

Bus stop looking west as shown in view 19 of the site tour documents the crossing point would be just around the bend where road disappears from sight.

Dear Sir

We note none of the matters raised in our submission in response to the previous meeting submission 7, were addressed by Highways England HE. We do hope you will consider this submission requires a response.

Of particular concern are those relating to the capacity at J10a and safety. We are at the final stages and yet still do not have absolute figures for maximum flows at J10a. This junction is designed to future proof the Ashford road network, allowing a huge raft of development to come forward, yet independent modelling shows developing only one site will 'stress' the junction, when all come on line will the junction fail?

Our concerns regarding safety remain unanswered.

The meeting on 17th May raised some more issues.

Environmental statement.

Air Quality.

The applicant showed some measures of air quality. Using the aerial photo, drawing title "scheme outline –main and alternative scheme sheet 1 of 1"; to the west of J10 there is an area marked 'traffic signals upgrade', it is within the small development next to this area the air quality was measured.

As you can see this is nowhere near the new junction. It is expected air quality would actually improve at these sites as J10 traffic no longer has access the M20 at this point.

These measurements are not indicative of any impact of air quality on those near the new J10a.

Measurements should be taken at strategic points around the site, possibly the hospice, Kingsford Street, William Harvey Hospital and St Mary's grade 1 listed church. This could be used to prove the air quality models figures, that there will be no impact on air quality. It should be undertaken by Highways England rather than at a cost to Ashford residents.

Yet again when challenged about the impact of peak traffic congestion it was argued that averaging out the figures would mean the site would appear to have low figures. The applicant could not see that people who breathe in the fumes could not then average out the impact on their health.

The WHO World Health Statistics 2017 published on May 17th showed deaths due to poor air quality in the UK were higher than comparable countries. (25.7/100000)

The WHO called on policy makers to tackle the toxic air crisis. Despite the inspector repeatedly asking for details of mitigation this was ignored by the HE representative.

Village Alliance asks that rather than massaging the statistics the applicant should show greater mitigation and monitoring.

Nature Conservation.

In discussion with Natural England it was noted they could not comment on anything other than procedural aspects of a plan until the DCO has been granted. Thus the lack of comment should not be taken as agreement, just that procedure has been followed.

We note that, although Great Crested Newts are prevalent in the area, they were not found in the latest inspection of the ponds due to be removed. Regardless of this last survey procedures should be followed to ensure colonies that have been missed are saved and relocated.

Noise.

At present the M20 to the east of J10 runs in a deep cutting; this minimises the noise to surrounding properties. Testing should be undertaken to ensure the impact of the stop start traffic in queues at the higher elevations of J10a and the slip roads is recorded and further mitigation put in place if the impact is greater than expected.

Vibration.

HE is not intending to measure the impact of this on the surrounding houses. Both Redburr and Ransley Kennels are listed buildings, built over 500 years ago they do not have foundations, the impact on the properties structure should be assessed.

Effects on all travellers

It is essential the Highfield Lane turning loop is in place before work on J10a begins. Recent failures of the J10 traffic lights (wrong phasing) has meant hours of queues forming along the main roads and rat running has become a daily problem.

Barrey Road exit onto the A2070 is still a serious issue to local people and should be addressed simultaneously by KCC and HE.

We still feel the modelling uncertainties have not been addressed.

Safety on the Kingsford Street Bridge crossing the M20. We have included several images taken to show the dangers faced when crossing the A20.

This is a major concern. Despite a reduction in speed along the A20 approaching J10a and thus the point where the path over the bridge crosses the A20 we do not feel this makes the crossing safe.

At present pedestrians can cross J10 via a set of signalised crossings. These are not proposed at J10a thus the only designated crossing will be via the Kingsford Street Bridge. To suggest they wait and see if anyone uses it seems a completely inappropriate response to safety concerns. The point where the bridge meets the A20 has no pathway in either direction. To cross the road you have to walk along the verge until you can see the traffic. Please do view the attached video showing the dangers of the site. The Bockham Lane junction is an accident black spot.

There needs to be a path running east stopping opposite Bockham lane this would link it to the bus stop and a signalled crossing at the bridge to allow horse riders and vulnerable pedestrians to cross the A20 in safety.

This has to be part of the initial plans and not added later.

Road Drainage and Water environment.

Please note the pumping station at Highfield lane needs to be upgraded not just moved.

It is a concern that no local representatives were at the meeting with service suppliers.

What guarantees do we have that power and telecoms will not be disrupted? Can we have a named contact that would be responsible for solving these issues?

Combined and cumulative effects

To suggest the impact of Operation Stack should not be considered seems short sighted. The government are proposing spending 250 million pounds on a tarmac holding pen that will have to be accessed from a new slip road between J10a and J11. It is expected 4000 vehicles will be accommodated the remaining 10000 will have to queue along the M20 to filter through the site before crossing the channel.

It is also suggested that post Brexit the area might be used for customs clearance. To suggest it wont happen is to ignore all HE plans for this area.

One of the main issues with the design of J10/J10a is it does not create any new routes just spreads the load between the two junctions. HE gave their example of how J10a would lower the volume of those truckstrying to circumnavigate the Stack at J10. There would be a reduction of exactly the same number as would now just use J10a! This does not solve a problem it just moves it.

Operation stack has been used in the form of the TAP (Traffic Assessment Project) on the A20, trucks have regularly queued from Dover 8 miles towards Folkestone on one lane. This was in place 137 times between April 2015 and January 2016. Howeverextensive work has been conducted within Dover to hold freight and those figures have reduced slightly. The simple addition of independent signals controlled by the police has stopped the trucks from filling Dover town to breaking point. These are the clever inexpensive solutions that are needed in Ashford.

We look forward to receiving your reply.

Sharon Swandale on behalf of The Village Alliance