

SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMENTS ON EXA'S FIRST WRITTEN QUESTIONS

HIGHWAYS ENGLAND'S RESPONSE

<i>Question No</i>	<i>Question</i>	<i>SBDC Response</i>	Highways England Response
1.3	<i>Would the project deliver appropriate environmental and social benefits as required by NNNPS para 3.3?</i>	<i>Although the proposal now includes low-noise surfacing along the whole scheme, it is still not clear whether sufficient mitigation has been proposed in South Bucks District in view of concerns from the Environmental Health Officer as well as local residents near the M4 who consider that the additional lanes will bring traffic noise closer to residents.</i>	<p>Highways England considers that the Scheme will deliver appropriate environmental and social benefits as required by paragraph 3.3 of the National Policy Statement for National Networks (“NNNPS”), as described in Highways England’s response to this question, comprising: low-noise surfacing, visual amenity, reduced driver stress, additional capacity and more reliable journey times, economic benefits, impacts on regeneration areas close to the Scheme and local employment.</p> <p>The noise and vibration assessment is reported in Chapter 12 of the ES (Application Document Reference 6-1). The magnitude of impact for the Scheme is minor beneficial in the short term and negligible in the long term. The significance of effect during the operation of the Scheme is assessed as slight beneficial in the short term and</p>

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			<p>neutral in the long term, with the vast majority of the Scheme corridor experiencing negligible or minor reductions in noise levels with the Scheme in operation (see paragraph 12.4.110 of the ES).</p> <p>Work is ongoing to provide a quantitative assessment of the enhanced mitigation strategy outlined in Appendix 12.5 of the ES. This comprises an iterative process which is employed to estimate the numbers of receptors experiencing specific reductions in noise levels (for an additional noise barrier, as detailed in Table A12.5.1 of Appendix 12.5 of the ES, or replacement of an existing barrier, as detailed in Table A12.5.2 of Appendix 12.5). The results will then be monetised (as employed in Transport Analysis Guidance (“TAG”) appraisal) and compared with the cost of the mitigation to provide a cost benefit analysis. Thus, the lengths and heights of new barriers (if specified), and the heights of replacement barriers (if specified), will be optimised. The results of that assessment, and the results of the assessment of the landscape and visual impact of any additional noise barriers</p>

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			proposed, will be provided to the Examination in due course.
1.4	<i>Are the local authorities satisfied that the traffic forecasts and economic case for the project have been adequately tested through the use of the M3/M4 variable demand transport model, and that the requirements of paras 4.5 and 4.6 of NNNPS have been met?</i>	<i>Highways-related issues in South Bucks are dealt with by Buckinghamshire County Council</i>	In the absence of any comments from the Council or the County Council, Highways England affirms that the traffic forecasts and economic case have been rigorously tested in line with NN NPS guidance and approved principles and systems and so paras 4.5 and 4.6 of NNNPS have been met.
1.6	<i>Are the local authorities satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated good design as required by NNNPS paras 4.32 to 4.34?</i>	<i>Prior to the hiring of the contractor HE mentioned that they planned to use standardised steel constructions that would require minimal maintenance for all bridges along the scheme. However there has been insufficient detail to determine whether this would ensure good design. More information on their likely impact on the setting of historic parks, conservation areas and Green Belt in South Bucks is needed.</i>	Good design principles as required by the NN NPS have been used to produce the massing, cross section and elevation details of the proposed replacement bridges as indicated in the Engineering and Design Report (“EDR”) (Application Document Reference 7-3). These designs have all been taken into account in the assessment of landscape and visual effects provided in Chapter 8 of the ES (Application Document Reference 6-1), which concludes that there would not be significant residual effects. The detail design of bridges would be developed in consultation with the local planning authority, whilst remaining consistent with the proposed massing, cross section and elevation details shown on the overbridge drawings in Annex F3 of the

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			Engineering and Design Report (Application Document Reference 7.4). The results of that assessment, and the results of the assessment of the landscape and visual impact of any additional noise barriers proposed, will be provided to the Examination in due course.
2.1	<i>Does the applicant accurately identify the Development Plans and Transport Plans currently in place for each of the 11 local authorities Table 1, APP-089 against which the application falls to be assessed?</i>	<i>At present the council is preparing a new Local Plan to succeed the current Local Plan and 2011 Core Strategy. However this is due to be adopted in 2018, following the Initial Consultation and Call for Sites closing in April 2015. HE should be aware of any new evidence that may arise as this process progresses.</i>	<p>The Applicant has assessed the acceptability of the proposed development against key planning and transportation policies within both adopted and emerging plans as listed in Appendix 1 of the Planning Statement.</p> <p>Whilst Highways England notes that the Council's emerging Local Plan could have been a relevant consideration in the determination of the Application, it is noted that it is not due to be published until 2017. The National Policy Statement for National Networks ("NN NPS") notes that the national policy regarding the weight to be given to policies in emerging plans (as contained in the NPPF) applies to applications for development consent (as well as orthodox planning applications). However, Highways England considers that any conflict between the Scheme and</p>

