

# OFH1\_BLOFIELD\_16082021\_SESSION 1\_TRANSCRIPT

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00:06

Good morning. The time is now 10 o'clock and I'd like to welcome everyone to this open floor hearing for the a four to seven Blofield to North Burlingham project. Before I formally open the hearing and introduce myself, I would ask Deborah Allen, the case manager for this project to confirm that you can see and hear me clearly and that the meeting recording and the live streaming of this event has started.

00:30

Hi, Alex. Yes, I can hear and see you. James Bunton is actually keeping an eye on the live stream. So if I invite James just to confirm it's being recorded, please. Oh, yep, I can confirm that live stream is is live.

00:44

Thank you.

00:47

Okay, thank you very much. So the openflow hearing is now open. My name is Alex Hudson. I'm a chartered town planner and the Chartered landscape planner. And I hold academic qualifications in both these areas. I'm an examining inspector and I've been appointed by the Secretary of State to be the examining authority to examine this application. There are two colleagues from the planning Inspectorate here this morning. You'll have spoken to miss Allen, the case manager for this project. In the joining conference. I'd also like to introduce James Bunton, who is also from the case team. If you have any questions regarding the application process in general, could I ask in the first instance that you please direct leads to the case team who will be happy to help the open flow hearings taking place virtually online, but the format's content and procedure will be very similar to the traditional face to face open flow hearings. That's been held for previous examinations, internationally significant infrastructure project applications. However, I am conscious of online conferencing fatigue, and I aim to keep the proceedings focused and as efficient as possible. I'll now deal with a few housekeeping matters. Firstly, you can ask that all audible notifications for electronic devices be switched off, can also ask that to help produce background noise and assist with the broad bandwidth unless you're speaking, that you have your camera and your microphone turned off. No requests be made for any special measures or arrangements to enable participation in this hearing. But can I just confirm that this is correct? Yes, that's correct. Thank you. Thank you. Please note the chat function in teams is not being used in this hearing. So please do not send any messages via chat, as it is not being monitored. If at any point in the in the hearing, you can't hear me or wish to speak to chaos or you turn your camera on and use the raised hand function in teams. That may sometimes be a delay before I can acknowledge this, as Alan

will have explained to you what to do if you lose your connection. And if required to do some more significant connection problems, I may be able to join for a short period. When required, I will adjourn for short breaks and convenient points. Usually no more than every hour and a half or so you can stay locked into teams throughout the break. Please ensure you switch your cameras off and mute your microphones. If you're watching the live streaming, you will need to refresh the live streaming web page to continue watching the live stream after any break. If you do lose connection, use the same link that you use to log on to log on to the hearing this morning and the case single endeavour to reconnect you as soon as possible. If a medical or other reasons anyone requires a break at a specific time, could you please let the case team know and I can hopefully adjust the programme to meet your needs. For the purpose of identification, and for the benefit of those who may listen to the digital recording later. Could I ask them to every point in which you speak? Could you please give your name and if you're representing an organisation or individual individual who it is that you are representing? Does anybody have any questions or concerns about the technology or general knowledge management of today's event?

04:24

I'm not seeing any race hadn't so I'll take that as a no and move on. There's a digital recording being made of this hearing. This will be made available on the project page or the national infrastructure planning website. If you take part in the hearing, it's important that you understand that your comments will be recorded and the digital recording will be published and retained, usually for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision. As search the planning Inspectorate is subject to the general data protection regulations. It is very unlikely that I will ask you to put sense If personal information, such as email addresses an economic, financial, cultural or health rate and matters into the public domain, indeed are adaptively encouraged that you do not do that. However, if for some reason you feel this is necessary for you to refer to sensitive personal information, I would encourage you to speak to our case team in the first instance, the case they will then explore with you whether the information could be provided in a written format, which could then be appropriately redacted before it's published. Please bear in mind that the only official recording of the proceedings is the digital recording. That will be that will be placed on the project page of the national infrastructure planning website, tweets, blogs and similar communications arising out of this hearing will not be accepted as evidence into the examination of the application. Moving on to agenda item two, which is the purpose of holding the open floor hearing. The formal purpose of the open floor hearing is to discharge my duty as the examining authority to interested parties who requests to be heard. An open floor hearing is an opportunity for interested parties to make their case, or any relevant matters or any relevant matters, or really is there for an opportunity for me to hear firsthand your thoughts about the application. And like other hearings, I'm not going to ask all people here to introduce themselves at this point. But I will ask individuals who wish to speak to do so when they address the hearing. That will turn proficiency with fairness and allow everyone who wishes to speak to do so please make sure that your contributions are to the points and focused to enable the best use of the time available and allow everyone who wishes to speak an opportunity to do so. Given the small number of participants of this hearing this morning, who potentially wish to speak, I did not intend to strictly limit the amount of time available to speak, but I would expect it to be no longer than 10 minutes. To make the best use of the time, it would be of great systems. If points were not repeated, you can be sure that I've already read any written submissions that you have made. If I consider the points are beginning to be repeated or the concerns are being

