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Sent: 16 March 2021 16:04
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[REDACTED]@aecom.com>
Subject: M54 to M6 Link Road - PROW Routes

Good Afternoon,

Following the publication of the Schedule of Recommended Amendments to the Applicant's draft Development Consent Order submitted at Deadline 6 [REP6-002/REP6-003] on 26 February, we have been looking to incorporate changes to the draft DCO. One of the recommended amendments proposed to introduce a new shortcut route between Cannock Road and the Featherstone Junction West roundabout at M54 Junction 1. This change is detailed as an alteration to Schedule 3 Part 6. We are proposing a solution that differs from that suggested by the ExA so would appreciate confirmation that the new route meets their requirements. The rationale is provided below with a plan attached showing the options considered. The intention would be to submit revised plans/ docs at Deadline 7 as requested.

Detailed modelling of the route Option E2i (light blue alignment) indicates that in order to provide suitable gradients for all users then significant earthworks would be required resulting in a greater degree of woodland loss at this location. Due to levels raising above existing ground level through the woodland with this option by up to 2m, the earthworks vary from zero to up to 6m either side of the alignment at the eastern side of the woodland, resulting in additional woodland loss of approximately 1000m². This would lead to ecological, landscape and visual impacts due to both the woodland loss and creation of the embankments. The route would need to be located north of the location shown on the attached plan to avoid the embankments affecting the watercourse. The route would have reduced the distance travelled by approximately 157m. Due to the increased environmental effects the team considered a slightly longer arrangement Option E2ii (purple) that minimised woodland loss, but the additional route length would erode the benefit the route provides, saving 110m in distance.

Following the above analysis, the team re-considered the Option E1 (orange) route in more detail and confirmed that it could be routed to avoid Root Protection Areas of trees where possible and be constructed to be sensitive to the woodland location. This route provides a greater benefit in terms of route length reduction and starts at a higher level along Cannock Road which reduces the level difference between Cannock Road and the roundabout. This not only reduces the amount of earthworks and tree loss required but also reduces the vertical level difference that users would need to travel between the two points. This route would reduce the distance travelled by approximately 248m. Our proposal is therefore to take forward a route that broadly follows Option E1, but amended to minimise tree loss. We would then add text to the OEMP to ensure construction techniques also minimises loss.

The proposed gradients and alignment for any of the options considered are not considered suitable for cycle users. The gradients and level landing areas (for wheelchairs and pushchairs) would encourage high speeds with a level of discomfort for cycle users. This could also increase the risk of collisions between cyclists and walkers. Due to the relatively short distance between the roundabout and Cannock Road, an alignment with suitable horizontal geometry and vertical gradient could not be provided within the engineering constraints without considerably increasing the distance required to travel. Furthermore, it is considered that cyclists would prefer to use the slacker gradient of the realigned A460 and would be less sensitive to the slight increase in distance travelled. Alternatively, they could use the proposed shortcut route if dismounted.

It is therefore proposed that Option E1 is implemented as part of the Scheme as a footpath.

Are you able to confirm that the above solution is acceptable?

If you require any further information please let me know.

Thanks

[Redacted]