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			the emerging development plan is a matter of weight for the Secretary of State to balance. NN NPS 5.173 states that:
			<i>"Where the project conflicts with a proposal in a development plan, the Secretary of State should take account of the stage which the development plan document has reached in deciding what weight to give to the plan for the purposes of determining the planning significance of what is replaced, prevented or precluded. The closer the development plan document is to being adopted by the local plan, the greater the weight which can be attached to the impact of the proposal on the plan."</i>
2.2	<i>Do the local authorities agree the applicant's assessment of the project against the relevant policies of each Council? If not, please identify any areas of conflict and explain the reasons why the project would be in conflict.</i>	<p><i>The key policy areas of concern for SBDC are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>L4 River Thames Setting (how the Thames Bray Bridge development will impact the River Thames setting)</i> 	Policy L4 of the Adopted Local Plan 1999 (Saved Policies 2007) provides the statutory policy guidance against which to consider the effects of the Scheme on the setting of the River Thames. This has been done in Chapter 8 of the ES (Application Document Reference 6-1) through considering the effects of the Scheme on the landscape and visual amenity at this location. The massing, cross section and elevation details of the proposed replacement Thames Bray

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			Bridge as indicated in the EDR and the associated vegetation clearance and mitigation, in the EDR, Annex A2, Vegetation Clearance, Sheet 19, and
		<p>- <i>L10 Felling trees protected by a TPO (there is currently no details of how many protected trees will be lost and mitigation guidance should any be knocked down)</i></p>	<p>Annex A1, Environmental Masterplan, Sheet 19 (Application Document Reference 7-4) have been taken into account in the assessment of landscape and visual effects provided in Chapter 8 of the ES (Application Document Reference 6-1). Whilst vegetation clearance will be required, replacement planting is proposed. As set out in Table 8.2 of the ES, the landscape and visual effects (relating to the landscape character of the locality and visual amenity of those with views to Thames Bray Bridge) during construction are assessed to be moderate to large adverse, reducing to slight adverse by Design Year (2037 - 15 years after construction), due to establishment of planting.</p> <p>The outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (“CEMP”) (Appendix 4.2A of the ES) (Application Document Reference 6-3), requires the contractor to employ the services of an arboriculturalist to carry out a tree survey</p>

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			and report in accordance with BS5387.
		<p>- <i>TR10 HGVs (details of potential haul routes have still not been provided and there is still concern over the potential impact on Iver as a result of additional HGVs in an area that already experiences an unacceptable volume together with the cumulative impact of other national infrastructure proposals.</i></p>	<p>This survey will identify all of the trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders (“TPOs”), including those trees located outside the Order limits but where their root system is likely to extend into the area covered by the Order limits. The outline CEMP will be secured by Schedule 2, Requirement 8 of the draft Development Consent Order (“DCO”) (Application Document Reference 3-1). Wherever possible existing vegetation including trees will be retained and where removed, replacement planting will take place. Where a TPO protected tree must be removed or altered, the correct process and mitigation will be developed in consultation with the local planning authority.</p> <p>These details will be adequately addressed in the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (“CTMP”) (Annex E of Appendix 4.2A of the ES ‘outline Construction Environmental Management Plan’) (Application Document Reference 6-3). This document will be adopted, developed, and implemented as part of the CEMP in</p>

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			consultation with the highways
			authorities, including Buckinghamshire CC. It will address (among other matters) details of access/egress to construction compounds in the County. Consequently, if, for example, it is proposed to use Construction Compound 9 for the construction of the Scheme, liaison will take place with the Buckinghamshire County Council as the highways authority over details relating to the use of the site, including such matters as egress/exit and construction traffic routes and volumes. The preparation and implementation of the CEMP, including approval by the relevant authority, is secured under Schedule 2, Requirement 8 of the draft DCO.
2.3	<i>Are there any developments which are either proposed in or in accordance with Local Plans which might be affected by the project? If so, please identify and explain what the effects would be.</i>	<i>Yes- planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of the former Wyeth Pharmaceuticals building for office use on Huntercombe Lane South and this may be hindered by the proposal during the construction phase.</i>	Highways England was previously advised by SBDC of the proposal to redevelop the Wyeth Pharmaceuticals building for employment uses and this was taken into account in the development of the M3/M4 traffic model forecasts. Accordingly, this site forms part of the cumulative assessment for the operation of the Scheme.

