A57 Link Roads (previously known as Trans Pennine Upgrade Programme)

Planning Inspectorate Reference: TR010034

Peter Simon (A57L-001) "Summary" of my Submission (which is circa 3700 words with supporting diagrams) " for "Examination Deadline 2

A. Introduction - Overall position on the scheme

The Scheme represents economic aspiration rather than economic necessity. Its environmental and human cost is too great, and the route can be enhanced otherwise to deliver envisaged benefits without the unacceptable damage it involves.

B. Scope

A consideration of the temporal and spatial extent of the Examination that has formed the approach of this Submission.

C. <u>AQMAs and the Local Transport Network</u> –(Figures 1, 2, 3)

Concerning NNPS2014 requirement for schemes to comply with Air Quality Management Areas, and consideration of the Applicant's solution of alternative routes through Glossop other than the A57. Evidence of local conditions supplied in support of a firm conclusion that such an expectation is wholly unrealistic, and thus the AQ impediment to the Scheme remains.

D. <u>Process</u>

Consideration of the repeated failure of the Applicant to produce relevant documents at appropriate times and how this has affected the Consultation and Examination processes and may continue to do so.

Also questioning of the scope of any SOCG by the Applicant with GMCA if made through a subsidiary GMPTE.

E. Green Belt (Figure 4)

Exploration of the grounds for allowing the scheme to run through and compromise the Green Belt where strong planning policy planning protection applies. The Applicant relies heavily in part on a Tameside Council planning position so this is examined.

Should the Scheme represent "inappropriate development" consideration of whether all necessary alternative routes to the Schemes have really been scoped and whether it survives a balancing of benefits against adverse impacts.

F. Alternatives

Examination of the methodology basis for adoption of the A57 Link Roads (Trans Pennine Upgrade) into RIS1 as expressed in the South Pennines Feasibility Study which is found to be dubious. Suggestion of a more balanced and necessary compromise.

G. Co2 output assessment method

Reiteration of this Interested Party's Relevant Representation position regarding the appropriate method for assessing the Scheme's Co2 output.

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Peter Simon (A57L-001) "Submission" for "Examination Deadline 2

Submission under 7 headings

- A. Introduction
- B. Scope
- C. AQMAs and the Local Transport Network
- D. Process
- E. Green Belt
- F. Alternatives
- G. Co2 output assessment method

A. Introduction

The Scheme represents economic aspiration rather than economic necessity. Its environmental and human cost is too great, and the route can be enhanced otherwise to deliver suggested benefits without unacceptable impacts. Collateral improvements it might offer to some communities are only piecemeal and will involve unsustainable damage elsewhere in the "affected network".

B. SCOPE

The exact scope for evidence for this examination into the DCO Application for the A57 Link Roads remains to be finally established as regards spatial and temporal boundaries. My submission is therefore prepared on the basis that an Inspector has advised in a Preliminary Hearing that the guiding metric is that of National Policy (NNPS2014) and will proceed on that basis unless indicated otherwise. (Preliminary Meeting 1 - Session 3 - Transcript - 16 November 2021, P11). I consider mainly the immediate time frame of the scheme because even assuming the modelling to be reasonably accurate it cannot be a firm prediction, and becomes increasingly uncertain over time.

C. IMPACTS on AQMAs.

NNPS2014 (5.1) indicates that the ultimate Decision Maker for the Scheme, the SOS for Transport, requires complete assurance regarding no detriment to air quality levels in designated AQMAs to allow the DCO. This definitive test applies within the "affected network" including "areas" in High Peak Borough, notably that on the A57 at Dinting Arches but also in Glossop Town Centre and in the eastern approach to Tintwistle. It has been publicly acknowledged by the Applicant, that issues in this area have already forestalled a very similarly designed scheme previously known as the "Trans Pennine Upgrade".

It appears the burden of proof is on the Applicant to ensure no detriment to AQ as described $(5.11\ to\ 5.13)$ were the scheme operational so the question I obviously raise is the viability of any new solution here?

