

Tuesday 19th May 2020

Sir Antony Gormley submission for Deadline 6

HEARINGS

Sir Antony Gormley would be delighted to take part in the hearing process if possible – a video conference form would be our preferred medium.

We have submitted the Examiner's questionnaire as requested and would like to confirm our interest in taking part in Issue Specific Hearings relating to Cultural Heritage and Landscape and Visual aspects of the scheme.

RESPONSE TO DEADLINE 5 SUBMISSIONS

We will now address the Applicant's responses to our Deadline 5 submissions:

2.0.5 and 2.0.6 – North Dene Footbridge Replacement

We accept that the proposed design for the footbridge has been considered to allow for some through views to the Angel of the North.

2.0.8 – Gantry Design

Highways England have confirmed that the design of the gantries will potentially change during the detailed design phase. We accept this and would like to reiterate that the open truss design is our preferred option, with as little signage as possible.

Superspan Gantries

Highways England have suggested that the super span gantries could be replaced with gantries that span one carriageway only (where signage is required in one direction). Whilst this solution would involve supports /foundations being rooted in the central reserve, we would be highly supportive of this alternative. We feel that this is a far better solution – and the temporary inconvenience at the time of installation or maintenance is far less significant than the permanent disruption of clear views of the Angel of the North.

2.5.1.a – Landscape mitigation

Highways England have created, and shared, the PDF *TR010031-000988-Appendix 1A* -in response to our latest submission.

The design seems to show the planting of low scrubs and clearing of vegetation to open up various sight lines to the Angel of the North and depicts these sight lines (marked in yellow) in relation to the gantries (marked in blue) in closest proximity to the Angel of the North.

Again, all assessments have been made based on current vegetation cover as the baseline and the Applicant has stated that they will not consider undertaking any further analysis. We would like further reassurance that the vegetation on the embankments in the nearby vicinity to the Angel of the North consists of low-lying shrubbery. To mitigate against the negative impacts of the scheme, and to return the views of the Angel of the North to their former state, we would ask that the surrounding vegetation remains below the skyline so that the Angel of the North and the mound are clearly visible.

Crucially the site lines depicted are *from* the Angel of the North rather than site lines from vehicles on the A1 *towards* the Angel of the North. We are most concerned by the negative impact of the scheme on views for A1 users, and again would argue that *TRO10031-000988-Appendix 1A* does not go far enough to illustrate the disruption of views for road users.

The proximity of the Eighton Lodge gantry to the Angel of the North is most worrying. We would ask that the Applicant considers moving the Eighton Lodge gantry to the South by 150m to minimise negative impacts on views in the immediate approach to the Angel of the North.

Understandably, conversations with Gateshead Council seem to have slowed due to the current situation. However, we need further guarantees that Highways England will develop the Landscape and Vegetation Management Scheme in close dialogue with Gateshead Council and where possible, any negative impacts of the scheme on views to the Angel of the North are counteracted.

2.7.6.b – Acoustic Barrier

Highways England have stated that the design of the acoustic barrier is not yet confirmed but may comprise close boarded timber fencing. We would support the decision to create a consistent design in keeping with the acoustic barriers that are currently installed along the neighbouring stretches of the A1. The appearance will be confirmed during the Detailed Design Phase and in the Construction Environmental Management Proposal, and we would appreciate being informed of the final design.