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			<p>During construction of the Scheme, Lake End Road bridge will be kept open until a replacement structure is constructed adjacent to the existing structure. On completion of the new bridge, the existing structure will be demolished and traffic diverted on to the new structure. At that time traffic currently using the Marsh Lane bridge will be diverted on to the new Lake End Road bridge and on to the A4. As the access to/from Huntercombe Lane South will be maintained in both directions during the Scheme construction works, Highways England does not envisage any hindrance to the redevelopment of the former Wyeth site.</p>
2.4	<p><i>Is the scheme compatible with regional and local strategies to increase uptake and mode share for public transport, walking and cycling?</i></p>	<p><i>No it is not compatible with local strategies designed to promote sustainable transport. There will be a negative impact on the cycle and walking network within the Colne Valley Park as a result of the proposed year long closure of the bridge at Old Slade Lane and also there will be a possible impact on the Thames Path national trail and Jubilee River rights of way during the construction of bridges in Dorney.</i></p>	<p>Sufficient mitigation has been provided for the closure of Old Slade Lane Bridge during its reconstruction</p> <p>The effect of the proposed on-line reconstruction of Old Slade Lane Bridge and the need temporarily to divert the public rights of way over it is explained in paragraph 13.7.21 of the ES. Mitigation has been provided to address temporary severance during the on-line replacement of Old Slade Lane Bridge,</p>

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			<p>comprising a temporary diversion route to the south via Colnbrook Bypass, Sutton Lane, and North Park (see Figure 2.1 Sheet 13 of 16) (Application Document Reference 6-2).</p> <p>The significance of the residual effect of the bridge replacement on users of Old Slade Lane Bridge for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, where there is no suitable alternative route for the duration of the construction period (some 12 months) is detailed in paragraphs 13.7.21 and 14.11.13 of the ES. The assessment results in a moderate to large adverse effect in terms of severance and a severe effect in terms of effects on all travellers due to the length of the diversion. It should be noted however, that these effects will be of a temporary duration during the construction period and will impact on a relatively small number of individuals. Two 12 hour counts of users of the bridge were undertaken on 3 and 6 June 2015, which found a relatively low level of usage. On Wednesday 3 June 2015, a total of 58 people used the bridge (45 adults, 6 children and 7 cyclists) and on Saturday 6 June 2015 44 people were observed</p>

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			<p>using the bridge (35 adults and 9 cyclists). Vehicular access to the Thames Water facilities is available from Colnbrook Bypass. Once construction is over, access across Old Slade Lane Bridge will be reinstated for all highway users and there will be no long term impact on pedestrians, cycle users and equestrians (although cycle users and equestrians will gain some benefit from the provision of the higher parapets shown on Annex 3 of the Engineering and Design Report (Application Document Reference 7.4).</p>
`3.1	<p><i>The scheme includes the widening of the M4 at junctions of the motorway to alter sliproads; the construction of new overbridges; and the widening of underbridges. To what extent would these works have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt and constitute inappropriate development? To what extent would these operations have an impact on the five purposes of including land in the Green Belt?</i></p>	<p><i>There will be some localised impacts on openness particularly in Dorney however the majority of the scheme will be located on land that is already developed. The District will mainly be impacted by the need of land for the construction process and the amount of land required to raise the roads enough to service the new bridges, with some needing to be over 1 metre higher than they are at present. Precise details of this have not been provided to date.</i></p>	<p>The massing, cross section and elevation details of the proposed replacement bridges and the raising of approach roads as indicated in the EDR have been taken into account in the assessment of landscape and visual effects, provided in Chapter 8 of the ES (Application Document Reference 6-1), which concludes that there would not be significant residual operational effects on the openness of the Green Belt or any other land.</p>

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3.2	<i>In respect of proposed new gantries, to what extent would their construction have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt and constitute inappropriate development? To what extent would they have an impact on the five purposes of including land in the Green Belt?</i>	<i>Within the South Bucks District it is anticipated that there will be little impact in context of the motorway generally with there being not much permanent land take. The gantries are expected to have no impact on the 5 purposes of the Green Belt.</i>	Noted.
3.3	<i>Six potential construction compounds are proposed. To what extent would they have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt and constitute inappropriate development? To what extent would these operations have an impact on the five purposes of including land in the Green Belt?</i>	<i>There is only 1 compound located within the South Bucks District within the centre of Junction 7. With this being a temporary use, providing it is fully restored to its previous GB use then there are no concerns.</i>	Noted. The compound will be restored to previous Green Belt use. A commitment to undertake this will be secured through the CEMP. .
4.1.1	<i>Chapter 5 Section 5.5 APP-145 sets out the methodology for establishing the baseline for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Are consultees and interested parties satisfied with the approach as adopted?</i>	<i>The one aspect of the process which is of concern is that of factoring in potential future developments in emissions reduction from vehicles. Current developments indicate recorded improvements are not always reliable and therefore the impact on NO2 and particulates in the district could be larger than predicted. This has ramifications for High and Medium value receptors identified as being at risk due to the scheme.</i>	Over the last few years the rates of improvement anticipated by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (“Defra”) have not been realised as quickly as anticipated. This is due to the dieselisation of the vehicle fleet to a greater extent than previously anticipated, with the associated higher emissions of NOx and NO2, and also because of the gap between the anticipated laboratory based rates of NOx