Glossop is notorious for its current traffic constraints and congestion around the Dinting railway arches and Shaw Lane junctions. All day and especially during peak hours traffic backs up and moves slowly in queues through the town in

both directions with a characteristic level of pollution. This takes place within the steep valley topography to create a "canyon effect" which as matters stand traps the NoX emissions and particulates to unacceptable levels. These are particularly injurious to local schoolchildren at Dinting Primary, with regard to their respiratory and developmental health, and is partly why the AQMA designation exists in the current Do Minimum situation. In a Do Something scenario as modelled, the traffic rises significantly in the relevant area.

The DCO Application submission solution seems fairly straightforward. It perceives traffic as naturally diverting to the freest alternative route so as to relieve the A57. In particular it forecasts a dramatic around 50% traffic level rise on 3k AADT on the parallel route of Dinting Road to 4,500 AADT. (TR010034-000234-6.5 ES Appendix2.1 Traffic Data Insert 3)

My contention is that this claim or expectation of natural traffic diversion is not remotely plausible in that the capacity for this does not exist, as would be seen from any meaningful inspection across relevant times of the specific routes suggested. Also that even if the capacity did exist, which it does not, the characteristics and features of any other routes proposed will shortly have a strongly increased residential component such as would further militate against their increased use on safety and amenity grounds.

The NH case evidence models diversions along 2 specific routes through Glossop and Hadfield

- 1. The route as identified to experience a near 50% traffic increase along Shaw Lane, and then onto Dinting Road, to return at its end onto feeder roads into the A57 at Glossop Centre.
- 2. An additional route through Hadfield taken from "Insert 3"as referenced that would seek to divert traffic away from A57/Glossop Centre by adopting a circular route along Hadfield Road and Cemetery Road joining the B6105 Woodhead Road as a feeder road. This increase is around 11% so the main focus remains on the proposed Dinting Road impromptu "bypass" of the A57.

In each direction the Shaw Lane segment is only wide enough to accommodate single file traffic, so there is an unofficial waiting system in place now relying on driver consideration particularly with the passage of 237 bus. The current situation only imperfectly allows for the existing capacity, a far from ideal situation. Without CPOs and house/factory demolition it is not possible to envisage this informal one way system being able to accommodate further traffic with a heavy increase of the kind envisaged for diversion. NH claim in answer to the Relevant Representations of 2 statutory local authorities that the increase would amount to one journey per minute, not at scheme opening, but at 2040. (TR010034_9.5) . I cannot find any verifiable calculation to test this assertion in documents available at this Examination. Even if it were a reliable claim which is dubious as it stands, the traffic fluctuates wildly in this location so this is a meaningless statistical projection without reference to a specific time of day.

The route then adopts a lateral trajectory along the minor 2-lane Dinting Road. The appearance here is deceptively rural as "committed development" is poised to occupy nearly the entire length of the road frontage. Imminently its character will change dramatically so there will be continual impediment to traffic flow through vehicle entry off access routes from estates. This I show through diagrams of two of the high density committed developments and an

indicative sketch showing access points for committed and existing developments super imposed on the NH diagram (**Figures 1, 2, & 3** & **TR010034-000229-6.4 Environmental Statement**) (footnote*)

It should be noted the Applicant's optimistic surveys of this route do not record the considerable foot commuting of school age children along this route with a specific crossing place for the back way to the school at Newshaw Lane. This daily back and forth "migration" arose from the relocation of Glossop's main school around 2016; foot journeys forming a fair proportion of journeys to school. Notably more school places are to become available due to need at the school in 2022/3 with accordingly a further rise in pedestrian passage. The journey is already hazardous, with few passing places, and minimal pavements where children tend to step into the road. There is a sharp bend at the top of the road also where pupils also arrive from Dinting Railway Station. It is hard to believe this diversion route would have been seriously proposed as a major alternative by a responsible Applicant if they were aware of the risk to safety. However NH appear to decline any such responsibility. "This part of the road network is outside the scheme boundary and it is therefore a matter for DCC to address issues of traffic using alternative roads to avoid congestion on Glossop High Street". (footnote 2**)

On the basis of these verifiable observations it is clear that the natural diversion principle, on which NH contend no NNPS AQMA violation through the Scheme, is not credible, and their conclusions in this area must be considered to be dubious if not plainly wrong.

