

## **Response to Applicant's Submission "Additional Submission - 9.15 Alternative Wood Lane Junction Options Appraisal"**

In its Deadline 4 submission "*Written summaries of oral submissions made at hearings w/c 1 November 2021*" (Planning Inspectorate Reference REP4-20) Norfolk County Council advised that it would comment on the technical merits of the proposed junction put forward by Mr Meynell on behalf of Berry Hall Estate. It also stated that, since it was confirmed at the hearings that Berry Hall Estate would be submitting revised proposals at Deadline 5, the County Council proposed to provide these technical comments on the revised proposals that are to be tabled. The County Council notes that Berry Hall Estate did not submit its proposal for Deadline 5 and as a result a technical assessment has not been undertaken.

However, the County Council is aware of the Applicant's submission "*Additional Submission - 9.15 Alternative Wood Lane Junction Options Appraisal*" (Planning Inspectorate Reference AS-022), which documents its assessment of the alternatives put forward by Mr Meynell. In this submission, one of the Applicant's conclusions is that each of the alternative options have significant deficiencies across a range of key criteria where assessments were possible. In particular, it notes that all options require amendments to the local road design, introducing safety concerns and additional maintenance.

Whilst the County Council has not undertaken a technical assessment to confirm the Applicant's conclusions, it has concerns about any alternative option that would reduce road safety or increase maintenance requirements. With this in mind, both Alternative 1(A and B) and Alternative 2(A and B) would appear to increase the maintenance requirements by introducing an additional length of de-trunked road and a junction (the existing A47 and Wood Lane junction) into the local highway network. In the case of Alternatives 1A and 2A a new underpass of the A47 would also be introduced. Similarly, introducing an additional junction into the local highway network could provide an additional area of risk, although as identified above no technical assessment of this has been undertaken.

The Applicant's submission concludes that, having reviewed the alternative options, the current Scheme design remains the preferred Wood Lane junction design option with regards location and layout. The County Council has discussed the current Scheme design with the Applicant during its development and supports its approach of using the UK DMRB as a framework for the design of the sideroads. An independent assessment of its operational capacity has also been undertaken by the County Council's Norwich Western Link (NWL) delivery team. As a result, the County Council can confirm that it supports the Applicant's proposal for this junction.

The proposed junction location and alignment at Wood Lane allows for connection of the proposed NWL and the B1535 for scenarios 'with the NWL' and 'without the NWL'. The need to accommodate both scenarios is explained below.

**'Without the NWL' Scenario** – The County Council has previously undertaken a series of improvements to a route between the A1067 and the A47 that diverted HGVs away from the villages of Weston Longville and Hockering. This route was

developed to address an existing issue of HGV movements through these villages. On completion of these works in 2014 the route was classified as the B1535. Therefore, in a 'without the NWL' scenario, it is important that the A47 should maintain a connection to Wood Lane (B1535) as this is the main existing HGV route linking the A47 with the A1067. The Applicant's proposed junction at this location provides this connection. The connection to Wood Lane is not a direct connection in order to offer a lower priority to Wood Lane should the NWL arm be added.

**'With the NWL' Scenario** - The NWL is included as one of Norfolk County Council's three priority infrastructure schemes and is highlighted in the Norfolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2017-2027. At its meeting of 15 July 2019 the County Council's Cabinet agreed the preferred route for the NWL which joins the A47 at the Wood Lane junction and has subsequently submitted an Outline Business Case to the Department for Transport for funding from its Large Local Major projects programme, which is awaiting approval. The County Council recognises the benefits of the Applicant's single delivery approach with the proposed size and outline design of the A47/Wood Lane junction included in its DCO application catering for the future connection and capacity with NWL included. The dumbbell layout, as included in the DCO application has been modelled using flows from the updated 2019 base version of the strategic model for the NWL. This shows that the two individual roundabouts work within capacity in the design year of 2040 for a 'with NWL' scenario."