

A19 Downhill Lane Junction Improvement

Scheme Number: TR010024

6.11 Environmental Statement Addendum – Environmental Effects of Using Integrated NMU Route

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A19 DOWNHILL LANE JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT

The A19 Downhill Lane Junction **Development Consent Order 202[]**

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT ADDENDUM - ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF USING INTEGRATED NMU ROUTE

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A19 Downhill Lane Junction Improvement – Environmental Statement Addendum – Environmental Effects of Using Integrated NMU Route



1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 This document relates to an application made by Highways England to the Planning Inspectorate under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008. The application is for the grant of a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the alteration of the A19 Downhill Lane junction (the Scheme).
- 1.1.2 The Scheme description can be found in detail in Chapter 2 'Scheme Description' of the Environmental Statement (ES) (document reference TR010024/APP/6.1). Schedule 1 of the draft A19 Downhill Lane Junction Improvement DCO (document reference TR0010024/APP/3.1) describes the proposed works for which this application for development consent is sought.
- 1.1.3 As this statement is part of the application documents, it should be read alongside and is informed by the other application documents. In particular, this statement should be read alongside the ES (**document reference: TR010024/APP/6.1**).



2 PROPOSED CHANGE TO USE IAMP TWO'S WASHINGTON ROAD BRIDGE FOR A19 NMU CROSSING

- 2.1.1 The Scheme's non-motorised user (NMU) proposals would involve the creation of a dedicated NMU route, connecting Bridleway B46 to the north-east of Downhill Lane junction with the A1290 to the west of the junction via a new NMU bridge across the A19 to the south of Downhill Lane junction. Section 2.12 'Non-motorised user facilities' of the ES describes the Scheme's proposed new NMU provision (document reference: TR010024/APP/6.1). By way of background, the existing junction between Downhill Lane and Bridleway B46 remains busy with non-motorised traffic throughout the year, particularly with cycle commuters crossing the junction to access the Nissan Plant.
- 2.1.2 A potential variation to the Scheme's NMU solution has been identified in the event that the IAMP TWO development is granted consent before the Scheme's NMU bridge is built and IAMP LLP commits to delivering their NMU solution. Therefore, Highways England are introducing assessments that assess the impacts and benefits of an NMU route integrated with the most recent NMU solution consulted upon by IAMP LLP.
- 2.1.3 The integrated NMU route is shown on the drawing **TR010024/APP/6.11** in Appendix A
- 2.1.4 The assessment is also limited to reviewing the changes in routes as indicatively shown on the drawing in Appendix A as there are currently no formal designs for the proposed integrated NMU route. It is assumed the route would be designed to enable safe access by all potential pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian NMUs (including disabled users). However, this approach allows for future changes to the design of the new Washington Road bridge as it has not assumed any specific features or exact location to mitigate environmental effects (e.g. on visual amenity).

2.2 Air quality

- 2.2.1 Construction of the standalone NMU route would take place within the context of the wider highway works. While there would be some reduction in construction activity as a result of not having to construct the Scheme's NMU bridge and the Scheme's NMU route link between Washington Road and the A1290, there would be no significant change to those air quality effects during construction assessed in Chapter 6 of the ES.
- 2.2.2 During operation, the proposed integrated route would mean less separation of NMUs and vehicular traffic; however, this is unlikely to be a significant effect.
- 2.2.3 Overall, the changes to the Scheme's NMU provision would have no change on the air quality effects set out in the ES.

2.3 Cultural heritage

2.3.1 The integrated route would not make any material change to the conclusions in relation to heritage. There are no cultural heritage assets in the affected area.



2.3.2 Overall the cultural heritage effects of the changes to the Scheme's NMU provision would be negligible and would have no significant change to the effects set out in the ES.