2. The route directly through Hadfield to and from the Woodhead Road, the B6105.

The High Peak traffic model for future years, particularly 2025 also detects an alternative route to filter through the heart of Hadfield, suggesting it now accommodates 5150 AADT journeys, with an approximate 8% increase to 5750 by 2025 at scheme opening.

Traffic does "rat run" currently down through Hadfield, so the proposal is to expand the "rat run" here. The actual figures in the model are only established at one end, but Figure 3 highlights the route to be taken is down Hadfield Road so I consider that as the NH evidence. This stretch will be effectively at capacity now.

The eastern higher top end contains a series of impediments namely: a difficult T Junction at Redgate on a hill brow with poor sightlines, an extremely difficult multi crossroads at full capacity at the Railway Street junction to Hadfield (again on the 237 bus route), and a single lane bridge on Park Road. The entire Hadfield end of the route is mainly double parked between Park Road at the top to Wooley Bridge at the bottom, so effectively a single lane route with much LGV use. Traffic is not likely to divert away from the A57 here, as, in the manner of water, it would be discouraged by resistance to free passage.

There is no incentive for drivers to adopt this as a viable natural alternative. Some traffic as now will possibly trickle across all these routes, but in general the bulk of the flow as increased will remain or return to the A57 on discovery of there being no advantage in journey times with the longer parallel or circuitous routes.

Thus the strategy regarding AQMA mitigation through diversion does not hold, and the legal policy impediment in NNPS2014 remains as it cannot be credibly shown that worsening congestion will not occur with pollution levels over adopted EU legal limits within the AQMA.

Beyond these suggestions as scrutinised above, the NH evidence traffic model is limited generally, as regards projections for the affected network in the residential area of Hadfield at opening phase. Where other routes are identified in the TA but not modelled I would suggest it is incomplete for the needs of this Examination. Were missing evidence for any relevant part of the "affected network" obtained I am sure it could be shown that there are significant impediments elsewhere, as the notion of potential relief routes for the Glossopdale A57 AQMA sections are demonstrably mistaken.

(footnote *) Although NH have declined to give a percentage in their answer to my request, it seems from this document that the modelled flows may include those derived from Committed Development. However if so accounted I continue to feel this should be available for consideration at this Examination. I therefore repeat my request to the PM, ignored by NH in their response, for these specific flow additions resulting from "committed development" to be made available as a percentage to allow reasonable certainty regarding the "affected network" at scheme opening.)

(footnote **) TR010034-000737-TR010034_9.5_Comment_ on_Relevant_Representations RR-0240-15Page 12). Interestingly NH find they are accountable to local authorities when considering Longdendale HGV Exclusion alternative, which suggests their assessment of the scheme applies different rules in different areas depending on which they favour for HGV traffic, rather than impartial scrutiny)

D. PROCESS

The part of my submission regarding AQMAs is based upon the National Highways evidence as submitted to the Inquiry. There is other evidence outside their case documentation which apparently according to the Preliminary Meeting has been released to another party CPRE. Such relates to the technical modelling underpinning the Transport Assessment but as a member of the public I can only comment on the case and supporting documentation before the Examination at this stage. Regrettably as it seems a procedural anomaly this possibly key further evidence is not available.

It has to be noted that not even a Transport Assessment was available at the Public Consultation which seems to me another gross anomaly. NPPF quite logically requires local residential developments of a certain size to provide a transport assessment so I think one might reasonably expect this to be a given with a national road scheme but apparently not! If the TA was then not yet prepared, as NH claim, the Public Consultation was clearly held prematurely which seems at best unprofessional, if not possibly even improper practice.

