

A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down

TR010025

Deadline 3
8.20.2 - Responses to Local Impact Report –
Devon County Council

Volume 8

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

Planning Act 2008

The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

May 2019



Infrastructure Planning

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A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down

Development Consent Order 20[**]

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1.1 Devon County Council submitted a Local Impact Report (LIR) in accordance with the requirements set out in the Planning Act (the 2008 Act) and the Advice Note One: Local Impact Reports (republished April 2012, (version 2)).
- 1.1.2 The Advice Note states that the “content of the LIR is a matter for the local authority concerned as long as it falls within the statutory definition”. The LIR should consist of a statement of positive, neutral and negative local impacts.
- 1.1.3 The Advice Note states that when the Examining Authority decides to accept an application it will ask the relevant local authorities to prepare a LIR and the relevant local authorities should prioritise preparation of their LIR irrespective of whether the local authority considers the development would have a positive or negative impact on the area. The LIR may include any topics that it considers to be relevant to the impact of the development on its area and will serve as a means by which its existing body of knowledge and evidence on local issues can be fully and robustly reported to the Examining Authority.

1.2 Highways England Response

- 1.2.1 Thank you for providing the ‘A303/A358/A30 Corridor Improvement Programme: Economic Impact Study’. as commissioned by Devon County Council on behalf of the A303 Steering Group, which we have read as the Devon County Council Local Impact Report [REP1-060].
- 1.2.2 Thank you for also for providing a submission in the form of a Written Representation [REP2-085 to REP2-088].
- 1.2.3 Highways England has provided a response to both the Local Impact Report and the Written Representation within the document, submission to Deadline 3 - Responses to Written Representations.
- 1.2.4 We would like to thank Devon County Council for the work undertaken to demonstrate the economic benefit that upgrading the A303/A358/A30 corridor could provide to the South West region. Devon County Council’s written representation and the Relevant Representations by the Heart of South West Local Enterprise Partnership, the Peninsula Transport Sub-national Transport Body and the A303/A30/A358 Improvement Partnership show the level of support for improvements to the corridor from local authorities and other regional bodies in the South West.
- 1.2.5 Highway England’s own work presented in its 2017 report ‘Socio-economic analysis, future forecasts and the strategic road network (https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/strategic-economic-growth-plan/supportin4g_documents/Socioeconomic%20analysis%20future%20forecasts%20and%20the%20SRN%20%20final.pdf) concludes (Chapter 5) that

“growth in employment and GVA in peripheral regions would be enhanced by effective connections that reduce effective distance with urban agglomerations, improve access to international gateways and reduce journey times for tourists and leisure travellers”. The A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down scheme fulfils these points.

- 1.2.6 Furthermore, analysis of the distribution of traffic using the A303 past Stonehenge, and as presented in Figure 2-2 of the ComMA [APP-298], shows that only 11% of trips have both an origin and destination within 10 miles (16 kilometres) of Stonehenge (i.e. are local), with the average length of journeys being 100 miles (160 kilometres). This highlights both the sub-regional and regional connectivity provided by the A30, which business and leisure users (including tourists during busy periods) would benefit from with the proposed Scheme. Analysis of the Scheme benefits is set out in Section 6 of Appendix D to ComMA [APP-302], with Section 6.7 explaining the local, sub-regional and regional distribution of benefits that the scheme would deliver.
- 1.2.7 As set out within its Road Investment Strategy (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/408514/ris-for-2015-16-road-period-web-version.pdf), the Government’s aim is to transform all remaining single carriageway sections of the A303/A358 corridor into a high-quality dual carriageway route, linking the South East with the South West. By providing a free-flowing and reliable connection to the South West, as part of the upgrading of the A303/A358 corridor, the scheme will help to boost productivity in the region. The scheme will make the South West an easier place for tourists to access, which is a major part of the region's economy. It will also facilitate new jobs and long-term prosperity, meeting the needs of a growing population. Further information can be found in Chapter 5 of The Case for the Scheme [APP-294]. The RIS also identifies that funding will be set aside for smaller-scale improvements to the A303/A30 section between Southfields and Honiton to improve safety and journey quality for road users along the existing single carriageway, recognising that large scale improvements would be challenging given the protected landscape and topography surrounding the route. This includes future small-scale work in the Blackdown Hills AONB which will take account of the environmental sensitivity of the area. The Draft Road Investment Strategy 2: Government Objectives, explains, on page 9, the aims of the Government to support economic growth. *‘Through the RIS we also aim to facilitate delivery of the [Industrial] Strategy by increasing productivity and reducing congestion. Key projects such as the Lower Thames Crossing and the continued upgrade of the A303 will ensure regions are better connected’.*
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/752066/draft-road-investment-strategy-2-governments-objectives.pdf

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