

Norfolk County Council  
Identification No: *TR010038*  
Registration identification number: 20028295

## **Norfolk County Council's response to comments at North Tuddenham Hearing (06/01/2022)**

Norfolk County Council, as local highway authority, wishes to make the following response to comments made during Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) held on 6 January 2022.

Response to comments made by Ms Goodall of Weston Longville Parish Council regarding traffic mitigation for the village of Weston Longville (56.15 to 1.04.42 of the transcription of ISH3 Session 4 (Document Ref: EV-046))

The County Council has worked with Weston Longville Parish Council (WLPC) and National Highways to develop the proposal that is referenced in the previous submissions, in particular the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2021, which captured the agreed arrangements should the Norwich Western Link (NWL) project be delayed.

It is noted that at the 6 January hearing there was a request for the wording to be amended to include for the scenario of the NWL being delayed 'or not go ahead'. The County Council is very focussed on the delivery of the NWL project, and it will continue to develop the project to provide a solution for the existing issues and problems that local communities, including Weston Longville, are facing. The County Council remains confident that the NWL project will be delivered, but that is subject to concluding all of the necessary statutory and funding approvals. Taking account of the current timings for the A47 proposals and the NWL, it is acknowledged that there is potential for a delay and this scenario is what has been reflected in the agreement. This should provide a safeguard for Weston Longville that if the NWL is not able to be delivered within a certain timeframe linked to the A47 project, then the measures would be implemented.

The commitment from the County Council and National Highways as captured in the meeting minutes is therefore considered sufficient. However, following a meeting on Monday 24 January with representatives from WLPC, the County Council has agreed to provide a letter of confirmation to give further reassurance to the commitments that have been made. A copy of the letter will be provided to the Inspector, hopefully before the close of the Examination.

The details agreed at the meeting that captured the agreement, should the NWL be delayed, are also considered sufficient in terms of the involvement of the parties. The commitment that National Highways has provided to the County Council is that they will work together to deliver a solution. The reality is that the solution would be within the County Council's local highway network and there is a commitment that the County Council will work with WLPC to develop the solutions ahead of their implementation – there is also a commitment to agree the scope of traffic surveys to be undertaken during 2022. These provisions are appropriate, and it will be for the County Council to agree details and funding contributions with National Highways, something that is already under discussion.

Norfolk County Council

Identification No: TR010038

Registration identification number: 20028295

The provisions proposed by WLPC are not currently included as a Requirement within the draft DCO, and National Highways has set out its reasons for this, which in part is related to it not being in control of the highway network where the measures would be applied. It is also worth noting that it is hoped that the scenario that allows for these provisions, namely a delay to the NWL project, will not occur. For these reasons it is considered that the details held within the SoCG, the minutes of the meeting on 21 October 2021, and the additional letter referred to above, alongside the record of the issues raised during the Examination, should be sufficient safeguards for WLPC. However, it is accepted that it will be for the Inspector to determine whether the provisions are sufficient.

Response to Mr Josselyn acting on behalf of [REDACTED] regarding the technical assessment of alternative proposals for the Wood Lane junction (47.53 to 52.14 of the transcription of ISH3 Session 4 (Document Ref: EV-046))

At the hearing Mr Josselyn confirmed that no further submissions on the proposed alternatives for the Wood Lane junction are intended and suggested that Norfolk County Council should undertake a technical assessment based on the information already provided.

At Deadline 6 Norfolk County Council submitted a "Response to the Applicant's Additional Submission - 9.15 Alternative Wood Lane Junction Options Appraisal" (Document Ref: REP6-023). In this response the County Council noted that it believed [REDACTED] would be submitting revised proposals at Deadline 5. In the absence of this submission the County Council stated that a technical assessment had not been undertaken.

Although it has been confirmed that no further submission is intended, the County Council has not undertaken full technical assessment as this has been completed by the Applicant. The Applicant's consideration of the assessment was provided at Deadline 6 (Document Ref: REP6-023), which the County Council has reviewed. The results of this review were documented in its submission "Response to the Applicant's Additional Submission - 9.15 Alternative Wood Lane Junction Options Appraisal" (Document Ref: REP6-023), which outlined its concerns regarding the proposed alternatives.

Response to Mr Josselyn acting on behalf of [REDACTED] regarding the Applicant's proposals for the cycle route around the north side of the northern roundabout of the proposed Wood Lane junction (17:25 to 19:52 of the transcription of ISH3 Session 4 (Document Ref: EV-046))

At the hearing Mr Josselyn raised a question regarding the connectivity of the cycle route around the northern roundabout of the proposed Wood Lane junction and how this connects with the route at Sandy Lane.

