

M25 Junction 10/A3 Wisley Interchange TR010030

9.98 Applicant's Comments to Regena Coults Deadline 7 Submission

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M25 junction 10/A3 Wisley interchange

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1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document sets out Highways England's comments on the Deadline 7 [REP7-036] submission and documents submitted by Regena Coult.
- 1.1.2 Where issues raised within the submission have been dealt with previously by Highways England, a cross reference to that response or document is provided to avoid unnecessary duplication. The information provided in this document should, therefore, be read in conjunction with the material to which cross references are provided.
- 1.1.3 In order to assist the Examining Authority, Highways England has not provided comments on every point made by Regena Coult, including for example statements which are matters of fact and those which it is unnecessary for Highways England to respond to. However, and for the avoidance of doubt, where Highways England has chosen not to comment on matters contained in the response, this should not be taken to be an indication that Highways England agrees with the point or comment raised or opinion expressed.

2. Response to request for further information

- 2.1.1 The submissions at Deadline 7 by Regena Coult ([REP7-035] and [REP7-036]), query the amount of mitigation being provided by the Scheme and refer to the following key points that have been raised in previous submissions and oral representations:
- A 50m wide green bridge should be built as part of the mitigation for the scheme, and there should be green bridges over each branch of the junction;
 - The proposed toad underpasses on Old Lane as described in Change 2 of the report on proposed Scheme changes [REP4a-004] should be moved, and additional toad underpasses provided;
 - The speed reduction on Elm Lane as described in Change 6 of the report on proposed Scheme changes [REP4a-004] is welcomed. However, Elm Lane requires mitigation that will lead to zero amphibian deaths from traffic and should have regular toad underpasses along the length of the Lane, spaced at 50 m apart. These could be incorporated into speed bumps to enforce the 20mph speed limit;
 - A toad tunnel under the A3 should be considered; and
 - The 'Wisley by-pass' should be reconsidered and relocated.
- 2.1.2 As these points have been raised previously and have been responded to by Highways England, to avoid duplication, please see below a summary of Highways England's position on these points signposting the ExA to the relevant past submissions.
- 50m wide green bridge and additional green bridges*
- 2.1.3 As explained in paragraph 4.4.12 on page 6 of Highways England's comments on the joint LIR [REP3-007], the proposed green bridge at Cockcrow is not considered as mitigation for the Scheme, as it is intended to address the severance of habitats caused by the existing A3. Should this green bridge go ahead, it will be funded by Highways England designated funds and not by the Scheme. The location of this green bridge was chosen due to its linkage of the existing areas of heathland on Wisley Common and Ockham Common. The A3 and M25 are both already causing barriers between the four quadrants of the Ockham and Wisley Commons SSSI, and green bridges are not required as mitigation for the Scheme. Therefore, green bridges are not required in any direction as mitigation and additional green bridges will not be considered further.
- Toad Underpass on Old Lane*
- 2.1.4 It is noted that:
- Regena Coult has previously requested a single underpass on Old Lane in her relevant representation [RR-036], then increased this to a requirement for three underpasses on Old Lane (as recorded in Item 6 of the meeting minutes as appended in A.3 of the Applicant's comments on Regena Coult's Deadline 6 submission [REP7-006]), but now appears to be requesting to increase this to five underpasses);
 - Regena Coult initially did not request any underpasses on Elm Lane in her relevant representation [RR-036] but requested a single underpass during a meeting (as recorded in Item 6 of the meeting minutes as appended in A.3 of the applicant's comments on Regena Coult's Deadline 6 submission [REP7-006]). In this this latest submission [REP7-035], Regena Coult appears to be requesting that Elm Lane should have regular toad underpasses along the length of the upgraded section of Elm Lane, spaced at 50 m apart.

- 2.1.5 Highways England's position with regards to the toad underpasses and the appropriate mitigation required has not changed and is explained in Highways England's comments on Regena Coult's Deadline 6 submission [REP7-006]. In summary stating that:
- The proposed underpasses are aimed to mitigate for the predicted increases in mortality on the population of common toads associated with the Bolder Mere Conservation Verge, which is located on Old Lane (refer to CV005 on Figure 7.4 of Biodiversity Figures [APP-068] for location);
 - The proposed mitigation is considered to be sufficient to mitigate for the increased mortality to the overall common toad population associated with the Bolder Mere Conservation Verge. Therefore, Highways England consider that no further mitigation is required. However, based on consultation with the SCC ecologist and toad crossing volunteers, it was noted that one of the underpasses may be better positioned in a different location along Old Lane (as recorded in Item 3 of the meeting minutes as appended in A.3 of the applicant's comments on Regena Coult's Deadline 6 submission [REP7-006]);
 - As confirmed in [REP7-006], Highways England are in discussions with Surrey County Council about the possibility of moving one of the proposed underpasses on Old Lane to the location specified in the meeting on the 6 January 2020 (as recorded in Item 3 of the meeting minutes as appended in A.3 of the applicant's comments on Regena Coult's Deadline 6 submission [REP7-006]), and also the possibility of providing a third underpass along Old Lane, which could be secured via agreement outside the DCO examination.

Toad underpass on A3

- 2.1.6 As explained in Section 2.3 of the Applicant's comments on Regena Coult's Deadline 6 submission [REP7-006]), the Scheme will not worsen the situation on the A3 and mitigation is not required. The A3 already forms an impassable barrier to amphibians, and the existing culvert under the A3 will be extended and retained (see Work No's. 1(e) and 5(d) as listed on page 37 of the draft DCO [REP6-003]).

Relocation of Wisley by-pass

- 2.1.7 The Scheme has been considered carefully under consultation with numerous stakeholders, and the proposed access to Wisley Lane is considered the most appropriate solution. Regena Coult's comments are noted, but this suggested material change to the Scheme will not be considered further. Highways England note that the proposed culvert under the new section of Wisley Lane is welcomed.

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