raised or not matters for the examination, or the matters being raised or to be considered as an issue specific hearing, that I may ask you to draw your contribution to a close. It is my intention to hear from any interested parties who have requested speak in the first instance. And interested parties identified by those persons set out under section one or two of the Planning Act 2008. Specifically and irrelevant to this hearing events persons who made a relevant representation and that this became an interested party and local authorities in whose area the application site is located. The hearing will run until all interested parties who have requested speak have made their oral representations and responded to my exploration of the matters arising from them if necessary. short time permits are then asked for any contributions many other interest parties or any non registered interested parties who may be present. I will offer the applicant a rise in response following all discussions may also take this opportunity to remind you that you can submit the full transcript of anything you say at this open floor hearing for the next deadline which is deadline for on Thursday, the ninth of September 2021. Before moving on to agenda item three, do any parties have any questions in relation to the purpose of the open floor hearing?

08:54

Okay, I'm seeing no raise hands. So I'll take that as a no. And I'll move on to agenda item three, which is representations by interest parties who wish to speak. So following the publication of the hearing notification letter on the 14th of July. I've had an indication from one interested party that they may wish to speak. This is Chris Gates is is Chris gates here. And can I ask whether you wish to speak at this open floor hearing this morning, Mr. Gates. Good morning. Can you hear me? Oh, sorry. Yes, I can hear you now. Yes, I am here and I would like to speak so. Okay. Thank you. Are there any other parties interested parties here today? who wish to speak? Okay, I'm Sunday. Norfolk county council suggested they may wish to speak. Mr. Cumming, are you here? Yes, sorry. It's I'm David Cumming, strategic team manager for Norfolk County Council. Yes, I am here. But no, I don't wish to speak today. Thank you. Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Coming. Okay, on that basis, Mr. Gates, could I ask you to please introduce yourself. But also, please make clear whether you're speaking on behalf of yourself or you're representing a different organisation.

10:46

Yeah, good morning. So again, yes, I'm speaking on behalf of Burlingham cottage gardeners. I'm chair of inclusion. That's a community group here in North burlingham Green in the surrounding area. I've also been asked by Kathy Pi, chair of Lynwood and Burlingham am parish council to informally represent them since she can't attend this hearing.

11:12

Okay, thank you. So, first of all, who are going to speak on behalf of first of all?

11:20

Well, it The point is, I want to make an AR brief, you'll be pleased to know, our general points concerning apart the highways England's approach to us and to the proposal. And in the course, the lack of a central crossing, and the pathway to April. Okay, so

11:45

maybe perhaps we'll be better if you if you first of all speak on behalf of the Burlingham cottage garden Association, and then we'll move on to Lingwood or Burlingham parish Council.

12:00

Yeah, that may not be necessarily the greatest respect because Lingwood Burlingham parish council endorse. Okay. The views I'm going to express

12:12

it's the same column. It's the same concerns that you're raising. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Well, please, in that case, please go ahead with your oral submission.

12:20

I will refer to the notes if you don't mind. When North Burlingham was bypassed in 1969, then authority acknowledge the importance of maintaining a North South Village access across the a 47 that highways England now proposed to sever by leading the pedestrian crossing point on the northern roadside at the side of Linwood lane. You might be familiar with liquid lane, that's the lane closest to the White House. Yes, I found no reference to this crossing in highways England submissions is possible. They're unaware of it. But the vigr author could advise on that point, no doubt, he knows visited the site several times. But he might have missed the fact that at the northern side of the a 47 oppositely wood line, there is a formerly maintained crossing point. The fact that this crossing point is well used to this day, despite highways in one failure to capture your speed and all the demonstrates continuing need or to suggest and I've got statements from a daily commuter commuter, living with the Burlingham and a leisure Walker burning them to Lynwood to support this and photographic evidence of the world use state of the crossing point which are could supply if you wish. Now, local knowledge would demonstrate that level of line emerges onto equal road, not White House lane as highways England call it sometimes but April road beyond the point where heavy commercial traffic turns left to cantley. In other words, if I could try and make it as graphic as possible, if you're going up a call road from the White House, you would turn left to go to counselling. And some way further on Lynwood lane joins from the right hand side.

