

Planning Inspectorate NSIP ref no TR010037

A47 – A11 Thickthorn Junction

Submission from Richard Hawker IP ref No 20028387 Date: 11 March 2022

Written summary (not verbatim) of Oral submissions at OFH2 (1 March) and ISH2 (3 March)

My summary covers both hearings, as I did bring up some topics in both.

1) Carbon /climate change

I pointed out that the company CEPP (Andrew Boswell) has already raised concern about cumulative assessment of carbon emissions with inspectors for all three A47 schemes, and the ExA would know that the issue is being considered by the DfT in respect of the A38 scheme in Derby; the issues are equally relevant here. Unfortunately Andrew Boswell was unable to attend the hearing due to personal circumstances.

I pointed out the recent report from IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, on which UK is of course, represented) urging action to stem carbon emissions, and that UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres had stated that ‘Delay is Death’ regarding climate change. It is already agreed that this scheme would increase carbon emissions, so it was difficult to see how it could be sanctioned, and still be within government policy to tackle climate change.

2) Bats

I noted that in REP7-009, Bat Survey Report, dated December 2017, it is recommended that the survey be repeated no later than December 2019. Has this been done? I was told that this was not relevant, but lodged just to indicate the format of such a report. But I was not given any reference to the latest report, nor a reference to any document containing a query for which this 2017 report was offered as an answer.

Since the hearing, I have noted that the applicant has stated that bat surveys results from 2022 should be available at deadline 9. It is regrettable that I could not have been given this information during the hearing.

3) Transport and Traffic

I still do not understand why the applicant can deem it ‘unnecessary’ to provide basic traffic-modelling information, such as origin and destination, and turning movement data. Lack of this information makes it impossible to adequately scrutinise the figures within the report, particularly the predictions of traffic numbers. Traffic numbers and congestion is the reasoning for the underpass, and consequent rebuilding of the foot bridge, which should not be necessary. (I will address this further in a future document).

4) Cantley Lane access

A major part of the scheme is the Cantley Lane flyover. The scheme eliminates the slip-road access and egress arrangement were for those residents to the east of the low railway

bridge, thus restricting their access. The solution proposed in the scheme is the Cantley Lane flyover, which would be very costly, and necessitate diverting Cantley Stream. I have requested details of why the slip road arrangement cannot be retained, or an improved design substituted, thus avoiding cost and disruption, but the applicant has not provided this. I conjectured that it may be deemed unsafe, so I looked at safety records for the whole junction area. I could only find those for a four-year period in the application. Only one, in 2015, appeared to be near the slip road onto Cantley Lane. None was at the off-slip. I felt that a suitably-safe design could be enacted here, and I have not found an analysis of this possibility in the application.

5) Accidents in general

I pointed out the huge number of accidents predicted for the 60-year period in table 4.16, but I was told that this was not for the impact area, but for a wider area of COBRA-LT (presumably that of the 'blue roads' in fig 4.26.). This is not made clear in the text.

6) Public transport

I observed that the government's 'Bus Back Better' policy document of 2021 requires that every road scheme put forward for DfT funding must support bus priority measures, or explain why it cannot. The applicant has stated that this scheme is 'neutral' for its effect on public transport. It must therefore supply a reasoned argument (which it does not currently supply), or be in breach of the government's policy.

Richard Hawker

11 March 2022

