

Deadline 8 submission in respect of impact at Cart and Horses Junction

Overview

Whilst the Cart and Horses junction has been excluded from the redline of the M3 J9 DCO, Hampshire County Council as Local Highway Authority has articulated in its submissions that the impact the scheme is expected to have on the safety and performance of the junction would be unacceptable without mitigation, due to the significant increase in traffic flows through the junction on the A33. This is supported by analysis of the personal injury accident record for the junction.

In its Local Impact Report, the County Council set out its concerns regarding the impact of the M3 J9 DCO Scheme on the safe operation of the Cart and Horses junction. At the Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH 2), in response to questions raised by the Examining Authority, the County Council set out its position with reference to the accident record of the junction which included six accidents in the most recent five-year period, including one fatality. A common factor in accidents recorded at the junction was that they involved vehicles travelling north through the junction on the A33. The forecast increase in this movement of 91 and 171 vehicles in the AM and PM peaks respectively is therefore of significant concern to the Local Highway Authority. This level of increase in traffic travelling north through the junction, in its view, would have an unacceptable impact on the safety of the junction given that it is this movement that is associated with the accidents at the junction.

Update

At the ISH 2, the County Council referenced the public engagement that took place over the summer regarding two possible improvement schemes at the Cart and Horses Junction which are considered to provide mitigation for the increase flows outlined above. The options that have been designed include a roundabout junction improvement and a signalled controlled junction.

The public engagement highlighted that over 60% of respondents actively avoid the junction due to concerns about its operation. The outcome of the engagement was that there was overwhelming support for improvements at the junction to provide a safer layout, and strong support for the roundabout option. However, further technical work would be required to determine which option should be delivered at the junction, albeit both options would provide the capacity to safely accommodate the forecast additional traffic from the DCO Scheme.

The County Council has had initial discussions with the Applicant regarding the practicalities of delivering improvements to the junction alongside the DCO Scheme and joint working where possible to minimise disruption. However, the County Council has been unable to reach agreement with the applicant in respect of securing mitigation towards this junction as a result of the DCO scheme.

Mitigation request and Community Infrastructure Levy Regulation 122 compliance

The County Council's position is that the impact of the DCO Scheme on the junction can be mitigated by securing improvements to the junction as part of any DCO consent. These improvements would take the form of either a roundabout layout which is currently estimated to cost £5.5 million, or an alternative signal junction which is currently estimated at £3.9 million.

The County Council consider that the M3 Junction 9 Scheme would have an unacceptable impact on the safe operation of the Cart and Horses junction if left unmitigated. The obligation to deliver the necessary improvements is considered to be in accordance with the CIL regulations in that:

- 1) It has been demonstrated that the improvement works at the Cart and Horses junction are necessary to accommodate the additional traffic forecast from the Scheme. Without the improvement works, the impact on the safe operation of the junction would be unacceptable and not in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 111;
- 2) The improvements required are directly linked to the proposed development, as the junction is located on the boundary of the redline for the DCO works and the forecast traffic flow changes through the junction as a result of the Scheme necessitate the works; and
- 3) The improvements are considered to be fairly and reasonably related in scale to the development as the estimated cost of the improvements in relation to the overall Scheme costs are between 2% and 3%.

Conclusion

The County Council has been consistent in its request for mitigation at the Cart and Horses junction from initial pre-application responses through to representations during the examination period. The impact of the Scheme on the junction is considered to be significant and would lead to an unacceptable impact on the safe operation of the junction.

The mitigation in the form of either a roundabout scheme or a signal junction is supported by the recent public engagement that the County Council undertook. It has been demonstrated that an improvement scheme to mitigate the unacceptable impacts of the Scheme in this location is deliverable.

In the absence of agreement with the applicant regarding the requirement to mitigate the impact on the junction, the County Council requests that the Examining Authority consider the requirement to secure the improvements if it is minded to recommend the DCO for approval.