

A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvements

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**9.16 Applicant response to submissions made at Open Floor
Hearing 1**

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Rule 8(1)(k)

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Rules 2010

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Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

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(Examination Procedure) Rules 2010**

**A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet
improvements
Development Consent Order 202[]**

**9.16 Applicant's response to submissions
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1 Applicant response to submissions made at Open Floor Hearing 1

- 1.1.1 This document has been prepared by the Applicant to set out its responses to the submissions made at Open Floor Hearing 1.
- 1.1.2 The Applicant has compiled **Table 1-1** below summarising the representations made at the Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1) which was held on Thursday 19th August 2021. The table also includes the Applicant's response to the points raised.
- 1.1.3 There were two speakers at the Open Floor Hearing:
 - a. Jethro Punter on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - b. Guy Quint also on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council.
- 1.1.4 In a number of instances, cross references are made to both responses to relevant representations and written question answers all of which have been submitted at Deadline 1. It is considered more expedient to do this than simply repeat more lengthy responses across multiple documents.

Table 1-1 Applicant response to submissions made at Open Floor Hearing 1

Oral Submission	Applicant Response
Jethro Punter on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council	
<p>Construction phase impacts of the proposed scheme.</p> <p>Displacement of Traffic onto the Local Road Network</p> <p>Mr Punter noted that whilst the Authority fully recognises the benefits that the Scheme will offer upon completion, the Authority is concerned about the impacts of the Scheme during construction upon the local roads, the travelling public and the local communities through which they pass. In particular the Authority is concerned about the information contained in the transport assessment and subsequent information provided by the Applicant which in the Authority's view predicts significant numbers of vehicle trips outside of those using formal diversion routes potentially being displaced onto the local road network.</p> <p>It is the Authority's submission that this will result in a considerable potential burden on</p>	<p>Modelling undertaken by the Applicant has forecast that a proportion of traffic will be displaced on to local roads during the construction phase, mainly as a result of the temporary speed reductions on the A428.</p> <p>The strategic traffic model has been used to provide forecasts during the construction phase. However, the model assumes that drivers have perfect knowledge of the road network and traffic conditions (e.g. delays) thus enabling them to optimise their journey. Diversionary traffic routes were not subject to any coding adjustments within the SATURN traffic model and therefore the traffic forecasts can be considered to be robust, i.e. in terms of avoiding over-representing traffic using diversionary routes and under-representing traffic on alternative routes.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the model has identified those locations that might be expected to experience increases in traffic flows as a</p>

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<p>the Authority in terms of monitoring the effect of changes in traffic flow and composition and the impact on routes that may be sensitive to such changes. The Authority is also concerned that there will be a requirement for ongoing liaison with the local community and a potential need for temporary or permanent works to address arising traffic issues relating to safety, capacity or amenity. Mr Punter does not think this is addressed fully within the transport assessment work, the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) or the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO).</p> <p>When asked by the Panel, Mr Punter explained that he understands that the Applicant will have a degree of local community liaison available but the view of the Authority is that there is likely to be a considerable increase in communication of concerns directly from the community to the Authority, therefore a degree of that consultation will fall to the Authority. The Authority is therefore looking for what support is available to cover the additional resource likely to be required to deal with the increased local consultation – both in terms of staffing and infrastructure required to carry out the additional monitoring.</p>	<p>result of temporary measures which can be addressed in traffic management plans.</p> <p>The Applicant has advised that the Scheme will be supported by dedicated customer and communications teams including the Community Liaison Officer, reducing the burden on Local Authorities. The Applicant will continue to engage with the local communities through the established Community and Technical forums. Further engagement is required with Central Bedfordshire Council to understand the nature of their concerns and agree how the project team can support.</p>
<p>Construction Impacts on Station Road</p> <p>Mr Punter noted that the Authority has a number of specific concerns relating to specific routing and traffic management proposals contained within the OCTMP. In particular, the use of Station Road through Tempsford for construction works associated with the pipeline diversion and works to the rail bridge. Mr Punter explained that there are concerns over the potential increase in abnormal loads or large size vehicles which in the view of residents would be challenging to accommodate along this route. The Panel requested that the Authority provide</p>	<p>The Applicant has advised the local authority, through ongoing engagement on the OCTMP, that access for construction vehicles along Station Road through Tempsford would be limited to specific elements of work including the gas main diversion works and construction of the east abutment of the East Coast Main Line Railway; both of which are early activities. This route is already being used for access to archaeological clearance works and is a minor route which will only be used for the early activities. Once these specific elements of work are completed, it will then</p>