14:17

So that's that's the one 140 isn't it going down to complete?

14:23

That's right. So the be 140 times left to Kennedy as well from the road now.

14:30

If

14:32

earlier walkers and cyclists are denied a central crossing the central centrally placed crossing that we've asked for and instead had to use the proposed White House overreach. They'll be forced to mingle with heavy goods vehicles until the third catatonia is reached. There aren't any footpaths. There'll be in the roadway. And at the moment, they don't have to do that because they can go up

linkwood line make it accessible in mid lane from the crossing point in North Burlingham, if, as the parish councillors suggested following the information from the sugar beet factory, there's up to 1400 heavy goods vehicle movements a day. That's a lot of traffic for cyclists, adult and children connection. I respectfully suggest that you offer the why char report theme Cypress as he claims to be would rather not mix the sugar beet Lori's certainly our residents don't want to either. This seems to be directly at odds with highways England stated aim to provide an accessible an integrated network, ensuring the proposals take into account local communities and access to the road network providing this safer route between communities for cyclists, pedestrians, equestrians, and other non motorised groups, I'm quoting from their publication, improving the a 47 from March 2017. Note it's titled improved in the a 47. Not Improving life around the a 47. So that is my first time you'll be pleased no longest point, there is a cross thing that we will lose. And if we'll use the why to our report continuing to say nobody uses this is simply not the case. Our second one is is it's a matter of record. The other meeting with high resident Team Leader Gemma Malone and her team here at Burlingham that's my home here at Burlingham in August 2019. They revealed that their initial application to the designated fund for the April path and the Burlingham crossing had failed due to lack of funds that year, but they would be reapplying. I'm assuming that everybody is familiar with what I mean by the APR path. This is the short section of path needed about 400 metres to connect the junction that Southwark road, the White House crossing with the pathway that goes onwards towards April. This is not a pathway all the way to April, there's just a short missing section, which originally holidays, they would include. Now, they said there would be reapplying because they'd fail due to lack of funds in the designated fund for that year. To be frank, we never really understood what the designated fund was. But Jonathan Donlevy, one of the earlier project managers did say that it was a source of money available for projects which weren't strictly speaking within the scope of the roadway itself, ie the aq path. Now, in August 2019, Gemma Miloan was able to say that that his applications failed, but they would be reapplying. And since we now understand that funds were were available in 2020. We'd like to know if highways England did indeed reapply at that point. Because if they're reluctant to take the cost of these two projects from their main budget, and I think Norfolk County Council would probably say they should. But if they were reluctant to take it from the main budget, and didn't bother to apply to the designated fund the second time in 2020. Well, what changed what why not? My second point. My third point is really a bit of a round up. And it's it's the refusal to include the central burning and crossing and pathway to April goes against current policy from the likes of Sustrans and cycling UK, which is all about extending the cycle. It's contrary to the Ramblers walking for help government exercise initiative, like cycling school. It's also quite contrary to highways England's own promise to extend and improve local productivity came contained within their publicity. I'd suggest it's contrary to common sense. Surrounding parish Council, Water District Council, Norfolk County Council and a local MP drove by who all support the burning process and the age of the blofield crossing the length of the White House crossing on woods to leeward is always England choose to make so much event always refer to the keen cyclists author of the Y char report. And his assurance is it all has been taken into account and I'd venture to suggest that if he lived in North Burlingham, he would find the provisions suggested remotely acceptable.

19:48

Okay, thank you very much. Mr. Gates. Can I just can I just check that with regard to the proposed blue fee? The proposed B one 140 over bench Yes, Your Honour. Either there's there's a separation

between the road and the cycle path footpath provision over that particular bridge. Yes. Okay. But you still you still have the concerns?

