

TEXT_M25J28_OFH1_Session1_01032021

Mon, 3/1 7:17PM • 39:31

00:02

Good evening, everybody. It's now half past six. And this open floor hearing in relation to the application made by highways England for the proposed M25 Junction 28. Improvements is now open. Can everybody hear me loud and clear?

00:20

Yeah, we can hear to see you. Thank you. And Mrs. Hanlon, please, Could you confirm that live streaming event has commenced? Yeah. Thank you.

00:32

Well, my name is Richard Allen, and I'm a chartered town planner. And I'm an examining inspector and a bit appointed by the Secretary of State to be the member, a lead member of the panel of inspectors to examine this application, please can ask my colleague to introduce himself.

00:49

Thank you, Mr. Allen. And Good evening, everyone. My name is rod McArthur. I'm a chartered architect. And I've been appointed by the Secretary of States to be a member of a panel of inspectors to examine this application.

01:01

And together we constitute the examining authority for this application. Now, in the arrangements conference, which preceded this meeting, you will already have spoken to Paige Hanlon, who is the case manager for this project, and she is supported by Edwards Lee and James Bunton from the case team.

01:22

I will now need to go through some housekeeping matters. Particularly I'm to say a few words on the general data

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protection regulations.

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This event is being recorded as well as being live streamed to interested parties who requested this, the digital recordings are retained and published, and they form a public record that contain your personal can contain your personal information, and to which the general data protection regulations apply. The planning Inspectorate practice is to retain and publish recordings for a period of five years

from the Secretary of State's decision on this application. Consequently, if you participate in today's meeting, it's important that you understand that you will be recorded, and therefore consent to

02:10

consent to the retention and publication of the digital recording will be given. We only have asked for information to be placed on the public record that is important and relevant to the planning decision. It will only be in the rarest of circumstances that we may ask you to provide personal information of the type that most of us would prefer to keep private or confidential. Therefore, to avoid the need to edit the digital recordings, what we would ask is that you try your best not to add information to the public record that you would wish to be kept private or confidential.

02:45

Please bear in mind that this is the only official record of the proceedings that will be placed on the planning inspectors website, tweets, blogs, and similar communications arising out of this meeting will not be accepted as evidence in this application.

03:04

Thank you for

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the phone formal purpose for this open floor hearing is to discharge the examining authorities duty to interested parties who have requested to be heard. A number of requests were made by interested parties to hold an open floor hearing, which provides any interested parties an opportunity to make their case on this or in any other matter relevant matter orally at this public hearing.

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It is therefore an opportunity for the examining authority to hear firsthand your thoughts about this application.

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The open floor part of the overall hearing is usually for the benefit of members of the public and residents to air views.

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Whilst local authorities statutory undertakers an organization's may exercise, their right to speak at these events is generally not done so as those parties may will take more of an active part of the issue specific hearings. We are conducting this meeting in accordance with section 9394 of the Planning Act, and the infrastructure planning examination procedure rules 2010. Specifically rule 14,

04:11

you are reminded that section 494 of the Act allows the examining authority to refuse to allow representations to be made at hearings. If the examining authority consider them to be irrelevant, irrelevant, vexatious or frivolous, relate to the merits of policy set out in national policy statement or repeat other representations already made.

04:34

We will temper efficiency and fairness and allow you to have your say, but we would be grateful if you could keep your contributions to the point and focused. So we may make best use of the time available to us.

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The exact it is the intention for to hear the interested parties first, and then followed by a non interested parties. And I'll come to who I've got speaking just about

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Want

05:03

to make the best use of the time, as I say, Please don't repeat the points that have already been made.

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Now, once you've all had your chance to speak, the examining authority will offer the applicant the right of response. The applicant may not choose to respond, however, and may wish to take the points raised today, either in his written responses, or at the issue specific hearings on Wednesday, Thursday and Thursday, it may be necessary to impose time restrictions.

05:35

And the applicant and the applicant will have the final word on this hearing before we close.

05:44

Is there anybody that has any comments to make about how we intend to run this hearing?

05:52

No.