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<p>evidence to support these concerns in their written submissions.</p>	<p>become a prohibited route for construction traffic.</p>
<p>Barford Road Bridge</p> <p>Mr Punter confirmed that on this issue the Authority have had a number of ongoing discussions with the Applicant which have been positive and as such the number of items that they wanted to raise have reduced. The remaining items relate to the future provision for sustainable transport connectivity across the bridge which Mr Punter believes is also one of the written questions which has been raised to the local authorities with regard to NMU provision.</p>	<p>The design of Barford Road is a replacement of the existing infrastructure. The existing infrastructure does not include separate provision for walkers, cyclists and/or horse-riders and there is currently no community severance that would justify this intervention therefore this is not proposed in the design of the Barford Road side road diversion or overbridge.</p> <p>The preliminary design for Barford Road including the bridge crossing was developed and agreed in consultation with Central Bedfordshire Council as the maintaining highway authority prior to the submission of the DCO Application.</p>
<p>Operational phase impacts on the A1</p> <p>Mr Punter explained that the Authority is concerned about the impacts upon the A1 and the lack of mitigation related to the Scheme in this respect. The Authority noted that the A1 is recognised as being at capacity with the need for a significant solution to be found and funded in the long term. It is the Authority's view that if the Scheme results in increased pressure on the network, then these impacts should be mitigated by the Applicant. Mr Punter believes that a joined-up approach is required when considering the multiple infrastructure schemes currently being considered in the location where the impacts have been identified within the submitted transport assessments. The Applicant's proposal is for these to be addressed via a monitor and manage approach; however, the Authority is concerned that the process is not clearly defined in terms of methodology, timing, local authority involvement in that process or funding availability. Mr Punter requested that further clarity on the process is provided as the examination progresses.</p>	<p>The Applicant has set out all impacts on the wider road network (including the A1 junctions) within the Transport Assessment Annex [APP-243].</p> <p>For the A1 corridor near Sandy roundabout, there is a relatively small increase in overall traffic volumes predicted in the AM peak hour, and a minor reduction in overall traffic volumes predicted in the PM peak hour, due to the scheme, in the opening year (2025).</p> <p>The flow changes as a result of the Scheme are forecast to improve network operation in the 2040 AM peak hour as there is a reduction in east to west flows which leads to delay savings for A1 southbound traffic. In the PM peak hour, there is a significant improvement in overall network operation due to the Scheme.</p> <p>The Applicant's preferred strategy for the affected A1 corridor is therefore to Monitor and Manage the corridor including the section around the Sandy Roundabout once the Scheme has opened, and help develop suitable mitigation strategies, if</p>

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	<p>necessary, in consultation with the Local Highway Authority.</p>
<p>Guy Quint on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council</p>	
<p>Air Quality</p> <p>Mr Quint explained that the Authority is concerned that in their view the Applicant has predicted an adverse effect on the Sandy Air Quality Management Area but has not proposed any mitigation for this. Mr Quint submitted that in the air quality monitoring as set out in the Sensitivity Test, using the 2020 Uncertainty Log Data report, the Applicant identified the potential for medium level impacts for seven properties that lie in the existing Sandy Air Quality Management Area. However, Mr Quint said that because this amounts to less than 30 properties being affected, the Applicant has assessed the impact as not significant.</p> <p>In Mr Quint's opinion, the size and scale of the impact is not material and in his view anything that has an adverse impact on the health of the Authority's residents in this sensitive location and is likely to counteract the Authority's efforts to improve air quality in this area is not acceptable, particularly without measures to mitigate the adverse impacts.</p>	<p>It is the Applicant's position that there have been no significant effects predicted as a result of the Scheme and therefore no mitigation measures are required in regard to the Sandy Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).</p> <p>As set out in the Applicant's response to the Authority's Relevant Representation [RR-016], using the traffic models and data generated for the Scheme, the air quality effects within the Sandy AQMA are predicted to be, at worst, imperceptible worsenings, with some small improvements recorded. This is set out in Chapter 5, Air Quality [APP-074] of the Environmental Statement. In summary, predicted changes would be -0.7 to +0.2 µg/m³ in annual mean nitrogen dioxide. An imperceptible change (<1% of the objective value of 40µg/m³) is one so small as to not be measurable and is therefore not considered to be a worsening in air quality at these receptors.</p> <p>These effects are not considered to be significant for air quality based on advice within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA 105 air quality standard applied. As such, no mitigation is required to manage air quality effects associated with the Scheme.</p> <p>As noted in the Open Floor Hearing, a sensitivity test has also been undertaken for an update to the traffic uncertainty log. This assessment is presented in Sensitivity Test using 2020 Uncertainty Log Data [APP-249]. Within this assessment small (1-5% of the objective value) increases in annual mean NO₂ concentrations were predicted at 7 receptors within the Sandy AQMA. A small increase in annual mean</p>

