



## **A47 North Tuddenham to Easton – proposed development by Highways England**

### **Royal Mail Group Limited comments on information to be provided in applicant's Environmental Statement**

#### **Introduction**

Reference the letter from PINS to Royal Mail dated 23 September 2019 requesting Royal Mail's comments on the information that should be provided in Highways England's Environmental Statement.

Royal Mail's consultants BNP Paribas Real Estate have reviewed the applicant's Scoping Report, scrutinising the proposed development and its potential impacts on Royal Mail's business interests.

#### **Royal Mail- relevant information**

Under section 35 of the Postal Services Act 2011 (the "Act"), Royal Mail has been designated by Ofcom (the independent communications regulator) as a provider of the Universal Postal Service.

Royal Mail is the only such provider in the United Kingdom. Its services are regulated by the Communications Industry Regulator, Ofcom.

In respect of its postal services functions, section 29 of the Act provides that Ofcom's primary regulatory duty is to secure the provision of the Universal Postal Service. Ofcom discharges this duty by imposing regulatory conditions on Royal Mail, requiring it to provide the Universal Postal Service.

By sections 30 and 31 of the Act (read with sections 32 and 33) there is a set of minimum standards for Universal Service Providers, which Ofcom must secure. The conditions imposed by Ofcom reflect those standards. There is, in effect, a statutory obligation on Royal Mail to provide at least one collection from letterboxes and post offices six days a week and one delivery of letters to all 29 million homes and businesses in the UK six days a week (five days a week for parcels). Royal Mail must also provide a range of "end to end" services meeting users' needs, e.g. First Class, Second Class, Special Delivery by 1 pm, International and Redirections services.

Royal Mail is under some of the highest specification performance obligations for quality of service in Europe. Its performance of the Universal Service Provider obligations is in the public interest and should not be affected detrimentally by any statutorily authorised project.

Royal Mail's postal sorting and delivery operations rely heavily on road communications. Royal Mail's ability to provide efficient mail collection, sorting and delivery to the public is sensitive to changes in the capacity of the highway network.

Royal Mail is a major road user nationally. Disruption to the highway network and traffic delays can have direct consequences on Royal Mail's operations, its ability to meet the Universal Service Obligation and comply with the regulatory regime for postal services thereby presenting a significant risk to Royal Mail's business.



### **Potential impacts of the scheme on Royal Mail**

Royal Mail has four operational facilities within 10 miles of the proposed DCO boundary as listed below:

Site	Address	Distance
DEREHAM DELIVERY OFFICE	QUEBEC STREET NR19 2AA	7.1
BOWTHORPE DELIVERY OFFICE	UNIT 24 JARROLD WAY NR5 9PD	7.2
WYMONDHAM DELIVERY OFFICE	18 MIDDLETON STREET NR18 0AA	9.1
NORWICH PARCELFORCE DEPOT	112-118 BARKER STREET NR2 4HJ	9.2

This section of the A47 is a strategically important distribution route for Royal Mail services, important to mail handling and delivery at the regional and national levels. All Royal Mail vehicles / services that use the affected sections of these roads are at risk of delays during the construction period.

In exercising its statutory duties, Royal Mail vehicles use all of the adjacent local roads on a daily basis. Any additional congestion on these roads during the construction phase has the potential to significantly disrupt Royal Mail's operations.

Royal Mail therefore wishes to ensure the protection of its future ability to provide an efficient mail sorting and delivery service to the public in accordance with its statutory obligations which may be adversely affected by the construction of this proposed scheme.

### **Royal Mail's comments on information that should be provided in Highways England's Environmental Statement**

Royal Mail fully supports the objectives of the proposed scheme; if congestion, journey delays and accidents can be reduced by the scheme then there will be significant benefits to all road users.

However, Royal Mail asks that Highways England fully notes the above and addresses the following comments / requests:

1. Royal Mail requests that the ES includes information on the needs of major road users (such as Royal Mail) and acknowledges the requirement to ensure that major road users are not disrupted though full consultation at the appropriate time in the DCO and development processes.
2. The ES should include detailed information on the construction traffic mitigation measures that are proposed to be implemented, including a draft Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP).
3. Royal Mail requests that it is fully pre-consulted by Highways England on any proposed road closures / diversions/ alternative access arrangements, hours of working and the content of the CTMP. The ES should acknowledge the need for this consultation with Royal Mail and other relevant local businesses / occupiers.



Royal Mail is able to supply the applicant with information on its road usage / trips if required.

Should PINS or Highways England have any queries in relation to the above then in the first instance please contact Holly Trotman [REDACTED] of Royal Mail or Daniel Parry-Jones [REDACTED] of BNP Paribas Real Estate.