

A14
Cambridge to Huntingdon
improvement scheme
Development Consent Order Application

HE/A14/EX/158

TR010018

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Matters arising from Highways England's Oral Submissions made at the Issue Specific Hearing
on Detailed Design and associated Post Hearing Documents

September 2015

The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010



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Contents

Contents	3
1 Context	4
2 Agenda Items 3 & 4	4
2.1 Design Panel & Process for agreement of detailed design matters	4
2.2 Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments	5
3 Agenda Item 5	6
3.1 Landscape effects of gantries	6
3.2 Effects on Station Cottages	6
3.3 Camera Heights	6
3.4 Road Height	7
3.5 Compatibility with the A1	8
3.6 The cumulative effect of the scheme	9
4 Agenda Item 6	9
4.1 On-Site Worker Accommodation	9
4.2 Code of Construction Practice	9
5 Agenda Item 7	10
5.1 Excavation of material from borrow pits	10
6 Agenda Item 8	11
6.1 Climate change flood risk projections	11
7 Agenda Item 9	11
7.1 Flood risk assessment and credible climate change	11
APPENDIX 1: Positioning of the Ouse Valley Gantry	13
APPENDIX 2: Environmental Effects on Station Cottages	15
APPENDIX 3: A14 Photomontage viewing heights	25
APPENDIX 4: Compatibility of the Scheme with A1 improvements	26
APPENDIX 5: Assessment of cumulative effects at Buckden Marina	27
APPENDIX 6: On-Site Worker Accommodation	39
APPENDIX 7: Excavation of material from borrow pits	45

1 Context

- 1.1.1 This document provides written responses from the Applicant to matters raised by the Examining Authority (ExA), Local Authorities and third party stakeholders at the Issue Specific Hearing on detailed design held on Thursday 17 September 2015.
- 1.1.2 The structure of this document follows the order of items as set out in the agenda for the issue specific hearing on detailed design ("Agenda"). Numbered agenda items referred to are references to the numbered items in the Agenda.

2 Agenda Items 3 & 4

2.1 Design Panel & Process for agreement of detailed design matters

- 2.1.1 The ExA asked the Applicant to explain how the "double dose" of consultation engages the local authorities, the Landowners and Community & Environment Forums, the public and Employer's Representative.
- 2.1.2 In response the Applicant explained that this question related to two separate streams of work as follows:
- Discharge of requirements; and
 - Engagement with local authorities and the community during detailed design.
- 2.1.3 The reference to the "double dose" of consultation relates to the consultation with local authorities with respect to the discharge of the Development Consent Order (DCO) Requirements. The local authorities will firstly be consulted by the Applicant in its preparation of submission documents to submit to the Secretary of State to discharge Requirements. The local authorities will secondly be consulted by the Secretary of State as part of its approval of the submission documents and in discharging the Requirements. The Applicant was requested by the ExA to submit a note explaining the process by which Requirements will be discharged at the Issue Specific Hearing on the Development Consent Order on 4 September 2015. This note has been submitted by the Applicant at Deadline 10 (HE/A14/EX/152).
- 2.1.4 With respect to the second work stream (engagement during detailed design), the ExA asked the Applicant to submit a document at Deadline 10 explaining:
- The process by which forums will be consulted during detailed design and the role of each forum, including:

- Indicative terms of reference;
 - A visual representation of the proposed forum structure;
 - How often the forums will meet;
 - Membership of the forums;
 - How disputes will be resolved.
- 2.1.5 The ExA also asked the Applicant to explain the role of the Design Panel and the process by which there will be an 'independent review' of the Scheme.
- 2.1.6 The Applicant has submitted a note at Deadline 10, (HE/A14/EX/162) addressing the above points with respect to consultation in detailed design and the role of the design panel.

2.2 Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments

- 2.2.1 The ExA asked the Applicant whether the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) (REP2-019) has relevance to the process of consulting on detailed design matters. The Applicant explained that the REAC does not have a formal status and operates to direct the reader to the mitigation referred to in the Environmental Statement (ES) and where that mitigation is secured. The Applicant explained that it will place a contractual responsibility on the contactors to construct the scheme providing the level of mitigation contained within the REAC.
- 2.2.2 The Applicant was asked at the issue specific hearing to give consideration as to whether a 'register' of delivery of the various items contained in the REAC should be maintained during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development. Having given this due consideration, Highways England is of the view that this would not be appropriate. As an initial point, this has no precedent, as far as Highways England is aware, on consented Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects to date. It is considered unduly onerous and, in any case, the public would be kept fully informed of scheme progress through the various stakeholder forums proposed, together with other engagement methods (e.g. newsletters and online sources).
- 2.2.3 The measures in the REAC are largely secured through the requirements in Schedule 2 to the DCO, including the provisions of the code of construction practice, and it is proposed that the public would be kept informed of discharge of these requirements through a publically available register (please see Highways England's separate submission on the Discharge of Requirements Process (HE/A14/EX/152) for more information on this). As such, any separate 'register' relating to the Register of

Environmental Actions and Commitments would largely duplicate this register.

