



## Meeting note

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|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Project</b>            | A47 Wansford to Sutton           |
| <b>File reference</b>     | TR010039                         |
| <b>Status</b>             | <b>Final</b>                     |
| <b>Author</b>             | The Planning Inspectorate        |
| <b>Date</b>               | 28 May 2021                      |
| <b>Meeting with</b>       | Highways England (the Applicant) |
| <b>Venue</b>              | Teams meeting                    |
| <b>Meeting objectives</b> | Project update meeting           |
| <b>Circulation</b>        | All attendees                    |

### Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

### Project update

The Applicant provided an overview of the scheme's programme since the Preferred Route Announcement (PRA) in 2017 and briefly set out how the responses to its Statutory Consultation and subsequent supplementary and targeted consultations, alongside parallel engagement with stakeholders and environmental bodies, had shaped the final design.

The Applicant acknowledged its latest consultation, targeted at affected land interested, Statutory Undertakers (in respect of corridors for utility diversions) and the host local authorities (LAs), was due to close imminently. The Inspectorate queried the scale of response to date. The Applicant confirmed it had yet to receive any responses but Milton Estates, a significant land interest, had indicated it intended to respond. All supplementary and targeted consultations would be reported upon within the narrative of the Consultation Report (CR).

The Applicant acknowledged ongoing engagement with Historic England (HiE) had led to a realignment of the route to alleviate impacts on a flood storage area. However, the realignment created an encroachment into the boundary of a Scheduled Monument (SM) on the other side of the A47. The Applicant illustrated the realigned

section that encroached within the SM area and explained that HiE had verbally confirmed the encroachment (by circa nine metres) was acceptable in principle.

The Inspectorate queried whether HiE had requested any specific environmental mitigation to offset the encroachment into the SM. The Applicant explained that a full archaeological survey would be undertaken but noted the area seemed to have been previously disturbed, most likely when the original A47 was constructed, and significant archaeological finds would be unlikely.

The Inspectorate queried whether other environmental mitigation had been affected by the realignment. The Applicant noted water vole mitigation had now been brought within the schemes' red line boundary (RLB) and concluded that it had now drawn all of its proposed environmental mitigation and landscaping within the RLB. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to signpost between the CR and the Environmental Statement where changes to mitigation were a result of consultation.

The Applicant highlighted that sections of the Upton community remained unhappy with the design of the scheme which proposed to close one of the village's access to the A47 and upgrade the other. An interest group had been formed called 'Fight 4 Upton' (F4U) which had the support of a senior local councillor. The Applicant explained that F4U believes the Statutory Consultation to be inadequate because its' requested changes to the scheme had not been incorporated within the final design. The Applicant however was content that the statutory process had been followed and all of its duties properly discharged. A commissioned independent appraisal of the process had supported this conclusion.

## **Local Authorities**

The Applicant confirmed that the scheme was now wholly located within one administrative boundary – Peterborough City Council (PCC) – whereas during the Scoping process, the RLB entered into the neighbouring boundary of Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC). This meant that a number of upper-tier LAs which share a boundary with HDC and which had been consulted during the Scoping process were no longer identified as relevant LAs. The Applicant noted that due to the proximity of the 'lost' LAs from the scheme, their engagement with the process to date had been limited. Notwithstanding this the Applicant would write to each of those LAs to explain how and why their status in the process had changed.

The Applicant confirmed that although HDC's status had changed from a host authority to a boundary authority, it had continued to engage with HDC in the same way as PCC because of the proximity of the scheme to its administrative boundary. The changed profile of relevant LAs would be set out in the CR.

## **Submission**

The Applicant confirmed it was still working toward formal submission of the application in late June 2021. The Inspectorate requested the list of established LA contacts to enable early notice of the submission and the request for Adequacy of Consultation Representations.

It was agreed the application suite would be uploaded to a SharePoint folder via Microsoft Teams. The Inspectorate queried whether the Applicant had a preference whether it wanted the application suite published as soon as practicable after the

submission of the application, or after the Acceptance decision. The Applicant confirmed its preference for the application documents to be published as soon as practicable after submission.

The Inspectorate asked the Applicant to provide an update on its anticipated submission date no later than 24 June 2021.