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			<p>emissions compared with real world rates of NOx emissions. The approach utilised in the assessment of future air quality recognises this and therefore Highways England have not assumed that in the future all improvements in air quality (i.e. rates of improvement in vehicle emissions etc) will occur at the rate anticipated by Defra. In particular, the treatment of future air quality has been considered through the updated air quality advice on the assessment of future NOx and NO2 projections known as long term trend (“LTT”) analysis (Interim Advice Note (“IAN”) 170/12 v3), which only assumes a portion of improvements in air quality assumed by Defra will occur. This is described in paragraphs 6.2.57 to 6.2.60 of the ES. In this precautionary approach all modelling is undertaken consistent with Defra emission rates and associated local air quality management tools. The LTT rates of improvement are then applied to post-processed Defra based predictions to provide a more conservative set of results. Notwithstanding the cautious approach to Defra's predicted</p>

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			<p>improvements in air quality, in all other respects the assessment is consistent with Defra’s approaches as described above. It is these more conservative results which have been utilised in the overall operational assessment of significance of the Scheme.</p> <p>The objective values, which are used as the basis for the assessment of significance for the air quality assessment are set for the protection of human health, therefore all receptors considered in the assessment are considered to be of equal “value”.</p>
4.1.4	<p><i>An outline of the CEMP APP-293 is provided. The approval and implementation of the CEMP is secured through Requirement 8 of the draft DCO APP-026. The outline CEMP sets out a series of proposed measures and standards applied by the Highways Agency (as was) and its contractor throughout the construction period. The final CEMP will be certified to BS EN ISO 14001. Do any interested</i></p>	<p><i>Due to the large number of national infrastructure projects proposed to be constructed within the district, our main concern is the impact on resources on the Local Authority. As part of the scheme HE should enter into a PPA or SLA to assist in monitoring and processing consents for the M4, HS2, WRA and other projects to reduce the burden on the LPA.</i></p>	<p>The Applicant notes there are no comments in relation to the CEMP.</p> <p>The monitoring of the Scheme will be carried out by Highways England as set out in the CEMP (Document Reference Number 6.3), which is to be secured by a requirement attached to the Draft Development Consent Order under Condition 8, Schedule 2, (Document Reference Number 3.1).</p>

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	<i>parties have any comments on the sufficiency of the outline CEMP for securing mitigation? The ExA would be interested in particular in comments from NE, the EA and the LPAs who would be responsible for approving the CEMP under requirement 8 of the DCO.</i>		Should the Council desire to monitor the Scheme themselves, that would be their own decision and they would have to find their own funding for such an initiative.
4.1.8	<i>The locations of the gantries have been determined by design standards and these standards take into account need for maintenance, safety and visibility for road users. Can the applicant confirm what the design standards are which are referred to in para 8.2.13 APP-148 of the ES?</i>	<i>To date there has not been any detailed designs so for this reason we cannot comment</i>	<p>Question 4.1.8 was aimed at the Applicant and requested confirmation of the design standards used to determine the location of the gantries. In summary the response was that the relevant design standards are the following IANs as issued by Highways England:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. IAN 161/13 "Managed Motorways All Lane Running (MM/ALR)" ii. IAN 149/11 "Existing Motorway Minimum Requirements". <p>IANs can be accessed at www.standardsforhighways.co.uk</p> <p>Detailed design has now commenced and the design team understand the need to consult with SBDC.</p>

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4.2.4	<p><i>The spatial scope of the assessment is identified as the ZVI which is shown on Drawing 8.2 Sheets 1 to 16 APP-219 to APP-221. The ES does not provide details regarding the colours or the dimensions of the proposed gantries and therefore it is unclear how the ZVI was identified in relation to the gantries. Details of the types of gantries, together with 3D imaging, are provided in ‘Gantry General Arrangements’ APP-024, though this document is not referenced in the ES. Can a reference to this document be provided in the ES? Can the applicant also confirm the maximum dimensions of the proposed gantries, and confirm that this dimension was used in the identification of the ZVI, and would be secured through the DCO?</i></p>	<p><i>To date there has not been any detailed designs so for this reason we cannot comment</i></p>	<p>Question 4.2.4 was aimed at the Applicant. Regarding maximum dimensions of the proposed gantries and confirmation that this was used to determine the Zone of Visual Influence. In summary Highways England's response was that gantry heights range from 8.3m to 15.5 m and that these heights were used for the visual assessment.</p>
4.2.11	<p><i>Although Cumulative effects are discussed APP-148, can the applicant confirm that the scope of the cumulative assessment has been agreed with relevant stakeholders?</i></p>	<p><i>This has not been agreed to date</i></p>	<p>In accordance with Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (“DMRB”) Volume 11, Section 2, Part 5, consultation has been undertaken with relevant local planning authorities and other statutory bodies to agree the list of projects to be considered in the assessment of cumulative effects. Whilst the scope of the cumulative assessment has not been</p>