20:12

Well, from from the point from the White House effectively from that bridge, up to the one 114. There is no provision as far as I can see, to separate the traffic as far as apparently turning.

20:25

Okay. The fact that it would be a 30 mile an hour zone in that area still still doesn't doesn't really still doesn't appease your concerns?

20:33

Well, I know you've made site visits. I don't want to put words in your mouth. But you'll be aware that that lady is barely wide enough for two giant sugarbeet lawyers to pass each other. Well, they're to be cyclists or pedestrians in a road. At the time sugarbeet lorries are trying to get past it would all be rather than it doesn't need to be uncomfortable. If only we had a central crossing that would be purely cycling pedestrian, or if there's Mr. Cages' submission later this week on behalf of us for an underpass were to be accepted, possibly horses as well.

21:06

Okay, I'm just one one other thing they the lingwood Lane crossing you say it's not there's not a physical crossing that you can say you just be that you're there's the ability to cross the road at the moment.

21:19

You will be aware that along the a 47. As you approach the what's known as the cucumber lane roundabout, the blofield roundabout, there are various places there and I believe afterwards where even though it's dual carriageway, people are able to cross get in the Central reservation and then crosses the final carriageway is rather like that, except this is a single carriageway road at this point. What's happened is that Lynwood lane at one time before the original 69 bypass went in Leawood lane, joined main road Burlingham That's the long link of old road like a giant laybuy where all the properties in main road Burlingham are so joined main road, there's still a stump of big mud lane, off main road, there is a very heavy gate with sort of a warning emblems on it, not to try and go further in a vehicle. But there is a pedestrian way to the right of that and a post and that leads to the edge of the carriageway, or directly opposite Lynwood lane, is undoubtedly an official crossing point left by I imagine the Department of Transport can be done in 69. Europe.

22:38

Okay, all right. Well, thank you very much for that. Before we move on, can I just check that there's nobody else who wishes to speak this morning?

22:56

Okay, I'm saying no. No further Hands up. Mr. Gates. Sorry, if I could just ask you to turn your camera off and just mute yourself. Thank you very much. Thank you for your time. Okay, so in that case, I'll

move on to agenda item four, which is responses by the applicant? Is it Philip Robson or Stephen dag? Who is the lead for the applicant today, if you could just introduce yourself or the relevant person, if you could just introduce yourself, please. Good morning, sir. Philip Robson highways England, good for local highways England.

23:40

And so we've noted the points that Mr. Gates has raised. And many of the responses will come out during the hearing sessions and respect. In any event, perhaps a more detailed response in writing would be more appropriate than responding on the foot.

23:59

Okay, so you don't wish to respond already. Now, you'd rather leave it till the next, the next deadline or Yes. And further hearings? Yes. Okay, well, thank you very much. In that case, I'm going to move on to agenda item five, which is the close of the hearing. First of all, just thank you, Mr. Gates for your participation. In the hearing, it's been helpful and useful to me. Additional recording of the proceedings today will be made available as soon as possible on the project page or the national infrastructure website. In addition, I request that you submit in writing the points that you have made here today for publication on the website. The deadline for these is the deadline for which is Tuesday the ninth of September 2021. I'm going to briefly run through sort of the next stages of this week and the examination. And as set out in my hearing notification letter on the 14th of July 2021, the following hearings will be happening this week. So firstly, there's a further open floor hearing this evening at six o'clock. There's an issue specific hearing in respect to the draft development consent order, which is scheduled for tomorrow morning. With the arrangements conference starting at 930. And the hearing starting at 10 o'clock. There's a compulsory acquisition hearing in two sessions scheduled for the morning and afternoon of this wetness day, with the arrangements conference for the first session starting at 930 in the morning, and the hearing starting at 10 o'clock, and the arrangements conference for the second session starting at 130, and the hearing resuming at 2pm. And finally, there'll be two issues specific hearings into environmental matters scheduled for this thursday friday with the arrangements conference for each starting at 9:30am. And the hearing starting at 10am. Details of these events, including the agendas are available on the project page of the national infrastructure planning website. Once again, I'd like to thank all parties here today and those watching the live streaming or watching digital recording later for the interest in the application. And I'd like to swiftly specifically thank those parties here today who participated in the open floor hearing. The time is now 1026. And I confirm that this open floor hearing for the a 47 Bluefields North Burlington project is now closed. Thank you