

Peak District National Park Authority

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PEAK
DISTRICT
NATIONAL
PARK

Bart Bartkowiak
Case Manager
National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Your ref: TR010034

Our ref: A810/TN

Date: 13th July 2021

By-e-mail to: A57LinkRoads@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Dear Mr Bartkowiak

Re: Planning Act 2008 (as amended) – Section 55

Application by Highways England for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A57 Link Roads scheme

Adequacy of Consultation Representation request

Thank you for letter of 29^h June 2021 with regard to the receipt from Highways England for of the forthcoming application by Highways England for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A57 Link Roads scheme. Your letter includes a request for a representation from the Peak District National Park Authority on the Adequacy of Consultation undertaken by Highways England for the A57 Link Roads Scheme in relation to Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act (2008). This response sets out the Authority's view on the undertakings of Highways England and its agents in fulfilling these duties.

Duty to consult – Section 42

Highways England has taken a proactive approach to consultation with the Peak District National Park Authority regarding the proposed A57 Link Roads Scheme, since its inception in 2015. This has included officers of the National Park Authority participating in regular meetings of a Local Authority Steering Group. In addition, officers of Highways England and their consultants have provided regular updates on the progress of the scheme. They have also undertaken topic-based discussions aimed at better understanding and where possible addressing concerns raised by the Authority in relation to the scheme.

We believe that Highways England has therefore fulfilled the '*Duty to Consult*' the Peak District National Park Authority in relation to A57 Link Roads scheme.

However, it is worth noting that limitations placed on Highways England in how soon data in support of the scheme may be released has had a negative effect of the efficacy of that

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Chief Executive: Sarah Fowler

Chair: Andrew McCloy Deputy Chair: James Berresford

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▪ To speak up for and care for the Peak District National Park for all to enjoy forever ▪

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consultation. As a result of this, the Peak District National Park Authority has twice responded to formal consultations on the scheme (2018 and 2020) highlighting concerns about the lack of available information upon which to assess the effects of the scheme, (both positive and negative), on the Peak District National Park. This has resulted in the Peak District National Park Authority submitting two subsequent Holding Objections to the scheme. The Consultation Report for the scheme indicates that other statutory consultees have taken a similar approach.

Duty to consult the local community – Section 47

Highways England was proactive in contacting the Peak District National Park Authority in seeking comment on their Statement of Community Involvement for the 2020 Public Consultation. The Authority's headquarters at Bakewell has traditionally acted as a deposit location for consultation materials for the scheme. This has allowed members of the public who might not live in the immediate area of the scheme to view and comment on the materials. Given the close proximity of the proposed scheme to the Peak District National Park, this has been a positive approach. Unfortunately, for the 2020 Statutory Consultation, the Peak District National Park Authority was unable to accede to a request from Highways England to provide a deposit location due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is clear that the pandemic affected the way in which the 2020 Statutory Consultation was undertaken. It is also possible that this may have affected the ability of some members of the local community to respond to the Consultation. However, we believe that Highways England offered a wide range of ways in which to provide feedback to the consultation, and fulfilled its '*Duty to consult the local community*'.

Duty to publicise – Section 48

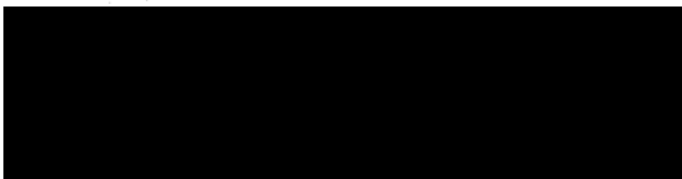
In undertaking discussions about the Statement of Community Involvement for the 2020 Public Consultation, Highways England were keen to ensure that the consultation was widely publicised. As a result of these discussions, Highways England shared their social media toolkit for the scheme with the National Park Authority. This enabled the Authority's marketing team to share messages about the consultation across its own social media platforms. Through this approach, we believe that Highways England fulfilled its '*Duty to publicise*' across a wider audience, and in particular for residents of and visitors to the National Park.

On the basis of the above, the National Park Authority considers that Highways England has fulfilled its duties under Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act (2008), in so far as they apply to the Peak District National Park Authority and the residents of and visitors to the National Park.

This response is non-prejudicial and refers purely to the processes of the consultation undertaken by Highways England in regard to the scheme. It does not however, detract from the concerns expressed previously about the adequacy of information upon which the consultations were made.

I hope that this information is useful to you, if you have any questions about any of the information contained within this response, then please contact me directly.

Yours sincerely



Tim Nicholson
Transport Policy Planner