

**Examination of the M42 Junction 6 Improvement Scheme DCO
Planning Inspectorate Ref: TR010027**

**Open Spaces Society -
Additional representation responding to Highways England Submission
on Actions Arising from hearing on 1 October 2019**

Richard Lloyd, OSS Local Correspondent, Solihull
The Open Spaces Society

[REDACTED]

1. Introduction

At the hearing on 1 October 2019, the Society requested further dialogue with the Applicant on the four major issues detailed in the submission dated 3 June 2019. Although the Society appreciates the recent work done by the Applicant, more would be achieved through cooperative development of design changes.

At the present time, it's not considered adequate consideration has been given to the use, character, attractiveness and convenience of the various rights of way, as required by the NPSNN¹, nor have public rights of way and access been improved, as required by the NPPF².

2. Underpass beneath Airport Way

In the most recent response from the Applicant³, the section in Appendix A is useful in understanding this design issue. It appears an extra 115mm is necessary to increase the width of the south verge to the minimum allowed by the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, TA90/05. The widths proposed at present are:

North verge 1.754m
North free-flow carriageway 3.035m
North carriageway 6.927m
Central reservation 2.821m
South carriageway 6.941m
South verge 1.185m.

Thus the total non-carriageway width is 5.76m, of which about 2m would be allocated for vehicle restraint barriers at 4 places. The road run slightly skew beneath the viaduct, and the free-flow slip road diverges at this point, but it appears to the Society that further detailed work would provide a solution.

Flexibility should be exercised as indicated by the Design Manual:

¹ Dept for Transport, *National Policy Statement for National Networks*, section 5.184 (December 2014)

² Secretary of State for Housing, Communities Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework*, section 98 (Feb 2019)

³ Highways England, *8.86 Actions Arising out of ISH on Living Conditions on 1 October 2019 for Deadline 7*

"As with all highway design, there is a need to balance issues of safety and practicality. This Advice Note provides 'preferred' and 'acceptable' minimum values based on best available evidence, but in exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate to apply some flexibility in using these figures over short distances and where other measures are used such as 'SLOW' markings to encourage lower speeds."

The provision of a separate dedicated underpass does not appear to have been investigated.

3. Clock Interchange eastern span

The applicant states there is an available width of 0.7m.

However, no consideration has been given to minor modifications to the balustrade to increase this width. At present, the balustrade is fixed to the surface of the bridge span, and shifting it to the outer face, and/or providing an inclined railing, could provide significant useful space. Similarly, there is unused space on the inside of the circulatory system, so a minor change could shift the carriageways without a reduction in lane width.

4. Proposed overbridge for footpath M112

The applicant has now produced a detailed plan and section of the area where an overbridge with a supporting column could be provided.

With regard to the Airport Safety Zone, there appears to be something of a dual standard being applied. The existing ground level is depicted as already infringing the Zone by about 8 m. This implies a small, but recognised, risk that an aircraft deviating from the normal path could contact the ground.

The disaster at Kegworth⁴, 30 years ago, shows the potentially catastrophic effect of an abrupt change of ground profile. It appears unlikely a footbridge within the cutting would cause a significant increase in the risk.

As a three-dimensional design problem, the constraints have been set out, but no options have been worked through to the stage that the proposed bridge should be dismissed.

5. Conclusion

The Open Spaces Society maintains its position that the scheme has not given sufficient priority to the needs of non-motorised users in the four areas described in earlier representations (retention of M106, M112 overbridge, M113A diversion, and off-carriageway M107-Eastway link)⁵.

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kegworth_air_disaster

⁵ Open Spaces Society, Additional Written Representation, 3 June 2019