In response to this question, Norfolk County Council notes that the Applicant proposes section of cycle track around the northern roundabout, and it intends to allow permissive use of this element by the public until the NWL planning application is determined. If the NWL scheme is not granted consent, the Applicant will consider dedicating the route as a public right of way but may choose to leave it as a

Norfolk County Council

Identification No: *TR010038*

Registration identification number: 20028295

permissive route. The Applicant outlines this proposal in its response “Applicant’s Response to the Examining Authority’s First Written Questions” (ExQ1) (REP2-014).

In a no NWL scenario, the County Council agrees with the Applicant’s proposals around the north side of the roundabout, which would provide connectivity between Honingham Restricted Byway 1 and the local road network to the west, which includes Sandy Lane.

If the NWL is granted planning permission, the County Council notes the Applicant will withdraw permission for the public to use the route so that construction of the NWL can be carried out. A Sustainable Transport Strategy for the NWL has been developed by Norfolk County Council, following engagement with key stakeholders and the local community. Within this strategy a cycle track is proposed along the west side of the NWL linking Honingham Restricted Byway 1 with a local road called The Broadway, approximately 1.9km to the north. At this location a grade separated crossing of the NWL is proposed to provide connectivity between the Honingham Restricted Byway 1 and the local road network to the west, which includes Sandy Lane.

Subject to the amendments to Article 13(7) as documented in “8.4 Statement of Common Ground Norfolk County Council” (Document Ref: REP4-003) submitted at Deadline 4, the County Council agrees with the Applicant’s proposals for the cycle track around the north of the roundabout in the absence of the NWL. This agreement is documented in the Statement of Common Ground between the Applicant and National Highways.

[Response to Mr Hawker representing Wensum Valley Alliance, regarding queries on the Applicants base modelling and traffic predictions for Taverham Road \(27:18 to 46:17 of the transcription of ISH3 Session 4 \(Document Ref: EV-046\)\)](#)

NCC and National Highways have previously agreed that it is appropriate for the NATS 2015 base model to be used for the assessment of the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton dualling scheme. NCC are now using the updated 2019 model for the NWL scheme because a model update was requested by DfT in relation to the NWL to enable the most recent available base year validation data to be used to inform the NWL Outline Business Case submission for funding.

The 2019 model update was still going through the approval process with DfT at the time of the DCO submission for the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton dualling scheme. Therefore, as that scheme was already funded and did not need to go through the same processes, it has not used the 2019 model data.

As a result it is to be expected that there will be some differences in the traffic predictions produced by the two models for Taverham Road – this is partly because of the different base years (2015 and 2019) between the two models, and also because Taverham Road has very low base year traffic volume and was not used in either of the two model variants as a validation link (albeit both model variants do meet the required DfT WebTAG model validation criteria across the network as a whole).

The main intention of strategic modelling is to understand the relative differences between scenarios and magnitudes of impact across the network, rather than to provide absolute traffic numbers.

The emerging draft traffic predictions from the 2019 NATS model have previously been shared with the NWL Local Liaison Group and local parishes. These were intended to provide an indication of the expected change in traffic flows on local roads as a result of the NWL and A47 schemes, and to inform traffic mitigation testing which was being developed for both schemes. The development of traffic mitigation for the NWL scheme is still ongoing, so the modelling for the NWL scheme will be subject to further minor changes prior to a planning submission.

The initial results from the 2019 model presented to the Local Liaison Group in February 2021 are shown below:

	2019 Base Year	2025 Do Minimum	2025 Do Something	2025 Do Minimum	2025 Do Something
				Honingham Lane closed with measures on Taverham Road	
Taverham Road	200	1,800	1,100	400	600

Where there is reference to 'Do Minimum' this relates to the network with the A47 improvements included, but without the NWL. 'Do Something' includes both the A47 and NWL projects. The small increase between Do Minimum and Do Something in the 'Honingham Lane closed' scenarios is due to the local roads being severed by the introduction of the NWL (eg The Broadway).

Whilst the National Highways 2015 version of the model indicates higher future year flows in the opening year of 2025 for Taverham Road, when compared with the 2019 model, it is also noted that the observed count on Taverham Road, in October 2019, was higher than the 2019 base year modelled flow of 200 vehicles shown above. NCC are therefore comfortable with the numbers presented by National Highways for this link, as the differences between the two models have been investigated and understood and we have concluded that the broad magnitude of impact on Taverham Road predicted by the 2015 model falls within the range expected by NCC.