05:54

So I can see we have two interested parties that have registered to speak. Jane Allen and Anthony Manley, and we have one non interested party counsellor Jan Sargent, it's the examining authorities intention to let all three or and they're not interested party council Sergeant to speak as well.

06:19

Now, we intend to allow between five and 10 minutes for each speaker to put their points across no more than 10 minutes, please. If you are reading from a script, and you do not have time to read it all out, I may remind you that you can submit that script in writing to us at the next deadline for on Wednesday, the 17th of March.

06:44

So without further ado, let's move on to the speakers. Now, last time we spoke, I'm talking to Jane Ellen, you wanted to be addressed as Jane, Is that still the case. And if so, when you're ready to read it all out, I sent her that manuscript

07:07

on my laptop, a delay of about 25 seconds, I can hear what you're saying 20 seconds ago, I don't know if it's just my computer, but our last time I can hear you talking about

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calls for your recording to catch up and then perhaps

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on my lap.

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Anyway, he was saying

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the recording, right? Last time, I can hear you.

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I think you're gonna have to stop. And so I'm gonna ask the case team to try and resolve your

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is not any repeating on a loop it pays to be repeating on another loop.

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You

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just carry on?

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I think you're gonna have to stop and talk and ask the case team to try and resolve.

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It's just it's not any repeating on a loop. It needs to be repeated. Again,

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if you can log out and i think Mrs. Hanlon is going to call you to see if we can resolve the issue.

08:42

Okay, and I believe that Mr. Manley is also going to be using your computer as well. So I presume that will have to return to Him To Him as well.

08:55

Which case what I will do then while you're just resolving that, perhaps I'll try and keep the show on the road and we'll go to the non interested party counsellor Sargent, I believe you wanted to say a few words as well. So providing you don't have an echo. Would you like to make what

09:16

statement you wish to make and say five to 10 minutes, please. Hello, can you hear me okay? perfectly. Yes. Okay.

09:24

Thank you very much. My name is counsellor Jane Sargent. And I'm a local Ward Councillor for the Goshwold world in Havering. And I also live within the Goshwold world. And Firstly, I'd like to thank the examining panel for giving me the opportunity to speak this evening. The world that I represent covers the majority of the area that the proposed and 25 Junction 28 improvements game will be delivered in within our hiring. There are a few matters that I would like to briefly mention, and I would invite the panel to give consideration to these

10:00

matters during the course of the examination into the proposed development of Woodstock Avenue. I'm aware that local residents in my world particularly those that reside in Woodstock Avenue, and Kenworth and Avenue have raised concerns about the scheme and in particular the difficulty that these residents face when wishing to travel westbound along the a 12.

10:26

Currently, residents living in these roads have to exit onto the a 12 by turning left and then travel eastbound all the way up to brook street roundabout before having to navigate around brook street roundabout simply to be able to travel westbound along the 12 tools gallows calm now, whether it be for essential services such as for work in other parts of haven or further west, or in a post COVID world for leisure purposes. I'm very concerned about the impact construction works particularly on the eastbound off slip road tools book street roundabout will have on local residents especially if this is closed for nighttime works, which I understand may happen through residents of Woodstock Avenue or Kenworth Avenue. This would made the having to travel all the way up to junction 12 of the I 12. Simply to be able to head westbound on the I 12. This would be an unacceptable diversion for residents, which will be incredibly

11:28

disruptive to their lives and would bring a financial cost to them if having to regularly drive what would be around 14 kilometres extra distance because of the event diversion. It makes no difference to say that closures will only take place at night as residents may need to travel for emergency reasons or for shiftwork purposes. Also got concerns about having the emergency services and will they be support. The supported when the a 12 eastbound off slip road is closed is absolutely vital that emergency services have the confidence that the appointed contractor will allow them safe passage for the 12 eastbound offset when it is close to vehicle traffic. I am aware that relevant representations have been