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			<p>expressly agreed with the relevant stakeholders, there has been extensive liaison between Highways England and relevant stakeholders in order to establish the scope of the cumulative assessment.</p> <p>The scope of the cumulative effects assessment was first set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report (issued August 2014) and accompanying Appendix A Committed Development. South Bucks District Council did not directly comment on the scope of the cumulative effects assessment in their response to consultation, which is included in Appendix 5.1 to the ES (Application Document Reference 6-3). However, they did mention other projects in the area, namely Mill Lane Taplow, which was considered for the traffic modelling (Appendix 16.2 of the ES) (Application Document Reference 6-3) and Western Access Rail to Heathrow and HS2 Spur into Heathrow which were not included in the cumulative effects assessment as these two projects are still in the development stage.</p>

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			<p>The cumulative effects assessment was developed in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (issued in November 2014), including an updated list of developments considered in the cumulative effects (Appendix 16.1) and included in the traffic modelling (Appendix 16.2). In their reply to the S42 consultation, South Bucks District Council did not comment on the scope of the cumulative effects assessment (Application Document Reference 5-2).</p> <p>On 3 December 2014, Highways England wrote to South Bucks District Council to confirm the list of planning applications that should be considered in the cumulative effects assessment but no response was received.</p>
4.4.3	<i>Table 9.5 APP-149 sets out the significance of the residual effect of the scheme on ecology and nature conservation. Is there any evidence to challenge the conclusions set out in this Table?</i>	<i>Issue for Buckinghamshire County Council</i>	Highways England notes there is no evidence offered from the Councils.

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4.6.2	<p><i>To what extent have the local authority Environmental Health Officers and Air Quality Officers been consulted on the assessment set out in Chapter 6? APP-146 Can the applicant, local authorities and other interested parties identify areas of agreement and disagreement with regard to the assessment of air quality impact set out in the ES?</i></p>	<p><i>South Bucks has not had a formal approach relating to Air quality. See SOCG.</i></p>	<p>The approach to the air quality assessment adopted in the ES was consulted upon through the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report for the Scheme (issued August 2014), as described in paragraph 6.1.15 of the ES. The methodology is consistent with Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and associated Interim Advice Notes.</p> <p>Additionally, meetings were held with South Bucks District Council on 9 March, 23 June and 22 September 2015 which the Air Quality specialist for the Scheme attended. In the meeting on the 23 June written comments were provided on air quality. The comments had been prepared by the Environmental Health Manager for South Bucks District Council (dated 19 June 2015). These comments and responses to these comments have formed the basis of the Statement of Common Ground agreed between Highways England and South Bucks District Council.</p>

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			The Statement of Common Ground between Highway England and South Bucks District Council concludes (and is agreed) that the requirements in the Application meet South Bucks District Council's concerns in relation to air quality (paragraph 3.28).
4.6.4	<i>Has the study area for the assessment of construction effects and for the assessment of operational effects been agreed with the local authorities?</i>	<i>To date this has not been agreed with SBDC</i>	<p>The approach to the determination of construction dust study area adopted in the ES is consistent with the study area selection criteria consulted upon through the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report for the Scheme (issued August 2014), as described in paragraph 6.1.15 of the ES. No consultee comments were received from South Bucks District Council on this aspect of the construction study area from this phase of consultation.</p> <p>Similarly, the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (issued November 2014) also utilised a construction dust study area consulted upon through the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report for the Scheme (issued August 2014), as described in paragraph 6.2.13. No consultee comments were</p>

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			<p>received from South Bucks District Council on this aspect of the construction study area from this phase of consultation.</p> <p>The approach to the determination of the local operational air quality study area adopted in the ES is consistent with the study area selection criteria consulted upon through Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report for the Scheme (issued August 2014), as described in paragraphs 6.1.12 and 6.1.13. No consultee comments were received from South Bucks District Council on this aspect of the local operational air quality study area from this phase of consultation.</p> <p>Similarly, the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (issued November 2014) also utilised a local operational air quality study area consulted upon with local authority consultees for the Scheme, as described in paragraphs 6.2.14 and 6.2.15. No consultee comments were received from South Bucks District Council on the local operational air quality study area from this phase of consultation.</p>

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			The Statement of Common Ground between Highways England and South Bucks District Council concludes that it is agreed that the requirements in the Application meet South Bucks District Council's concerns in relation to air quality (paragraph 3.28).
4.6.6	<i>Paras 6.2.7 to 6.2.14 of Chapter 6 APP-146 sets out details of sensitive receptors that may be affected by changes in air quality as a result of the construction and operation of the scheme. Some 3,275 sensitive receptors are identified. To what extent has the definition and identification of sensitive receptors been agreed with local authorities and any other relevant stakeholders?</i>	<i>To date this has not been agreed with SBDC</i>	The approach to the definition of the study area for the local operational air quality assessment is as described in paragraphs 6.1.12 and 6.1.13 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report. South Bucks District Council responded to this and identified Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation ("SAC") as a potential air quality sensitive receptor. Further information was provided to South Bucks District Council following completion of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (issued November 2014) to confirm that only very limited changes in traffic flows were anticipated in this location and that specific quantitative assessment was not required.

