



The Planning Inspectorate

Planning Act 2008 – Section 91

Application by Highways England for an Order granting Development Consent for the A47/A11 Thickthorn Scheme

Agenda for Issue Specific Hearing 1 on Environmental Matters: Wednesday 17 November 2021, 10:00am

Hearing	Date and Time	Location
Issue Specific Hearing 1 on Environmental Matters	Wednesday 17 November 2021 10:00 (Arrangements Conference from 09:30)	Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Issue Specific Hearing 1: Environmental Matters

All Interested Parties are invited to attend Issue Specific Hearings, but it would assist the running of the hearings if notice could be given to the Inspectorate's Case Team (A47A11thickthorn@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) of a wish to participate prior to the hearing by **midday 12 November 2021**.

Moreover, each Interested Party is entitled to make oral representations. However, this is subject to the Examining Authority's (ExA) power to control hearings.

Notwithstanding the above the ExA would find it helpful for the following attendees to participate in the Hearing:

- Highways England (the Applicant) - including representatives of the Applicant who are in a position to discuss the matters on the agenda;
- Norfolk County Council;
- South Norfolk Council;

The Arrangements Conference will commence 30 minutes prior to the start of each hearing to enable a prompt start. The hearings will finish as soon as the ExA deems that all those present have had their say and that all matters have been covered. The agenda is for guidance only. It is not designed to be exclusive or exhaustive. The ExA may add other issues for consideration, may alter the order in which issues are considered and will seek to allocate sufficient time to

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each issue to allow proper consideration of them. Any lack of discussion of a particular issue at a hearing does not preclude further examination of this issue, including the asking of further written questions.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the issues will be discussed on the days that they are scheduled for. Should the consideration of the issues take less time than anticipated, the ExA may conclude the Hearing as soon as all relevant contributions have been made and all questions asked and responded to. If there are additional matters to be dealt with or there are submissions that take a considerable amount of time at any Hearing, there may be a need to continue the session for longer on the day. Alternatively, it may be necessary to prioritise matters and defer others to further written questions.

Please Note: In order to ensure timely publication of the agenda, this has been drafted shortly after the receipt of submissions for Deadline 2 Tuesday 26 October 2021; as a consequence, the ExA may adjust the agenda at the Hearing.

Purpose

The main purpose of Issue Specific Hearing on Environmental Matters is to undertake facilitate questioning of certain topics, including matters arising from the application documentation and representations relating to: transport and traffic; tree impacts; biodiversity; design related matters and climate change.

Contingencies

The ExA will endeavour to hear all participants. If the Hearing, or parts of it, are unable to proceed, for example for technical reasons, then the ExA may adjourn for any incomplete business to be dealt with at hearings later in the Examination Timetable. Notice of any adjournments will be provided on the project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

Microsoft Teams

The Hearing will take place virtually using Microsoft Teams. Further information about virtual events in relation to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects can be found in the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 8.6: Virtual examination events:

[Advice Note 8.6: Virtual examination events | National Infrastructure Planning \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/advice-note-8.6-virtual-examination-events/)

Further information, including a short video regarding taking part in a Planning Inspectorate virtual event, can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website:

[Planning Inspectorate virtual events: guide to participating – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-inspectorate-virtual-events-guide-to-participating)

Please contact the Case Team if you have any questions about using Microsoft Teams.

Digital Recording

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A digital recording will be made of the hearing. This will be made available on the project page of the National Infrastructure website.

If you take part in the hearing it is important that you understand that your comments will be recorded and that the digital recording will be published and retained, usually for a period of 5 years from the Secretary of State's decision.

As such the Planning Inspectorate is subject to the General Data Protection Regulations. It is very unlikely that the ExA will ask you to put sensitive personal information such as email addresses, financial or health related matters into the public domain.

However, if for some reason you feel that it is necessary for you to refer to sensitive personal information the ExA would encourage you to speak to the case team in the first instance. The case team would then explore with you whether the information could be provided in a written format which could then be appropriately redacted before being published.

Please bear in mind that the only official record of the proceedings will be the digital recording that will be placed on the project page of the National Infrastructure website. Tweets, blogs and similar communications arising out of the hearing will not be accepted as evidence in the Examination of this application.



Agenda

Title of meeting	A47/A11 Thickthorn Junction Issue Specific Hearing 1 on Environmental Matters
Date	Wednesday, 17 November 2021
Time	10.00am
Attendees	Invitees

1. Welcome, introductions, and arrangements for the hearing

2. Transport and Traffic

- The Applicant will be asked to provide an initial overview of the scheme improvement being considered. In particular the case made for all of the suggested benefits being cited, including those proposed from traffic, public rights of way and cycle route perspectives.
- The ExA will then ask questions and seek responses.
- Discussion to cover the safety and capacity of routes/junction's post construction of the scheme.

- De-trunking matters any potential asset transfer considerations also to be covered.
- Interested Parties may also be invited to respond to questions posed by the ExA or to give clarification.

3. Design/ Landscape/ Visual Impact

- Applicant to explain/reaffirm their approach to design and demonstrate how the development meets good design principles.
- The Applicant to give an initial overview of the approach taken to the new footbridge design over the A47 for discussion. Highlighting any differences with the existing footbridge proposed to be removed and its present use.
- Design discussion will be asked to focus on the anticipated future function of the new footbridge structure and other elements of the scheme towards pedestrians', cyclists, and horse-riding activity as well as visual appearance considerations.
- Discussion to include the new Cantley Lane Link Road over the A11 carriageway and new underpasses set out within the scheme.
- The ExA will ask questions and seek responses including from interested parties.
- Design issues having regard to local circumstances as well as local policy context and national policy guidance also to be discussed.

Environmental Masterplan

- The Applicant to give an overview of the details of the Environmental Masterplan [APP-123] for discussion acknowledging its relationship with the Scheduled Monument Two Tumuli in Big Wood.
- Acknowledgement of the County Council are seeking further planting specification and details and management and maintenance plans discussion on those aspects.
- The ExA will then ask questions based on the overview of the information provided.

4. Tree Impacts

- The Applicant to briefly outline what trees would be impacted upon, (the plot numbers being referred to) and what trees are intended for removal and those intended for retention. As well as a brief update on any modifications or requirements.
- The applicant also to set out the steps taken in the scheme design to avoid tree loss acknowledging the iterative process referred to in the examination documents and the location of Cantley Wood.
- The ExA will then direct questions to the applicant's team.
- Interested Parties may also be invited to respond to questions or to give clarification.

5. Biodiversity

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- The applicant will be asked to set out the names, proximity, and context of the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar Site depicted in the submitted No Significant Effects Report as context.
- The ExA will then direct questions to the applicant's team.
- Interested Parties may also be invited to respond to questions or to give clarification.

6. Climate Change

- Applicant to give an overview outline on the application with respect to climate change issues; regard to cumulative impacts and other national infrastructure projects.
- Acknowledgement of any related court judgements being referred to, or to be referred to, acknowledging the applicant is proposing an update to ES Chapter 14.
- The ExA will ask questions and seek oral responses where appropriate.

7. Noise/other matters

- Applicant to provide a short overview of the approach taken to potential noise impacts and the receptor context as detailed in the application.
- Discussion of the Written Questions responses having regard to The Trustees of the Mackintosh Trust's submission both highlighting noise impact concerns and that additional receptors be considered.
- Discussion of lighting issues not potentially covered in any design matters topic section.

8. AOB

9. Review of any actions/ issues arising

10. Close of Hearing