

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

Deadline 9 - response on behalf of High Peak Borough Council

Responses from High Peak Borough Council are provided in red to outstanding matters discussed in the hearing session held during the week commencing 4th April 2022.

Item 7 – Other Environmental Matters

r) Please could Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council and High Peak Borough Council comment on the (Outline Landscape and Ecological Management and Monitoring Plan) updates for Deadline 9 (Wednesday 27 April 2022)?

The Outline Landscape and Ecological Management and Monitoring Plan includes the provision of various features which are reflective of habitats within the “Riverside Meadows” landscape character type as set out in the Landscape Character SPD adopted by the Borough Council in 2006. They include; wet woodland, reed beds, rush and marsh.

For detailed landscape advice, please refer to comments from Derbyshire County Council.

bb) Please could the local authorities and Peak District National Park Authority provide comments on the Applicant’s case (Green Belt Very Special Circumstances) by Deadline 9 (Wednesday 27 April 2022)?

The applicant’s approach to establishing the case for very special circumstances is broadly accepted. Paragraph 148 of the NPPF is clear that “‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”

However, there are specific considerations outlined by the applicant which may not weigh as clearly in favour of the scheme over harm to the Green Belt as suggested.

Each of the applicant’s “other considerations” which are contested are outlined and discussed below:

- *“The Scheme will improve journeys between local settlements, specifically Hattersley, Mottram, Hollingworth, Glossop.”*

Whilst overall journey times between Glossop and the named settlements within Greater Manchester will be reduced, journeys between Glossop, Hadfield and Tintwistle (i.e. those that trips that do not utilise the new highway) are more likely to experience a disbenefit due to additional traffic on the existing highway network and the absence of any plans to mitigate impacts outside of the DCO boundary.

- *“Once operational the Scheme will displace large volumes of traffic from a route immediately in front of properties through Mottram in Longdendale and Woolley Lane/Bridge, such that despite improvements in flow the noise impacts will be positive. The Scheme also demonstrates a positive impact upon the Mottram in Longdendale Noise Important Area*

(NIA) (an area identified to have high levels of noise pollution) located within the DCO boundary. Much heavy traffic travels along local roads, which disrupts the lives of communities, and makes it difficult and potentially unsafe for pedestrians to cross the roads. It is likely that these issues would get worse with time if significant improvements are not made.”

- *“The detrunking of a section of the existing A57 will help to decrease the severance of the communities close to this road as the speed limit is decreased on this road and traffic flows improved”*

Although it is accepted that the scheme will achieve the benefits as outlined above in terms of moving traffic away from the front of properties in Mottram and Woolley Bridge and decreasing severance on the de-trunked section of the A57, it will increase such issues elsewhere. In particular, along Shaw Lane and Dinting Road which are forecasted to experience increases of over 1000 AADT. The impacts of this traffic growth have not been addressed. The potential need for junction improvements, a pedestrian crossing to enable safe journeys to school across Dinting Road and the implications of on-street parking on Shaw Lane which prohibit two way traffic movements remain unresolved.

- *“The outcomes of the air quality assessment indicate there would be significant improvement in terms of annual mean NO2 concentrations at sensitive, human health receptors within the air quality study area. The Scheme will deliver improved air quality for all but one local receptor.”*

At the time of writing, the applicant has failed to properly assess the impacts of the scheme on the Air Quality Management Areas at Dinting and Tintwistle. As such, claims regarding significant improvements to air quality at sensitive human health receptors cannot be verified.