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			The Statement of Common Ground between Highways England and South Bucks District Council concludes that it is agreed that the requirements in the Application meet South Bucks District Council’s concerns in relation to air quality (paragraph 3.28).
4.6.8	<i>Chapter 6 Section 6.16 APP-146 deals with cumulative impacts. Have the key statutory bodies agreed the scope of the cumulative assessment? Are there any additional developments which should be included in the assessment?</i>	<i>No. All Major infrastructure projects of whatever stage should have regard to each other.</i>	<p>Highways England disagrees that all major projects “of whatever stage” should be included in a cumulative assessment.</p> <p>In accordance with DMRB Volume 11, Section 2, Part 5, consultation has been undertaken with relevant local planning authorities and other statutory bodies to agree the list of projects to be considered in the assessment of cumulative effects.</p> <p>In December 2014, a letter was circulated to local authorities along the Scheme which included a list of developments identified on each of the local authority planning application websites.</p>

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			<p>Responses received provided additional developments for consideration and/or provided updated details on developments already identified. Those additional developments that fell within the study area were considered using the criteria set out above and, where considered appropriate, were added to the list of developments presented in Appendix 16.1 of the ES.</p> <p>Therefore, Highways England confirms that, whilst there has been no explicit agreement as to the scope of the cumulative assessment with relevant stakeholders, the key statutory bodies have been afforded a number of opportunities to contribute to the scope of the cumulative assessments presented in the ES.</p> <p>The scope of the cumulative effects assessment was not explicitly agreed with South Bucks District Council, but they have had opportunities to respond on this matter.</p>

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			<p>The Planning Inspectorate (“PINS”), in Appendix 3 of their Scoping Opinion, advised that the cumulative effects assessment should consider major developments in the area that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 under construction; 1.2 permitted application(s) not yet implemented; 1.3 submitted application(s) not yet determined; 1.4 all refusals subject to appeal procedures not yet determined; 1.5 projects on the National Infrastructure’s programme of projects; and 1.6 projects identified in the relevant development plan (and emerging development plans - with appropriate weight being given as they move closer to adoption) recognising that much information on any relevant proposals will be limited.

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			<p>South Bucks District Council's view that all projects regardless of their stage of development should be considered in the cumulative effects assessment does not comply with DMRB or advice from the Planning Inspectorate. In order to place confidence in the results of the cumulative effects assessment, it is reasonable to restrict the projects considered to those with a reasonable likelihood of being implemented, and not include projects in their early stage of conception.</p>
4.7.1	<p><i>Do the local authorities agree that the locations of sensitive receptors and the areas most exposed to noise from major roads have been correctly identified (Figure 12.1 APP-253 to APP-256)?</i></p>	<p><i>South Bucks is satisfied that the sensitive receptors have been identified; however we are less sure that the full impact on all of them has been fully identified.</i></p>	<p>It is noted that South Bucks District Council responds positively to Question 4.7.1.</p> <p>In relation to the <i>full impact on all sensitive receptors</i>, and the overall effects of noise and vibration, these have been fully examined and the results are outlined in provided in Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement (along with Appendices 12.1 to 12.5 and Drawings 12.1 to 12.6).</p>

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4.7.2	<i>Has the baseline for the assessment of noise and vibration including the spatial scope (study area) for both construction and operational phases of the scheme together with the identification of the 21 monitoring locations been agreed with local authorities?</i>	No	<p>Whilst there has been no express agreement on this topic with South Bucks District Council, Highways England notes that no local authorities that have made a relevant representation (including the Council) have raised any form of comment regarding the noise monitoring locations or the study areas for the construction and operational phases of the Scheme.</p> <p>The study area was clearly defined in the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report (issued in August 2014). Subsequently, the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (issued November 2014) provided a set of drawings showing the study area for the noise and vibration assessment, identifying all of the sensitive receptors included within the assessment and the noise monitoring locations. There have also been a number of meetings with relevant local authorities (including South Bucks District Council) to discuss the approach to the noise and vibration assessment (including the study area), the employment of the baseline measurements, the developing results</p>