2.4 Landscape and visual effects

- 2.4.1 There would be a benefit from predominantly removing specific impacts and thus reducing effects on visual amenity and landscape and townscape character, as assessed in Chapter 8 of the Scheme ES. This would be due to the removal of the Scheme's NMU bridge over the A19 south of Downhill Lane junction, and its associated ramp structures.
- 2.4.2 This would be reflected in a reduction in adverse effects on visual amenity and tranquillity within local character units (LCUs) and in visual effects on receptors adjacent to the Scheme, both during construction and in operation (Town End Farm north western edge, Downhill Farm complex, Make-me-Rich Farm, properties on Lawn Drive, IAMP ONE, Usworth Cottages, The Chalet and NESLAM outdoor areas and football pitches to the north).
- 2.4.3 Views experienced by NMUs of shared cycleway/footways on approach to the new route crossing point from the A1290 (west) and Washington Road (east); and along Downhill Lane (part of the Great North Forest Trail), would no longer include the taller bridge structure and ramps due to their omission from the Scheme, but there would still be views to the IAMP TWO new Washington Road bridge.
- 2.4.4 The NMU route diversions over the IAMP TWO new Washington Road Bridge would still have views over the A19 to detracting elements of the Scheme road bridges to the north, and the Nissan Plant and Washington footbridge to the south, however these would be not be as elevated (approximately 7m instead of 9m above A19), and also not have to cross over the Washington Road (approximately 6m above) as well.
- 2.4.5 There would also be removal of impacts due to the construction and presence of the Scheme's NMU bridge in mid to long distance views from the north (workers within IAMP One, West Pastures Travelling Community Site and users of Footpath B29) and south (users of the multi-use cycleway on the A1290) of the Scheme.
- 2.4.6 Furthermore, there would be a reduction of visual effects between the opening year and the future year (15 years hence), in views from: the eastern end of Footpath 27 and Bridleway B46; Footpath B29; residents at the West Pastures Travelling Community Site, Mount Pleasant Farm and Swan Court in Hylton Castle; and visitors to the Travelling Man public house due to removal of the taller Scheme's NMU bridge structure.
- 2.4.7 Residual operational visual effects after 15 years establishment of mitigation on visual receptors identified above would also be reduced because of the Scheme's NMU bridge being removed.
- 2.4.8 Whilst the cumulative visual effects on views would remain the same as the Scheme ES due to the dominant contribution of the IAMP TWO development, views from the east looking west and from the NMU routes using the IAMP TWO new Washington Road bridge would experience different impacts as a result of the omission of the footbridge and ramps. This would lessen the contribution of the



Scheme to cumulative visual effects in views to the west from Bridleway B46 and Downhill Lane (east) and properties in this location due to having less man-made structures in these views. Furthermore, NMUs using the new Washington Road bridge would have one less bridge structure visible in the foreground when travelling west, with the IAMP TWO buildings being the dominant visual impact in these views.

2.4.9 Overall, the changes to the non-motorised user provision as well as surrounding property receptors would offer a positive effect on landscape character and visual amenity, as compared with those effects set out in the ES.

2.5 Ecology and nature conservation

- 2.5.1 There would be no significant change in the area of land temporarily disturbed by construction works, as ground clearance of the affected area would still be needed during construction for the Scheme's embankment and drainage works. There may be a small, localised benefit from any reduction in permanent hardstanding area from removing the Scheme's NMU structures, but any beneficial effect would not be significant.
- 2.5.2 Overall, at best, there may potentially be some marginal positive ecological effects compared to those effects set out in the ES, but these would not be significant.

2.6 Geology and soils

2.6.1 There would be no significant change in the volume of soils and area of land temporarily disturbed by construction works, as the Scheme's NMU route is located alongside wider embankment and drainage works. There may be a small, localised benefit from any reduction in permanent hardstanding between the Scheme's NMU bridge and the A1290. However, overall there would be no significant change to the effects outlined in Chapter 10 of the ES.

2.7 Materials

- 2.7.1 There would be a beneficial effect from reducing the need for structures and materials for the construction of the Scheme's NMU bridge and connection to the A1290.
- 2.7.2 Overall the changes to the Scheme's NMU provision would offer a positive effect on materials use and waste generation compared to those effects set out in the ES.