When the TA became available at the DCO Application stage for Relevant Representations the Technical modelling underpinning the figures and maps was still withheld. I recognise Examination Questions currently with Local Authorities may clarify the status of such material but not for this Deadline 2

Submission. If the withheld technical documents are relevant to these considerations as I suspect, I have to ask if they should not be before the entire public? Should not therefore the Examination return to a much earlier stage or cancelled altogether while NH consider their position?

The NH practice seems to have been characteristically obstructive in withholding evidence from the Examination. I note an Interested Party Mr Wimberley has represented very strongly on similar procedural matters and I concur fully with his points. (TR010034-000726-DanielWimberleypost-hearing submissions requested by the ExA P23)

Also regarding procedure I would comment on the Applicant's announced intention to prepare a SOCG with Greater Manchester Combined Authority through the agency of GMPTE (Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive). As their name suggests GMPTE represent a distinct part of GMCA business which is mainly that of public transport operation and to a degree it's planning. I would query therefore if they could be empowered or qualified as a body to express a view on behalf of the Combined Authority on spatial planning beyond their functional remit.

E. "Inappropriate Development" within the GREEN BELT.

The tests for "inappropriate development within the GB" designation in NNPS 2014 appear less specific than those for AQ but they are stringent, and there are clearly issues for the Application as regards policy transgression in this respect, notably with NPPF, which is a recognised associate policy to NNPS2014.

The scheme divides 3 major sections of Green Belt mainly in Tameside MB previously so designated as to permanently maintain openness between settlements and thus contain urban sprawl. The Green Belt land here also additionally functions as an important buffer between Greater Manchester and the Peak District National Park.

The affected sections are:

- M67 Junction 4 to Old Hall Lane to a tunnel entrance
- From a tunnel exit at OHLane to the current A57T proposed roundabout
- From the A57T roundabout to a proposed Brookfield roundabout.

These functions are all in particular sympathy with the aims laid out in NPPF and deserving of the particular protection that is expressed in the text there regarding Green Belts. (Section 13, from Page 41 "Protecting Green Belt Land")

NH claim the scheme "does not involve any other urban development such as new housing, business or industrial uses that would constitute unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas... and that no roads are immediately planned to spur off the scheme". However the restructured M67 J4 roundabout does link to another major development application by Tameside MBC in the Green Belt for housing via Mottram Old Road so the claim is questionable. The map in ES committed development references about 120 hectares of Green Belt to be removed, whilst a similar area will be compromised by the Link Roads (**Figure 4** & **TR010034-000229-6.4 ES Figure 15.1**). It is also worth noting in this context that Tameside have previously sought to include an industrial site also partly in Greenbelt, in the initial GMCA draft Plan that would closely follow the "alignment" of the bypass. (GMSF OA26 circa 2017). TMBC have shown they are prepared to act

independently from GMCA as with the Garden Village and landowner consent for this proposal means the plans for this site could easily be revived.

Tameside UDP of 2007 protects the line of a road scheme through Greenbelt resulting in a the NH case claim that local planning policy support makes their proposal "not inappropriate development in the Green Belt". (000127-7.1 The Case for the Scheme). What is evident however in view of their other activity is that Tameside MBC, on whom NH depend here show scant regard for national Green Belt policy protection and seem inclined to breach it on the weakest of grounds. So for this NH claim to be properly tested it is appropriate to examine the Tameside approach for spatial planning compliance with national Green Belt policy.

The overall Tameside Authority policy context for excessive cumulative development in the GB leads to an expectation they plan Longdendale Corridor to become urbanised with disregard for the statutory GB designated purpose to contain urban sprawl. In both cases "exceptional" or "special" circumstances in one area are being claimed for allowing major GB development, which is not a viable logical proposition and so cannot be a tenable policy position. As a Local Authority they submit an impact assessment to this Examination which may confirm this position. It will also soon be further scrutinised for "soundness" at the Greater Manchester "Planning for Everyone draft" Examination later this year.