- 2.2.4 The REAC would be made public as part of the certified environmental statement, under article 41 of the draft DCO. For clarity, Highways England has amended this article to make clear that all certified documents must be made available for inspection by members of the public in electronic format. However, it is not considered that a 'register' monitoring specific compliance with the measures contained in the REAC is necessary.
- 2.2.5 The Applicant intends to submit an updated REAC to the ExA at Deadline 11.

3 Agenda Item 5

3.1 Landscape effects of gantries

- 3.1.1 Mr Williams, of Buckden Marina Residents Association, queried whether the gantry proposed immediately west of the proposed bridge over the East Coast Mainline railway could be moved to minimise landscape effects.
- 3.1.2 The Applicant's response to this query is set out at **Appendix 1** to this document.

3.2 Effects on Station Cottages

- 3.2.1 Mr Norman raised a concern about various environmental effects on residents at Station Cottages, situated near Huntingdon Railway Station.
- 3.2.2 Similar issues have been raised previously in the written representations submitted by Mr Norman and Ms Axmacher at Deadline 2. The Applicant responded to the points raised in those written representations in its Comments on Written Representations Report 5 - Land Interests (REP4-015) and Comments on Written Representations Report 7 Local Community (REP4-017).
- 3.2.3 For completeness and ease of reference, the Applicant has set out its previous response with respect to impacts on Station Cottages at **Appendix 2** to this document.

3.3 Camera Heights

- 3.3.1 Campaign for Better Transport questioned whether the camera heights used for photomontages produced for the scheme were in accordance with guidance.

3.3.2 The Applicant's response to Campaign for Better Transport is at **Appendix 3** to this document.

3.4 Road Height

3.4.1 Mr Williams, of Buckden Marina Residents Association, questioned whether the road elevations could be lower. The Applicant responded to this point and this is expanded upon below.

3.4.2 The highway alignments have been designed with a consideration of the environmental impacts of the scheme whilst providing a safe, cost-effective, and practicable solution. The height of the alignment above the existing landscape has been minimised, keeping it as low as possible, subject to the following constraints:

- Watercourses – alignments must be at a suitable height above existing watercourses/drainage channels. This is necessary to preserve the function of this significant part of the local land drainage system and maintain its connectivity. In determining the height of the alignments, allowance has been made for factors including;
 - The size of culverts – noting current requirements for design storms;
 - Climate change allowance;
 - Including also: freeboard or navigational clearance above maximum water level; the thickness of structures; and the depth of new road pavement;
 - Headroom to allow vehicular maintenance access to watercourses and structures under the road and to adjacent farm land.
- Carriageway drainage - alignment height is governed by the requirements of the carriageway drainage system and pavement design, including compliance with current design standards Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and in particular Volume 4 -Section 2, Volume 6 and Volume 7. The height of the alignment is required to provide effective drainage to the foundation layers of the pavement. This is required for the longevity of the pavement and to provide sufficient height and falls to achieve outfalls by gravity. The alternative to a gravity system would be pumped outfalls. Pumped outfalls are fundamentally undesirable as these would be an ongoing maintenance and operation risk. Pumped outfalls would incur running costs and would require monitoring and more frequent maintenance than a gravity outfall. Additionally, notwithstanding the inclusion of multiple or backup systems, pumped outfalls have risk of failure with a potential for flooding of the new roads.

- East Coast Mainline railway. The mainline would pass over the existing railway allowing for clearance to the overhead electrical equipment, structural depth, pavement depth and construction tolerances.
- Side road crossings – generally existing side roads are maintained where they cross the A14 or A1 mainlines, closing roads not being an option unless there is a reasonably convenient alternative. For crossings, with the side roads being a lower design speed than the mainline A14 or A1, to conform to standards it is generally preferable to take the side road over the main carriageway. This is because tighter crest curves can be used which limits the extent of the embankment required (which for a side road is narrower than the main carriageway, in addition). This reduces both the embankment's environmental effect and also the amount of fill material used. The height of the side road crossings is determined by the height of the mainline carriageway (noting the other factors described in this response), headroom in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and allowance for the depth of the structure (noting the form of the structure, length of span(s)).