made asking for feasibility work to be undertaken to see if it would be possible to install a junction in the vicinity of Woodstock avenue to facilitate a right turn movement onto the A12. And this is something I'm very supportive of and would like to see explored by the applicant. And I'm also very concerned about how key documentation will be secured throughout the development consent order process. I am aware that a number of documents are set to be produced by the appellant appointed contracts, such as the final construction environmental management plan, traffic management plan, and plans relating to the management of noise biodiversity. biodiversity and air quality. It is my understanding these documents will be signed off by the Secretary of State and that local authorities will only be consulted on the documentation by the appointed contractor. I'm concerned that this could mean that in the event of a local authority was not happy with an aspect of one of these documents that their views would simply be ignored. I don't think it is appropriate to simply say that the comments from the local authorities will be included in a report that goes to the Secretary of State. As once the Secretary of State's granted consent of this game, he or she is unlikely to reject supporting documents that I've submitted by the contractor. I believe and document should be agreed with the respective local authorities prior to being submitted to the Secretary of State for must sign off and the environment. And I'm aware that the applicant recently undertook a non statutory targeted consultation on proposed changes to the scheme. One of these changes was the formation of an environmental bond. And it's important that local residents are given adequate protection from noise generated from the scheme. And I'm keen to understand if this new feature will give residents additional noise protection. And I also raised concerns over the impact of local wildlife. And I've previously raised my concerns surrounding wildlife strain on to the dual carriageway in this area. As I'm sure you're aware adjacent to this proposed development is a 345 Nature Reserve with free roaming deer and I'm a co-founder of a local restaurant, deer rescue group, we're continually being called out to road traffic accidents. And so I would like to highlight this safety concern once again and suggest that measures are put in place such as protective barriers and as this is not only a protective measure

15:00

For the wildlife, but also for the safety of roadway users. Thank you very much for allowing me to speak at this open floor hearing. Thank you.

15:12

Thank you, Councillor sergeant.

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McCarthy, you've got Do you have any questions for?

15:23

Thank you, Mr. Allen. Nothing specific. I note the final point regarding the safety of deer, specifically. And note that it's not something that I recall coming across in any of the environmental statements submitted by the applicant. But perhaps that's something that we can we can come on to later on.

15:47

Thank you,

15:49

counsel. Sergeant, I'd be interested in your, in your view. As to the responses are you may or may not have seen them. But Transport for London, of course, have responded saying that they wouldn't support a right turn out of Woodstock have a new kind of revenue. Have? Firstly, have you seen those responses? And if you have, what would what would your response be to that? I haven't at the moment No, sorry. Can you still hear me? I can still hear? Yes. All right. Brilliant. And I'd be very concerned because it's such a long way for residents to travel

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in I can't say

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it's such hurt, you know, the emergency services to actually go all that way and then come back on themselves just to travel to say, you know, gallows corner or there's got to be another way.

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I can't see the reason why they can't put the junction now. Specifically.

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Thank you, Councillor Saunders. That's very helpful. Thank you.

16:56

And we'll return now to Jane Allen, I understand your Gremlins are all fixed now. And

17:02

would you like to like to come forward and say we want to say again, five to 10 minutes, please. Okay. Thanks for the opportunity. And I just caught the tail end of Jane sergeant's

17:17

speech. So I'd certainly would like to piggyback on to that about the right hand turn issue at the bottom of our eyes. And I know categorically that all residents in this road have repeatedly raised multiple concerns on multiple occasions with multiple organisations about the impact this project will have, if we don't get some kind of resolution on this before the project starts. I find it very disconcerting, that highways England haven't produced an outline, they've only got an outline, and no evidence or of the outline traffic management plan, highlighting specific access issues which are unique to our road, we seem to have been pulled into the generic issues of the area, the Harold Park area, which doesn't really apply to us, because those of you that would have done the unaccompanied site visit would have seen were a no through road, we have absolutely no alternative other than to turn left and go round junction 28 roundabout to be able to turn right in effect. And by virtue of the fact that that slip road will be closed, possibly on multiple occasions for extended periods during two to three years of roadworks in our basically in our back gardens. I think it's pretty sad that nothing's actually been formally addressed. And specifically as myself, my partner, Mr. Manley, and some other residents in our moment we did

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sort of we were proactive back in 2019. And we are asked to meet with Yves Harrington and other representatives from TfL. Essex County Council, Hey, bring counsel to try to resolve this before, you know, so we've tried, and it's, you know, we are where we are, but I really think this issue needs to be teased out. And before it goes to Secretary of State, and if it gets the Secretary of State and it hasn't been resolved. I, I think we should be having some other plan in place because like Jen said, once it gets that far, the chances are, you know, it's going to happen, and we're going to lose out.