Should the Applicant's resort to a dubious endorsement from Tameside MBC not hold they appear to further rely on a claim that with the scheme operational the designation would not suffer. Realistically this is hard to accept as obviously the proposed road infrastructure for the area would dramatically alter its unique open character and the designation would be fatally compromised. With the fragmentation as described and the cumulative loss of Green Belt nearby, were the Application to gain consent, the Longdendale Corridor seems destined to become urbanised sprawl right up to the National Park boundary.

The "special circumstances" NH claim for development on Green Belt, are presumably the ones they might claim for all National Infrastructure linear road schemes, which is that they are in the Roads Programme, and have been fully assessed for any alternatives. It therefore becomes appropriate to consider if indeed all alternative routes have been considered to meet this test, and beyond that whether the scheme's merits on balance exceed its adverse impacts on the Green Belt.

The Policy requires in the case of "inappropriate development" that adverse impacts are weighed against benefits, although I do not know if a standardised methodology actually exists for such a test. The Green Belt depletion and erosion here means any marginal interim outcome in reduced journey times and economic benefit has to be balanced against the permanent loss. An audit in any reasonable assessment does not demonstrate the positive balance sheet outcome required. Certainly there needs to be greater assurance that all alternatives have been considered which I do not think is the case.

F. ALTERNATIVES & SouthPennines Feasibility Study by Mouchel Consulting leading to RIS1 Adoption

Considering the Scheme and the problems it seeks to address, it is inescapable that there is a fundamental conflict here between economic aspiration and the spatial imperative to retain a buffer area between the National Park and the Greater Manchester. A compromise should be found that best addresses these competing interests.

I hope therefore that all alternatives will be properly considered at this Examination as a better and more reasonable outcome that delivers most to all stakeholders now and in the future and weighs the needs of the economy with the protection of a finite resource of the National Park. I feel that would be the right solution going forward. As stated in my introduction, many of the limited benefits the scheme purports to provide, in terms of economy/improved journey times and AQ/and community amenity, can be supplied to a reasonable extent through minimal road building, with a simple spur to Stalybridge Road, from the M67 roundabout.

This was I believe was an Highways Agency alternative objector gyratory flow proposal to the Mottram/Tintwistle bypass inquiry earlier this century that is in the public domain. (A57/A628 Mottram-Tintwistle Bypass and A628/A626 Route Restraint Measures, Objector's Alternative Proposals to the Draft Orders Published in February 2007) This would tick many of the boxes of the current Scheme proposal yet without the huge expense. It would also I suggest deliver on audit far more "winners than losers" on both general and individual levels.

The Mouchel South Pennines Feasibility Study (to be found by search engine at the National Government portal) did not, in my view, attribute sufficient weight to such a minimal road building scheme and so allowed the road proposal to be adopted into RIS1 without a proper consideration of lesser road construction alternatives. The one-way component did survive to be one of 4 schemes selected for further consideration in the Mouchel sifting exercise, but only as conjoined with road building within the National Park and the addition of a component of the current Scheme, the A57T to Brookfield Link Road.

The conclusion was that only the road building parts of such a Package would perform for improving journey times and connectivity, which I personally find implausible unless it is underpinned with very clear and testable performance modelling. I could not find any such modelling in the SPFS, and suggest this needs to be re-examined.