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			<p>from that assessment, and particular local issues for each local authority. No criticism has been raised at these meetings regarding any aspect of the baseline for the assessment of noise and vibration. Furthermore, the signed statement of Common Ground between Highways England And South Bucks District Council states “it is agreed that the proposed low noise surface as set out in paragraph 12.2.49 of the ES is appropriate mitigation for any low noise impacts”.</p>
<p>4.7.12</p>	<p><i>The ExA notes that the representations made by interested parties, in particular, Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council RR-304, Buckinghamshire County Council RR-241 and South Buck District Council RR-282, have identified the following developments as omitted from the cumulative assessment in the ES: the potential third runway at Heathrow (as considered in the Airports Commission’s Final Report (July 2015)); Construction of the Western Rail link to Heathrow (2017); S.I.F.E Slough International Freight Exchange; and HS2 Heathrow Express</i></p>	<p><i>There is a possibility that the construction of HEX depot at Iver and Langley, WRA at Iver and Langley, M4 widening and Heathrow expansion could all begin construction during the same period and all generate significant HGV movements on the same roads in the Iver area, with the HEX proposal alone set to require 500 HGVs to deliver materials to the construction site.</i></p> <p><i>One potential solution to this issue is the proposed Iver Relief road in conjunction with HEX and WRA proposals. Financial support from all scheme promoters requiring HGV movements through the area would help mitigate this issue.</i></p>	<p>The list of cumulative developments considered is presented in Table A16.2.1 of the ES (Application Document Reference 6.3, Appendix 16.2). The list was compiled from details provided by local planning authorities and / or published local plans. The assessment was undertaken in accordance with DMRB, Volume 11, Section 2, Part 5 and included all reasonably foreseeable developments (see Chapter 16.1 of the ES). With reference to DMRB Volume 11, Section 2, Part 5 (HA 205/08) (Ref 16-1), ‘reasonably foreseeable’ is interpreted to include other projects that are ‘committed’. These should include</p>

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	<p><i>Sidings. Please can the applicant explain why these developments have been omitted from the applicant's cumulative impact assessment? Please can the applicant undertake a cumulative impact assessment for these developments to identify whether the inclusion of these projects would change any of the conclusions reached in the applicant's ES or require any additional mitigation measures in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible, remedy significant adverse effects.</i></p>		<p>but will not necessarily be limited to (i) Trunk road and motorway projects which have been confirmed (i.e. gone through the statutory processes), and (ii) Development projects with valid planning permissions as granted by the Local Planning Authority, and for which formal EIA is a requirement or for which non-statutory environmental impact assessment has been undertaken. In addition, this assessment has also considered applications for consent which have been made, but which have not yet been granted.</p> <p>The requirement to relocate the Heathrow Express depot is dependent on the HS2 Bill receiving Royal Assent and as such, without such approval, it cannot be regarded as committed.</p> <p>The Western Rail Link to Heathrow proposal was announced on 05/02/2014 following consideration of four options by Network Rail. At the time the assessment for the Scheme was undertaken, the proposal was at "early stages of development" following its inclusion in the Route Utilisation Strategies published in March 2010. As</p>

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			<p>such, it was not at a sufficiently developed stage to be included in the cumulative assessment for the Scheme, and did not come within the guidelines set out in DMRB for those committed, reasonable foreseeable developments that should be included in the assessment. It is understood an application may be brought forward in due course. Any application for the construction of the Western Rail Link will be required to take the M4 improvement scheme into account when assessing the effect of their proposals, rather than the reverse.</p> <p>The recommendations of the Airports Commission concerning a possible third runway at Heathrow are under consideration by the Government, and no application for consent to construct the proposals has been made. Heathrow is one of two locations where additional airport capacity was considered and as such, pending a decision by the Government, it cannot be regarded as committed. As such, the proposal is not considered to be reasonably foreseeable and so was not included within the cumulative impact assessment for the Scheme. Any application for the</p>

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			<p>construction of the third runway, and any connection applications such as for the relocation of the Energy from Waste Plant, will be required to take the M4 improvement Scheme into account when assessing the impact of their proposals, rather than the reverse.</p> <p>In response to the funding request, Highways England point out that applicants are only required to mitigate the impacts of their own Scheme which is the case on this Scheme. They are not required to partially fund other promoters and there is certainly no requirement to fund developments that are not yet "committed".</p>
4.8.1	<p><i>Chapter 7 Table 7.3 APP-147 concludes that there would be no more than moderate adverse impacts on cultural heritage assets or their setting during the construction phase of the scheme, and no more than slight adverse impacts on the setting of cultural heritage assets during operation of the scheme. Does any party have evidence to challenge this conclusion?</i></p>	<p><i>The residents of Burnham Abbey and the surrounding Huntercombe Conservation Area have outlined a number of concerns related to the potential impact of the scheme on the area. This has been summarised and included in the SBDC and BCC LIR.</i></p>	<p>Highways England note that no evidence has been provided here in direct response to the ExA's question.</p> <p>However, to respond to the Council it is noted that paragraph 7.8.23 of the ES has identified that a portion of the Huntercombe Conservation Area is located within the Scheme's Zone of Visual Influence ("ZVI"). This portion is restricted to the eastern periphery of the</p>