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And, you know, that's the main issue. And all the other roads in Harold Park have gotten altered.

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route to get to avoid, they don't have to use junction 28 to go anywhere they can cut back through to the a one to seven, they can get through to gallows corner, they can get back onto the 25 through another route. So this is something that is very unique to us in our road.

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The traffic flow issues. I mean, I'm probably I'm trying to speak a bit slower. But

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you know, we, our road is mentioned, I think it's on five occasions in that in the response to highways England and I personally feel that they haven't taken on board this specific, the minute menu tie of things that are affecting our us as residents, the traffic flow situation will have a significant impact during construction. And after,

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at the moment, from the bottom of our road to the current slip road, it's about I don't know, 800 metres half a mile, we've got our road, we've got cars, emergency services, whatever coming in and out deliveries, you know, Amazon and all the rest of it, we've got,

21:19

we've got the petrol station at the bottom of our road, which is very busy, we've got traffic in and out of there, we've got the maintenance golf course, traffic in and out of there, we've got the current slip road, which I know is going to be moved. But we're also going to have a double loop road joining us within the space of 800 metres. So how that is supposed to not impact us is beyond me.

21:45

And my concern, is that also that, yes, you know, in principle, we're not averse to the, to the changes, because we do see the issues on a daily basis. But I'm not convinced that it's actually going to make much difference to us, because we're still gonna have to go around the roundabout. And the fact that we've got another double loop road joining us in between our road and the exit road. So it doesn't seem, you know, particularly helpful to us, it's not going to impact us greatly at all, without having some sort of right hand turn.

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And as for noise and vibration, you know, not specifically affecting us, I beg to differ on that one. We, when the certainly when the wind is blowing in certain directions we hear and 25 we hear the 812 we're gonna have, you know, lorries and I don't know, all what comes with this kind of infrastructure

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on in our back gardens for years. So I just think it's, you know, it needs a it needs to be to be said, and I think

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the fact that we're in this COVID situation, but the moment the traffic isn't at full capacity, it's whenever you try to get out of the bottom of the road, it's you always have to pause because there's traffic coming all the way gallows corner, you know, to get to the 25 it's pretty relentless, really, you know, even out of peak times, you know,

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outside of COVID.

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And one of the things I did read in, I can't remember which to see is Section E a one point 12. It says clearly that this new developments such as this should seek to deliver improvements that reduce community segments and improve accessibility well, without some sort of a U turn. It's not going to improve accessibility. We're going to be hindered during and afterwards.

24:04

And one more thing is really the flooding on that round about on that road going up to brim with the a 1023. I think I read somewhere that when you did the site visit you actually saw that the issue is, as soon as it starts to rain, the water starts connecting and I don't know if that's being addressed during these

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construction projects. Anyway, that's enough for me.

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Thank you, Mr. Carver. Good to have any questions.

24:41

Thank you, Mr. Arlen. I, I'd like to come back if I may.

24:46

You mentioned Jane that you both you and your partner had had made some effort to be proactive in reaching out to the applicant highways England regarding the concerns that you have

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Not you alone but you and members of the community and Woodstock Avenue in particular. Can you just talk a little bit more about what response you had to that those attempts to reach out? Well, there was a minute published, and the meeting was held on the 20th of March 2019.

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society that was various representatives there, the minutes I have submitted, they should be in a link in the examination library somewhere, because I did submit those.

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Earlier on at the last deadline. We talked about the flooding issue.

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On the 81023, we raised that. And we talked about safety issues along certainly for walking and cycling and mobility, scooters, and, you know, queuing getting access to bus stops and things like that we raised that noise concerns.

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During this game,

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an air quality

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speed limits, we raised that

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where there was currently no plans for permanent in situ speed limit enforcement, even though we've got we've had to have speed cameras at the traffic lights just before our road, because of the accidents in the past fatalities, some of those. And

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they were also that there were this road right next to us Kenilworth Avenue, they have, they can get out onto the a 12 and turn, right. But it's very tricky. And they literally have to dice, you know, take their chances with the a 12, they have to sort of drive out, and there's a little where the traffic lights are, you know, but you can only really get one or two cars there. And you can't, you know, it is not ideal, certainly from a safety point of view.