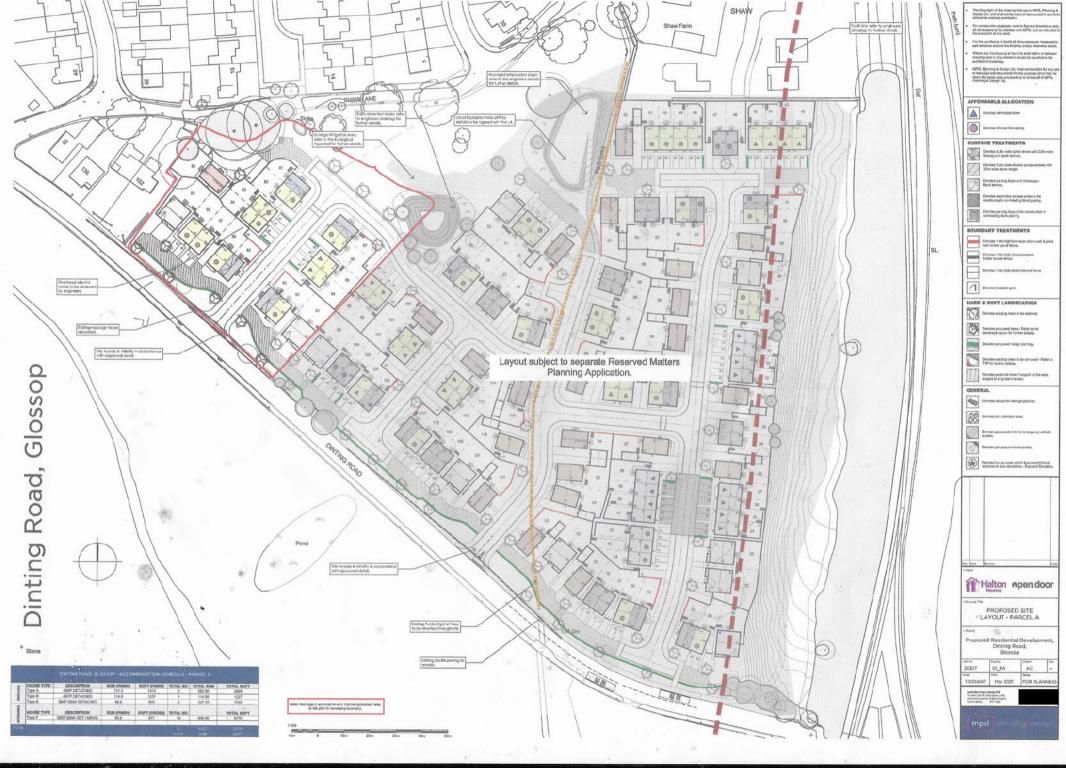
Furthermore I am not convinced that Mouchel's appraisal methodology appropriately allowed for the extreme environmental sensitivity of this Green Belt Corridor and the proximity of the National Park. Had such a balanced metric been applied I think the Gyratory with minimal Spur construction to Mottram would have emerged as the right compromise candidate here to deliver local congestion relief on all the many counts discussed. Thereby protecting an irreplaceable environmental asset yet allowing economic potential to develop without harm along what is ultimately a constrained high level route through a National Park.

G. CO2 EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

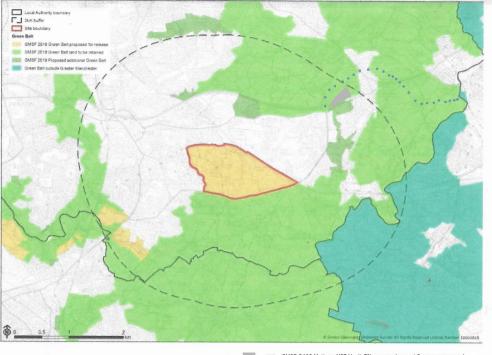
I would contend that any cost benefit analysis assessment of the scheme should treat climate impact (CO2 emissions) on an equal footing with economic growth so a cumulative national approach should apply for both. This is due to the

Climate Emergency declared post NNPS2014 with the legally binding target for net zero carbon emmissions in 2050. I note that several parties both statutory and non statutory have expressed a similar concern to the Examination. (eg, RR-0182/RR-0677) This gives me additional confidence to reiterate here my initial RR comments which were

"5. The CftS climate impact assessment method predates formal national regional and local climate emergency declarations (2019) so should not be considered fit for purpose for such an assessment now. When government net zero carbon targets were set a cumulative rather than scheme specific assessment become appropriate and the application would then fail on this count."







GM Allocation Area: 123.95 ha for GODLEY GREEN GARDEN VILLAGE PROPOSAL

GMSF 0A26 Mottram M67 North 70ksqm employment floorpace proposal