2.8 Noise and vibration

2.8.1 There would be a small reduction in construction activity by not constructing the ramped access and Scheme's NMU bridge; however, given that there would still be construction works in this area, associated with alterations to embankments, there is unlikely to be a significant change in the noise and vibration effects assessed in Chapter 12 of the Scheme ES. Any change would be slightly beneficial as negating the need for the Scheme's NMU bridge and ramped access could reduce the construction work near receptors in Town End Farm.



2.8.2 Overall, the changes to the Scheme's NMU provision would only offer a potentially small benefit in a localised area compared to those effects set out in the ES; however, this would not be significant.

2.9 People and communities

- 2.9.1 The changes to the Scheme's NMU provision would slightly reduce the benefits identified in Chapter 13 of the ES as there would no longer be full separation of NMUs and vehicular traffic for a significant length of the route. The proposed integrated route would include NMU provision alongside vehicular traffic across the new Washington Road bridge. However, there is still some separation of NMUs and vehicles at Downhill Lane junction and NMUs would still be routed away from traversing the actual junction itself. Information from IAMP TWO suggests that the new Washington Road bridge would have quieter traffic flows and would also not be open to heavy good vehicles (HGVs).
- 2.9.2 The changes would have less beneficial effects for recreational users, such as walkers and equestrians, as the route would no longer be fully segregated, which would offer less amenity benefits than that of the Scheme alone. However, while use of the Great North Forest Trail is a popular recreational route, it should be noted that the current NMU route is alongside an A-road and the official designation of this trail has lapsed.
- 2.9.3 The integrated route would also potentially offer benefits to commuting cyclists over the Scheme proposal, as this is a more direct route to access the Nissan Plant and the IAMP employment areas. Commuter movements of this kind represent the largest proportion of NMU movements in the area.
- 2.9.4 Overall the changes to the Scheme's NMU provision would be slightly less beneficial for recreational users, such as equestrians and walkers, compared to the Scheme's NMU route because of the integrated NMU route being immediately adjacent to a local road; though the route via the new Washington Road bridge would still be an improvement over the existing A19 Downhill Lane junction. Compared to the Scheme's NMU route there would be beneficial effects for commuting users, in particular cyclists, as the route is more direct. Neither of these two changes are likely to cause a significant variation to the conclusions outlined in Chapter 13 of the ES, but the integrated option is still overall a beneficial change compared to the existing NMU provision at the junction.

2.10 Road drainage and water environment

- 2.10.1 There would be a small reduction in hardstanding, through less construction of structures (the Scheme's access ramps and NMU route surfacing to the west of the A19), which may have the effect of slightly reducing operational run off; however, this would not be a significant benefit.
- 2.10.2 Overall the changes to the Scheme's NMU provision may have a small positive effect on the water environment, through the requirement for slightly less hardstanding associated with the NMU route; however, this is unlikely to change the effects set out in the ES.



2.11 Register of environmental actions and commitments

- 2.11.1 Removal of the Scheme's NMU bridge would only affect environmental commitments relating to:
 - Landscape planting to screen the Scheme's NMU bridge (LVIA 5, 8 and 14-19, plus P3.2 – 3.5) – the change does not affect these commitments as a planting scheme still needs approval at the detailed design stage for other purposes, just the need to specifically screen the NMU bridge has been removed.
 - Delivery of safety with a segregated Scheme NMU route (P&C 14 + 16) as outlined in Section 3.9, above, the improved safety commitment is still maintained compared to the existing baseline situation.
- 2.11.2 Overall the proposed changes to the Scheme's NMU provision reported in the ES would not affect the environmental actions and commitments in Appendix 1.3 of the ES.

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APPENDIX A: INTEGRATED NMU ROUTE SCENARIOS

Drawing TR010024_APP_6.11 'Downhill Lane Non-Motorised User Routes Integrated Scenarios'.'