27:02

We also certainly accessibility and access to emergency services was raised. And one particular resident did give a real life example where there was delays accessing ambulance services for his daughter was particularly poorly at the time.

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So we do have a range of age range residents, people with disabilities, and young children, children walk into school, you know, I've witnessed 2323 years and we've seen the,

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the worsening of the traffic

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over the last sort of 20 odd years.

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And we did finish the I'm just gonna read you

27:54

what we what the Minix said about traffic management plans, it says highways England said that their concerns as raising their consultation responses, this is residents of Woodstock Avenue, will be taken into consideration. When highways England produced their traffic management plans with a works in order to minimise the construction. We were kind of hoping that this is something that by getting in early meeting wisdom, you know that it would, you know, our you know, issues would be taken seriously and actually something in writing because like Jen said, if it doesn't get if it isn't written down, it doesn't necessarily have to happen. And you know, there's multi C's involved here. At high level, you've got organisations with legal representatives, with 50 odd homes, we don't have lawyers representing us, we rely on people are asked trying to navigate this overwhelming, you know, pages and pages of documentation, which is quite difficult to grasp at times. Okay. Can I if you don't mind, I'll stop you that we are very, very conscious of the concerns that you have. And we do have a note or we have them on record. We

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we recognise the concerns. I hope it's some reassurance that in the issue specific hearings that that we have coming up on Wednesday and Thursday.

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A significant number, if not all of the points that you've raised will be raised again, for discussion. Of course.

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You're welcome to listen into those and

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pick up any points that you feel may not have been made, either in writing or if you're able to attend, but rest assured that we will be raising these issues. Thank you. It's just because of the fact that we've got this far and it's still not in black and white by

30:00

highways England, it makes me quite nervous. I don't particularly want to listen into every meeting that's coming, of course, you know, and I don't leave officially represent, you know, all the residents. But I do have some time. And I do try. You know, I'm trying to get from point A person's point of view point across Really? I mean, what more do we what more can we do? Well, as I said, your points are very much noted by the examining authority, and particularly the concerns that you and the other residents of Woodstock Avenue. As they are noted.

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We are conscious of the concerns and these concerns will be raised.

30:46

Thank you. Thank you.

30:49

Thank you, Mr. Manley. Now, do you want to now view anything further you want to add? And yeah, thanks for letting me contribute to the meeting. And I'll be glad to know I'll only take about two or three minutes. And it's basically I'm not gonna try and repeat what others have said already, but I bit sad really, but I do travel. On occasion, these bound on that 812 and I measure and I have done measuring the distance between us and the shim till junction where we will inevitably have to turn around and come back. So if we can only turn left to the bottom of our road, it's a 12 and a half mile journey, without traffic 20 minutes to half an hour worth of traffic, an hour and a half class or if not longer. There are many holdups on the other side of the brook street roundabout, coming back to the end 25. Now, if you can imagine a situation we can't even get out of our turning on occasions. Frequently, there's a breakdown or an accident, and the traffic backs up past our junction, so you can't get in, you can't get out. I think that's going to happen again. And I'm almost sure that it's going to be a regular thing, when the construction starts when you've got the added traffic feed in the 812 westbound. So if he's found a big club,

32:07

that's more or less my point, I know what's going to happen because I can see I've seen it before, I've been in an ATV driver for Tesco. So I drive on the road all day every day. And I see where the traffic hotspots are. And this is one of the major ones which obviously is partly the reason why the constructions kind of hid in the first place. But where I find it difficult to understand is this million pound projects going ahead or may go ahead and this this this this unexposed and take the traffic or relieve the traffic on it. brook street roundabout going towards Chelmsford Felixstowe for the lorries? Well, I can't see that helping. I've spoken to so many people. And I can't see how it's going to make any difference to the flower traffic out of London because they're going down the 812. So anything that that actually goes down towards brook street roundabout and avoids it, particularly the lorries, they still would have feed the 812 in the same direction, which is going to cause more holdups past the bottom of our road. And I feel very strongly as you can probably imagine, by turning my voice, I can see there's been a nightmare. And I believe it's going to get worse, obviously during construction. And afterwards, I don't think it's going to make any difference from our side of the N 25 junction in might make a difference to the flow from Dartford, which I believe is what it's designed to do, but it's not going to make any difference to us. I think that's about all I need to say. Thank you.