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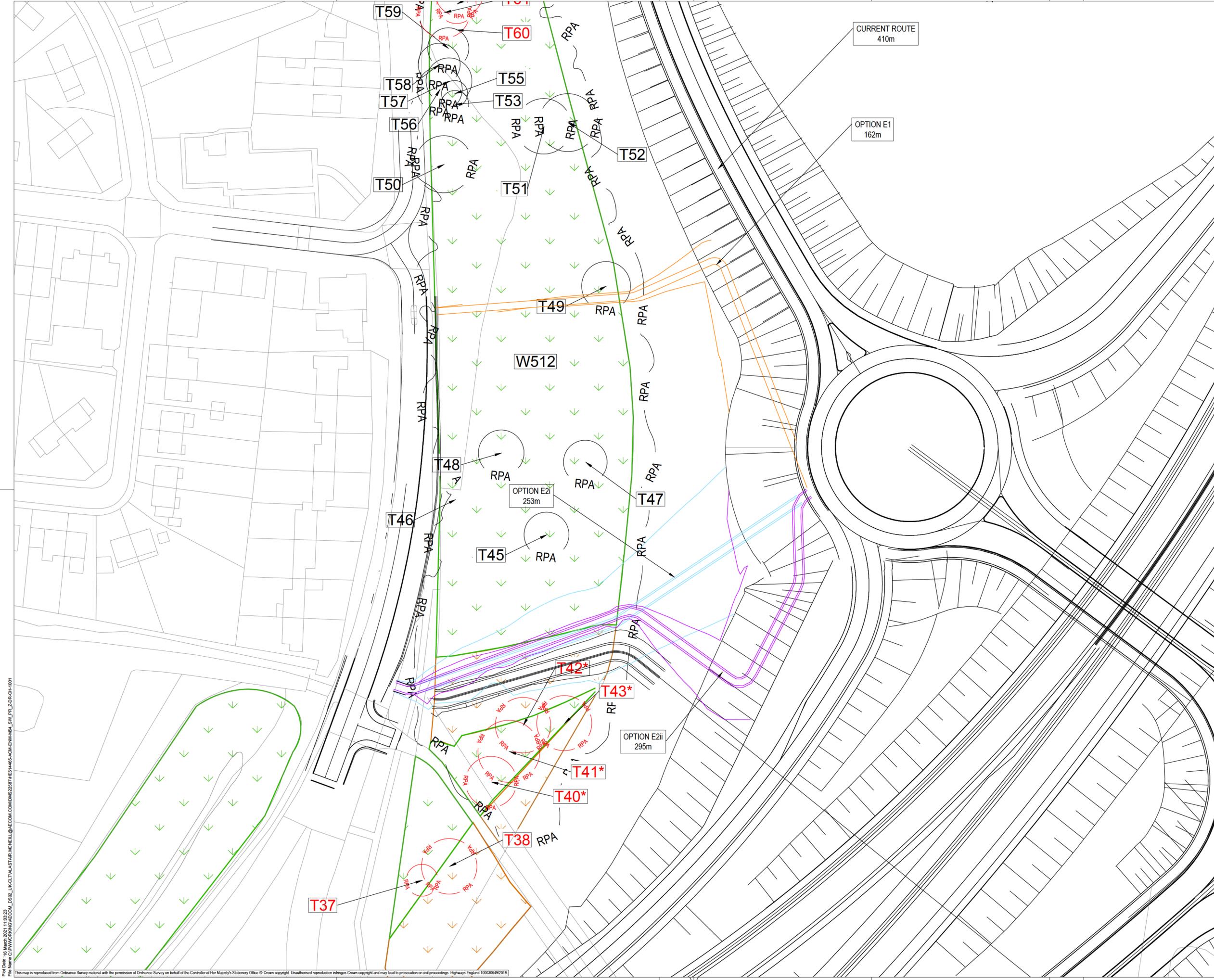
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Revision Details	By	Date	Check	Suffix
		09/03/21		P00.0

Purpose of issue: **INITIAL STATUS OR WIP**

Client: Highways England
 Floor 5
 38 Colmore Square
 Birmingham
 B4 6BN

Project Title: **M54 to M6 Link Road**

Drawing Title: **M54 JUNCTION 1 PROPOSED NMU SHORTCUT**

Designed	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Date
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Internal Project No: 60536736
 Scale: @ A1
 Zone: Non-Motorised Users
 Suitability: SD

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Drawing Number	Originator	Volume	Rev
HE514465 - ACM	- ENM -		P00.0
M54_SW_PR_Z	- DR-CH-1001		
Location	I Type	I Role	I Number

Plot Date: 16 March 2021 11:03:23
 File Name: C:\P\WORKING\AECOM_DRAWING\CLT\T\A\ST\AR\MCH\ELL@AECOM\COND\M54J1\HE514465-ACM-ENM-MSL_SW_PR_Z-DR-CH-1001

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