RTPI East of England Young Planners committee. He has experience in developing Suffolk's first joint Minerals & Waste Local Plan, determining major and EIA planning applications and is also the County Council's planning lead on Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station.



James Seymour

NATURAL ENGLAND

With over 25 years' experience, James has played a leading role in delivering large-scale nature recovery initiatives, shaping environmental outcomes working with landowners, developers and local authorities. His work has included leading project teams providing Natural England advice on nationally significant developments, including the Lower Thames Crossing. He specialises in aligning diverse interests to deliver practical, joined-up solutions. A central focus of his work has been improving how developers engage with environmental regulation.

James is passionate about demonstrating that nature's recovery can be achieved alongside sustainable development and economic growth, and aims to support resilient landscapes and thriving communities.

SPEAKERS



Andrew Tait KC

FRANCIS TAYLOR BUILDING

Andrew has been specialising in infrastructure planning for over 40 years, as a QC/KC since 2003. He has promoted numerous DCOs, including the Lower Thames Crossing, as well as representing local authorities at DCO hearings (e.g. Sizewell C). He has wide experience of the Transport and Works Act system (e.g. promoting transport upgrades in London such as the Northern line Extension) and of hybrid bills (including Crossrail and HS2).

He was Head of Chambers at FTB for 10 years and chaired the Planning and Environment Bar Association for 3 years.



Gethin Thomas

39 ESSEX CHAMBERS

Gethin specialises in planning, environment and public law. Gethin is ranked as a 'rising star' in planning law by The Legal 500. He has particular experience of judicial review challenges of Development Consent Orders, especially in the aviation and energy sectors. His recent cases include acting in the challenge to the Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project DCO (one of the first claims to proceed following the implementation of the streamlined challenge process).



Jonathan Welch

FRANCIS TAYLOR BUILDING

Jonathan has been in practice for four years and acts for a range of promoters of infrastructure projects and statutory consultees. He has acted for Thames Water and Natural England in relation to DCOs. He also practices in residential planning, environment and compulsory purchase and compensation law. He regularly appears in the High Court, public inquiries and hearings on his own and as part of a larger team.

SPEAKERS



Mark Willietts

NORTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL • NIPA COUNCIL MEMBER

Mark is a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute since 1994. He has worked mainly in local government but has also had experience of private practice and was Head of Planning at the Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands from 2006-2010 where amongst other large-scale projects he worked in support of the emerging Planning Act 2008. He has been at North Kesteven since 2014 and leads the council's planning functions and delivery of major developments, including several DCOs.



Liz Wood-Griffiths

THAMES TIDEWAY TUNNEL

Liz is a Chartered Town Planner with over 30 years' experience in infrastructure planning and delivery. She has been Head of Consents at Tideway since 2015, providing client assurance and overseeing the implementation of the DCO. Prior to joining Tideway, Liz worked on the planning and delivery stages of major projects in the transport sector for TfL and Network Rail. She was Consents Manager for the Borough Viaduct section of the £9bn Thameslink Programme of works, and managed the Examination stage and discharge of Requirements for the Redditch Branch Enhancement DCO.



Luke Wormald

HISTORIC ENGLAND

Luke is currently Head of the East Region and Infrastructure at Historic England, having joined the organisation in 2017 and taken up this post in September 2022. Prior to that he undertook a number of roles covering heritage designation and planning advice in both England and Scotland and also a number of policy development and strategic roles. He is an architectural historian by training and is a member of the Institute of Historic Buildings Conservation and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.