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	<p>concentrations at this number of receptors is not considered to be a significant adverse effect. As such, the outcome of the sensitivity test is consistent with the outcome of the assessment presented in the Environmental Statement; that there are no significant effects predicted for air quality as a result of the Scheme</p>
<p>In Mr Quint's view, the Applicant has not adequately factored in the cumulative impacts on air quality, when combined with the East West Rail Link proposals in particular regarding the proposed new station at Tempsford or St Neots and what that is likely to mean in terms of traffic generation on the A1.</p> <p>Mr Quint explained that the Authority perceives there to be an information disconnect between East West Rail and the Applicant and wants to see an improvement in the information sharing between the two parties.</p>	<p>In relation to the consideration of cumulative impacts with East West Rail (air quality and noise) the Applicant refers to its response to written question 1.17.4.1 part g.</p>
<p>Noise and Vibration</p> <p>Mr Quint explained that the Authority is concerned with the noise report results and the identification of significant adverse impact with an increase on a small number of receptors in the CBC area. This will see noise levels as a result of the new road scheme increase by 9dB and no further mitigation is proposed, beyond the embedded measures already identified, to try and address these significant adverse impacts. In Authority's opinion the Applicant is failing their primary objectives set out in the noise chapter, and the Authority's position is that it is not acceptable to subject even a handful of residents to such significant adverse noise impacts and not identify mitigation measures to alleviate these impacts.</p> <p>The Panel requested that in relation to the Authority's concerns in respect of both the Air Quality and noise impacts that the</p>	<p>Chapter 11, Noise and Vibration [APP-080] of the Environmental Statement comprises an assessment of the likely noise and vibration effects of the Scheme, which includes Rectory Farm and 1-2 The Barns on Little Barford Road. The assessment has identified that Rectory Farm is likely to experience increases in traffic noise on all its facades once the Scheme is opened. The increases range from 2 - 14dB(A) on the various facades.</p> <p>The assessment has also identified that 1-2 The Barns are likely to experience a decrease in traffic noise in the range of 8-10 dB(A) L10,18hr to the front of their properties as a result of the predicted reduction in traffic along Little Barford Road once the Scheme is open to traffic. However, the Scheme introduces a new source of noise to the rear of these properties, which results in increases in traffic noise of approximately 7dB(A)</p>

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<p>Authority's provide evidence in their written submissions to support these concerns.</p>	<p>L10,18hr on their rear facades. As a result, likely significant adverse noise effects are predicted to occur at these properties. Although barriers would provide some traffic noise reduction to these, the likely significant adverse effects are predicted to remain.</p> <p>The Applicant considers its approach to identifying noise mitigation measures is robust. It has been informed by considering those measures which will result in the Scheme meeting the policy aims set out in paragraph 5.195 of the National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPS NN), within the context of Government Policy on sustainable development. Appendix 11.6, NPS NN 2014 Compliance, Noise Insulation Regulations and Noise Important Areas [APP-215] of the Environmental Statement demonstrates how the Scheme complies with these policy aims.</p> <p>The predicted day time traffic noise levels from the Scheme at Rectory Farm once the Scheme is opened are relatively low, these being in the range 45-57 dB(A) L10,18hr. In comparison, the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL) is 55dB(A) L10,18hr. The predicted day time traffic noise levels from the Scheme on the rear facades of The Barns are also relatively low, ranging from 51-57 dB(A) L10,18hr once the Scheme is opened, which are comparable to or below the day-time LOAEL. In comparison, the predicted reduction in traffic on Little Barford Road once the Scheme is open to traffic results in traffic noise levels at the front facades reducing to below the day-time Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL) of 68 dB(A) L10, 18hr.</p> <p>On the basis of the above, the installation of noise barriers alongside both sides of the new dual carriageway at this small number of properties have not been taken</p>

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	forward as they are not considered to be sustainable noise mitigation measures.
<p>The Authority questioned why the further monitoring that was agreed to be undertaken to validate the noise model has now been apparently abandoned and why the Applicant's position is now that these surveys are not required.</p>	<p>The Applicant refers to its responses to Written Questions 1.16.1.1 and 1.16.1.2, which set out the Applicant's position regarding additional noise monitoring.</p>
<p>It is the view of the Authority that the Cumulative noise impact of East West Rail and the Scheme operating at the same time has not been properly assessed. Mr Quint submitted that the Authority expects in theory that the A1 noise will dominate so that there will be little additional impact over and above that already identified, however this needs to be considered and demonstrated.</p>	<p>In relation to the consideration of cumulative impacts with East West Rail (air quality and noise) the Applicant refers to its response to written question 1.17.4.1 part g.</p>