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			<p>conservation area. Impacts to the setting of this asset as a result of visual intrusion during construction and operation have been identified and are predicted to be slight adverse as indicated in Table 7.3 of the ES.</p> <p>Paragraph 7.8.23 of the ES has identified that a portion of the Huntercombe Manor registered park and garden is located within the Scheme's ZVI. The portion of the asset located within the ZVI consists of a large arable field bordered by the M4 approach road. Impacts to the setting of this asset as a result of visual intrusion during construction and operation have been identified and are predicted to be slight adverse as indicated in Table 7.3 of the ES.</p> <p>All listed buildings comprising Burnham Abbey and the surrounding Huntercombe Conservation Area are located outside of the Scheme's ZVI. Given the lack of inter-visibility between these features and the Scheme no adverse impacts on the setting of these heritage assets as a result of the Scheme are anticipated.</p>

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			<p>Detailed commentary on noise impacts are provided below in response to Question 7.1.</p> <p>The air quality assessment concludes that there are no significant impacts of the Scheme in the Opening Year (2022). There may be short term effects resulting from construction dust within 200m of the construction sites, but this can be mitigation through measures set out in paragraphs 5.6.1 and 5.6.2, Section 6.2 and 6.3 of the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Appendix 4.2A of the ES) (Application Document Reference 6.3), which will be secured under Requirement 8, Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (Application Document Reference 3.1).</p>
5	<i>Engineering and Design</i>	<i>Highways-related issues in South Bucks are dealt with by Buckinghamshire County Council</i>	Noted.
5.7	<i>Are the local authorities satisfied that the solution chosen for each of the overbridges or underbridges in their Council area are appropriate?</i>	<i>At present the proposal for rebuilding the bridge along Old Slade Lane is still not agreed. The Council supports the Colne Valley CIC's stance with the closure of the bridge causing a major disruption to one of the main footpath and cycleways in the park.</i>	The Highways England Team have been consulting with South Bucks District Council since March 2013 on the proposals to replace the overbridges over the M4 as part of the smart motorway scheme. As a result of that engagement with the Council we were aware of the

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			<p>importance of the Colne Valley route and the intent to form a bridleway across the Old Slade Lane bridge in due course. It is for this reason that the proposals include for a shared vehicle/non-motorised use provision across the bridge with the use of 1.8m high parapets to accommodate equestrian usage.</p> <p>The bridge replacement is based on construction being on-line to avoid the need for additional land given that current movements across the bridge are understood to be relatively low (as per the answer to 2.4 above in this document). Such an on-line replacement solution relies on using a diversion route during construction..</p>
7.1	<i>Does the scheme comply with the need to be designed to minimise social and environmental impacts and improve quality of life in accordance with para 3.2 of the NNNPS?</i>	<i>The current evidence suggests that the proposed scheme would not improve the quality of life for the local residents in South Bucks in close proximity to the M4. Particular concern is for the residents of the Huntercombe Conservation Area and Burnham Abbey where additional noise and vibration pollution would have a serious impact on the quality of life for residents and businesses.</i>	Highways England considers that the Scheme complies with the need to be designed to minimise social and environmental impacts and improve quality of life in accordance with paragraph 3.2 of the NN NPS.

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			<p>Improvements to the traffic flows and performance of the M4 motorway as a result of the Scheme will bring economic and social benefits which will improve quality of life for many (including local residents in South Bucks District).</p> <p>In terms of the noise issues raised by the Council, the noise and vibration assessment, is reported in Chapter 12 of the ES and referred to in full at 1.3 above in this document. The magnitude of impact for the Scheme is minor beneficial in the short term and negligible in the long term. The significance of effect during the operation of the Scheme is assessed as slight beneficial in the short term and neutral in the long term, with the vast majority of the Scheme corridor experiencing negligible or minor reductions in noise levels with the Scheme in operation (see paragraph 12.4.110 of the ES).</p>

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			<p>These noise reductions are shown in Drawing 12.4 for the short term, and in Figure 12.5 for the long term. Sheets 10, 13 and 14 are relevant to the South Bucks District Council area. Rather than Huntercombe Conservation Area and Burnham Abbey (and the general South Bucks District Council area) experiencing noise increases as a result of the operation of the Scheme, the reductions in noise levels with the Scheme in operation are evident, demonstrating that quality of life may be improved.</p> <p>Note that further detail on the potential impacts on Huntercombe Conservation Area and Burnham Abbey are provided in Highways England's responses to the South Bucks District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council Local Impact Report.</p>

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7.2	<i>Appendix B to the Socio-economic Report APP-090 sets out the applicant's WebTAG appraisal of the scheme. To what extent are the summaries of key economic and social impacts agreed? Can evidence be produced to support any disagreement with the conclusions set out in App B?</i>	<i>Not agreed.</i>	Highways England note that no evidence is offered by the Council to support any disagreement and request that South Bucks DC provide additional explanation as to which aspects of the summaries of the key economic and social impacts are not agreed.