33:34

Thank you Mr. Manley. It is noted, particularly the points on construction traffic and a traffic management plan, which we will be we've already asked a written question asking the applicant to provide it. They have declined our request and we Mr. McArthur will certainly be taking that up with them on Wednesday, but I don't have any questions for you. Mr. McArthur. Do you have any questions for Mr. Manley?

34:00

No, I have nothing further at this stage. Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you.

34:08

Mr. Challice, I have you down as speaking for the applicants are hope. I hope that's correct.

34:15

The final word is yours. Do you Is there anything that you wish to respond to? From what you've heard? Or you wish to leave them for the hearings?

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Later this week, I think it might be helpful to just respond very briefly. I was wondering so if you're going to ask TfL to comment,

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particularly regarding the right turn, which has been mentioned by Jane Ellen and Mr. Manley or put Would you like me then to respond? No, I'm not going to ask that they've not requested to speak and we are going to deal with this as an issue specific hearing matter on as you know, from the agenda on Wednesday, where we're going to talk in a bit more detail about this.

35:00

So, no, I'm sure. Mr. Rheinberg, or one of his colleagues will speak at that point. So no,

35:10

thank you very much for the opportunity to respond on behalf of highways, I will be sure, no more than 510 minutes or so, probably not even as long as that so but thank you very much for the opportunity to respond. We've listened with great interest to all that has been said by all the speakers. And I think it's fair to say it's certainly not a criticism but a comment that

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I think most if not all of the points have been raised in the written elements of the examination and highways England has made its position

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clear, but in short, as regards the possibility of a

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right turn onto the trail from Woodstock Avenue.

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The a 12 was a TfL road, it's not part of the strategic road network and TfL in their representations have explained why they don't think that is appropriate.

36:09

References have been made to the

36:11

potential closure of the off slip for the purposes of the works. CERN, as we have said in our responses, any night, any closure would be occasional and had night

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to cause minimum disturbance to

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everybody who might be using that road. And

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I mean, as regards the

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although the right turn from Woodstock Avenue is not for highways England, of course, one of the key objectives of the scheme is to make the junction operate more smoothly, for the benefit of everybody, including the residents of Woodstock Avenue. So we've very much open up traffic modelling shows that things will be better for the residents in using that junction.

37:05

Once these works have been done.

37:08

So there's no intention to deny access to the emergency services at any time and highways England will be ensuring that that that does not happen. Other issues raised I'll just deal with briefly regarding approvals given by the Secretary of State instead of by the local authorities that that so you have our reasons as to why we don't think that is appropriate, and that the Secretary of State should give approvals rather than

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TfL or the local authorities. And as regards the documents forming the construction environmental management plan, a number of detailed documents now form part of the

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the outline version that has been recently submitted to you might be also helpful to add that we have been considering about the traffic management plan and it now is our intention to submit an outline traffic management plan. The next deadline.

38:10

Are you pleased to hear that I think

38:15

okay.

38:16

Sorry, have you not finished? That? That's absolutely fine. Take thanks for the opportunity. Thank you. Thank you very much.

38:23

So as I draw this meeting now to a close, it's just to thank you all for your participation. Today, it's been very helpful to the examining authority. The recording will be made available as soon as possible on the planning inspectorates website, in addition request that you submit in writing the points that you wish to make

38:46

for the next deadline, and that is

38:50

on Wednesday, the 17th of March 20 2021, which is deadline for the next stage in the examination is the issue specific hearing on environmental matters where first up will be traffic and transport do come along if you if you can make it and that will cut on Wednesday, the third of March at 10 o'clock with the arrangements conference starting at 930. So just to say thank you once again The time now is 10 past seven and the open floor hearing for this project is now closed. Thank you