

A47 North Tuddenham to Easton

Scheme Number: TR010038

9.14 Applicant's Response to Examining Authority's Further Written Questions, October 2021

The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010
Rule 8(1)(c)

Planning Act 2008

November 2021

Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure Planning
(Examination Procedure) Rules 2010**

A47 North Tuddenham to Easton
Development Consent Order 202[x]

**APPLICANT'S RESPONSE TO EXAMINING AUTHORITY'S FURTHER
WRITTEN QUESTIONS, OCTOBER 2021**

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Author:	A47 North Tuddenham to Easton Project Team, Highways England

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 The Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton scheme (herein the Scheme) was submitted on 15 March 2021 and accepted for examination on 12 April 2021.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of this document is to respond to Further Written Questions (FWQs) set out within the Examining Authority's (ExA's) letter dated 7th October 2021¹.

2 EXAMINING AUTHORITY'S FURTHER WRITTEN QUESTIONS IN OCTOBER 2021

- 2.1.1 The ExA requested responses to two FWQs (FWQ 1 and FWQ 2) within the letter dated 7th October 2021.
- 2.1.2 FWQ 2 is directed to Natural England (NE), and therefore will not be addressed by the Applicant within this response.
- 2.1.3 FWQ 1 is directed to The Applicant (Highways England); the question reads as follows:

"In Section 3.6.2 of the Report to Inform Habitats Regulations Assessment [APP-139], it is stated that 'Upon further consultation on the submission of this Screening report, Natural England have confirmed that they are in agreement with the findings of this Screening report that there will be no likely significant effects on any NSN site or Ramsar site'. Please can the applicant provide the correspondence with Natural England which confirms this position."

3 APPLICANT'S RESPONSE TO FWQ 1

- 3.1.1 Section 3.2.2 of the Report to Inform Habitats Regulations Assessment (APP-139) states that a search was undertaken for National Site Network (NSN) sites, which includes Ramsar sites, that could be affected, according to the guidance in section 2.2 of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) guidance LA 115 Habitats Regulations Assessment).
- The River Wensum Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Paston Great Barn SAC were the only NSN sites identified and assessed in the report.
- 3.1.2 Sections 4.1.6 to 4.1.9 of the Report to Inform Habitats Regulations Assessment (**APP-139**) state that given the extent of available suitable habitat between the SAC and the Scheme, it is considered likely that barbastelle bats from SAC roosts do not frequent the study area due to the large distance between the SAC and the Scheme.
- 3.1.3 Section 4.1.1 of the report (**APP-139**) confirmed the screening assessment identified potential for likely significant effect pathways between the Scheme on

¹ The Planning Inspectorate to All Interested Parties, Application by Highways England for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton, Examining Authorities Further Written Questions, Ref: TR010038, 7th October 2021, available at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/projects/TR010038/TR010038-000695-EXQ2.pdf>

the River Wensum SAC. Section 4.1.3 concluded that following a potential effects screening exercise in accordance with Planning Inspectorate Advice Note 10 (Table C-2) "*there are no reasonably foreseeable significant effects on the River Wensum SAC as a result of the Proposed Scheme during construction or operation*".

3.1.4 The Applicant received the below email communication from NE on 22nd July 2021.

From: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@naturalengland.org.uk)>
Sent: 22 January 2021 09:55
To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@sweco.co.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@sweco.co.uk)>
Subject: RE: A47 North Tuddenham to Easton HRA

Hi [REDACTED]

I have reviewed the draft HRA and I can confirm you won't need detailed comments from Natural England.

In our view, the HRA is sufficiently comprehensive and contains all the details we would expect concerning the river Wensum SAC. We agree with the conclusions that there is not likely to be an effect on the integrity of the SAC due to this application.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Lead Adviser, Planning & Conservation
Suffolk Coast, Norfolk & Suffolk Team
Tel: [REDACTED]

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