



Department for Transport

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To the named Interested Parties

Date: 25 October 2017

Dear Sir/ Madam

Planning Act 2008 (as amended)

Application by Highways England (HE) ("the Applicant") for an Order granting Development Consent for the M20 Junction 10a.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCIL, THE APPLICANT AND ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL.

Representatives of the Secretary of State have received the correspondence annexed to this letter from a representative of The Village Alliance, a participant in the Examination of this case, about the provision of a vehicle turning facility at the junction of Kingsford Street and Highfield Lane.

The Secretary of State requests comments from **Kent County Council ("KCC")** about their current intentions with regard to the provision of this turning facility, including advice on timing (the Secretary of State is already aware of the references to a turning circle in the Statement of Common Ground between KCC and Highways England of May 2017 which formed Examination Document [REP9-006](#)). **Highways England, Ashford Borough Council** and any other party are also offered the opportunity to add any further comments on the correspondence annexed to this letter.

The deadline for any response is 11.59pm on 1 November 2017.

Responses should be submitted by email to M20Junction10a@pins.gsi.gov.uk . Please send any hard copy response to M20 Junction 10a Case Team, The Planning Inspectorate, Eagle Wing 3/18, Temple Quay House, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN. If you will have difficulty in submitting a response by the consultation deadline, please inform the Case Team.

Your response will be published on the project page for the M20 Junction 10a on the Planning Inspectorate website as soon as possible after the above deadline for response at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/m20-junction-10a/>

This letter is without prejudice to the Secretary of State's decision whether or not to grant development consent for the M20 Junction 10a scheme, and nothing in this letter is to be taken to imply what that decision might be.

Yours faithfully

Robert J Fox

CORRESPONDENCE TO DfT FROM A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE VILLAGE ALLIANCE.

From: Linda Arthur <[email address redacted] >

Date: 2 October 2017 at 18:52:43 EEST (*but due to a delivery failure, not seen by DfT until 23 October 2017*)

To: [two DfT addressees – redacted]

Subject: M20-J10a TRO Highfield Lane Mersham

Dear [names redacted],

I have been passed your details by [name redacted] National Infrastructure Case Manager at the Planning Inspectorate. I represent an organisation called the Village Alliance, a group of over 320 residents living in Mersham, near Ashford, Kent and we have been involved in J10a consultation meetings with Ashford Borough Council and Highways England and attended the Planning Inspectorate Hearings for J10a and have been actively involved in their consultations too.

I have also been on the project team with Kent County Council and been working over the past 4 years on the TRO for Highfield Lane, which has been granted and plans were going ahead for completion this autumn. However, it is my understanding that the project has stalled. I understand that the developers of the site to the north east of Highfield Lane, Aviva/Friends Life, have now been granted planning permission (14/00906/AS). I believe the S106 agreement in their planning permission, states that land will be gifted to KCC to make a turning circle at the junction of Kingsford Street and Highfield Lane, essential for the closure of Highfield Lane. It was always agreed that work would be carried out *prior* to the commencement of J10a and essential that this happens on safety grounds. KCC have plans in place for the work, but I now understand that the developers have stated that they are not commencing their development yet and therefore do not need to gift the land until they do. In the Planning Inspectorate's submission to the Secretary of State it states that Kingsford Street/Highfield Lane would be closed and the land gifted to facilitate this. There is extreme urgency that work commences on the closure of Highfield Lane immediately, also from an ecological stance, since hedges need to be removed prior to the hibernation of dormice and newts.

I am writing to you, so that you are aware that the demolition of Highfield Lane Bridge and the commencement of read works on the M20/A20 for J10a will result in a dangerous rat run along Highfield Lane and Kingsford Street, if the TRO is not put in place prior to the start. These lanes are narrow, single track, with blind bends, no pavement, pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and a children's play area. Any congestion on the A20/J10/A2070 will result in drivers seeking an alternative route along these lanes and the TRO was intended to avoid this dangerous situation.

This is a serious safety issue, which has only just arisen since planning permission for the site adjacent to Highfield Lane was granted on the 18th September and the subject needs to be addressed by KCC, Ashford Borough Council and Highways England and the DfT.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Linda Arthur

From: Linda Arthur [[email address redacted]]

Sent: 23 October 2017 13:46

To: [2 DfT addressees – redacted]

Subject: Fwd: M20-J10a TRO Highfield Lane Mersham

Dear [names redacted],

We would very much appreciate an acknowledgement of receipt of my e-mail sent to you both on 2nd October. Indeed, the village of Mersham, would also appreciate a reply to the concerns raised in the e-mail.

Tomorrow is the legal deadline, for ecological reasons, for KCC to start work on the removal of vegetation from the site for the proposed turning circle. This will not happen tomorrow, which means that work probably cannot start or more importantly, be completed, prior to the major works for the new J10a, should the Secretary of State give his approval.

The only way forward, as I can see, is for HE to agree to the construction of the turning circle before or at the same time as work starts on the new junction. KCC have plans, finance and constructor in place. The question of the gift of the land as part of S106 agreement is the remit of the lawyers. The intent in the agreement must have been for the land to be passed over to KCC once planning permission was granted.

We would appreciate a response from the DFT.

Many thanks,

Linda Arthur
[Address and phone number redacted]