3.4.3 By keeping embankments as low as practicable the environmental impacts (including the quantity of embankment fill required) are minimised.

3.5 Compatibility with the A1

3.5.1 Mr Williams, of Buckden Marina Residents Association, questioned whether the proposed scheme made provision for improvements to the A1 at Buckden Bypass.

3.5.2 The Applicant has provided Mr Williams with a sketch illustrating in outline potential A1 Buckden Bypass options, which are compatible with A14 scheme. The Applicant explained in its correspondence to Mr Williams that it has considered both western and eastern routes. The Applicant also provided a 1994 consultation leaflet, explaining that the routes shown on the sketch follow the blue (solid blue line) and red (dashed red line) routes shown in the consultation leaflet.

3.5.3 The sketch illustrates work done by the Applicant solely to check the compatibility of the A14 scheme against a range of options for the Buckden Bypass and the A1 improvements, and is not an indication of any proposals of the Applicant.

3.5.4 The sketch and the 1994 consultation leaflet are at **Appendix 4** to this document.

3.6 The cumulative effect of the scheme

- 3.6.1 Mr Williams, of Buckden Marina Residents Association, questioned whether the scheme had been considered taking into account the the A428 and A1 Improvement Schemes, Network Rail's plans to introduce the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) and the closure of the Offord Level Crossing.
- 3.6.2 The Applicant's response is at **Appendix 5**.

4 Agenda Item 6

4.1 On-Site Worker Accommodation

- 4.1.1 The Applicant was asked by the ExA to provide more information with respect to numbers of construction workers expected to be accommodated across the scheme, with an explanation of the expected temporal flow of workers over the life time of the construction stage.
- 4.1.2 The Applicant has provided this information at **Appendix 6** to this document.

4.2 Code of Construction Practice

- 4.2.1 The ExA asked the Applicant (under Agenda item 6 and other Agenda items during the issue specific hearing) to consider making amendments to the Code of Construction Practice (CoCP). In response, the Applicant has submitted a revised CoCP at Deadline 10, which also includes amendments discussed at a meeting with the local authorities on 22 September 2015. The amendments to the CoCP include:
- Amending paragraph 1.1.5 to remove reference to further modification of the CoCP following Certification;
 - Replacing Figure 1 with Table 1.1;
 - Amending section 3.2 to provide further clarity on the process of engagement and agreement of the LEMPs;
 - Removing the exclusion of technical design from the scope of the local forums;
 - Including local authority consultation within Part 4;
 - Adding reference to good practice guidance on air quality in 6.1.2;
 - Including additional paragraphs on agricultural restoration and establishment in section 8.3; and

- Adding wording to reflect Highways England's proposed approach to engagement in detailed design.
- 4.2.2 Some local authorities suggested at the issue specific hearing that they had not been consulted with respect to the CoCP. The Applicant confirms that consultation on the CoCP has taken place with local authorities as follows:
- 29/7/14 – Environmental Stakeholders Forum – Presentation made by the Applicant on the scope of the CoCP;
 - 11/9/14 - CoCP Workshop (draft CoCP was circulated prior to the meeting);
 - 12/9/14 – Follow-up email sent to statutory bodies requesting comments on draft CoCP by 19/9/14;
 - 19/9/14 – Deadline for comments from the statutory bodies on the draft CoCP – comments were received from Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC), Cambridge City Council (CCiC), South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC), the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage (as it then was);
 - 20/8/15 – Meeting held with HDC, SCDC and CCC to discuss updates to the CoCP since the DCO application;
 - 22/9/15 – Meetings arranged with HDC, SCDC, CCC and separately with CCiC on latest updates to the CoCP.

5 Agenda Item 7

5.1 Excavation of material from borrow pits

5.1.1 Agenda Item 7 asked:

"As soft, wet and unsuitable material is estimated at 1,500,000m³ and included in the envisaged borrow pit excavation depths, why is a surplus excavation of 610,000 m³ of suitable material, some 11% of the total suitable material, also incorporated in the envisaged borrow pit excavation depths, given that an additional 10% excavation of suitable material, or some 534,000m³, would be available if depths are increased to the maximum LOD limit (REP7-018, Question 2.5.6)?"

5.1.2 The Applicant explained the answer to this question at the issue specific hearing and the ExA asked the Applicant to set out the answer in writing. This is provided at **Appendix 7** to this document.

5.1.3 The ExA also asked the Applicant about its "three tiered approach" to the restoration and aftercare of the borrow pits. The