

A417 Missing Link
TR010056

6.2 Environmental Statement
Chapter 4 Environmental
Assessment Methodology

Planning Act 2008

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)
Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and
Procedure) Regulations 2009

Volume 6

May 2021

Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure Planning
(Applications: Prescribed Forms
and Procedure) Regulations 2009**

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Development Consent Order 202[x]

**6.2 Environmental Statement
Chapter 4 Environmental Assessment Methodology**

Regulation Number:	5(2)(a)
Planning Inspectorate Scheme Reference	TR010056
Application Document Reference	6.2
Author:	A417 Missing Link

Version	Date	Status of Version
C01	May 2021	Application Submission

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4 Environmental assessment methodology

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) details the approach taken to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the scheme. The chapter introduces the requirements of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and sets out the overall approach to the assessment of the likely significant effects of the scheme.
- 4.1.2 The adopted scope, approach and method of assessment for each topic are outlined in the topic specific ES Chapters 5-15 (Document Reference 6.2), with further details such as survey methods provided.

4.2 Environmental scoping

- 4.2.1 An EIA Scoping Report¹ was submitted by Highways England to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 14 May 2019. The Scoping Report sets out the proposed scope of work and methods to be applied in carrying out the EIA, and the proposed structure of the ES.
- 4.2.2 PINS reviewed and consulted on the EIA Scoping Report and published a Scoping Opinion on 24 June 2019. The Scoping Opinion is included in ES Appendix 4.1 The Planning Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion (Document Reference 6.4).
- 4.2.3 The Scoping Opinion and the comments from the consultees has been considered in undertaking the EIA and in preparing the ES. Responses to the Scoping Opinion and comments from the consultees are included in ES Appendix 4.2 Responses to Scoping Opinion (Document Reference 6.4).
- 4.2.4 The EIA Scoping Report states that topic assessments are based on DMRB Volume 11. DMRB standards were updated in 2019. The ES is written in accordance with the requirements presented in the new DMRB standards under "Sustainability & Environment".
- 4.2.5 It is considered that the EIA Scoping Report (May 2019) is valid and the changes to the standards and the scheme are capable of being assessed accordingly within the relevant topic chapters (ES Chapters 5-14 (Document Reference 6.2)).
- 4.2.6 ES Appendix 4.5 Changes to scope and methodology (Document Reference 6.4) outlines the changes in scope and methodology since the submission of the Scoping Report in May 2019.

Scope of assessment

Scoped in

- 4.2.7 The environmental assessment considers the following environmental factors in accordance with Schedule 4 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations)².
- Air quality
 - Cultural heritage
 - Landscape and visual
 - Biodiversity

- Geology and soils
- Material assets and waste
- Noise and vibration
- Population and human health
- Road drainage and the water environment
- Climate

4.2.8 The ES also considers the vulnerability of the proposed development to major accidents or disasters (within the appropriate ES chapters) that are relevant to that development. This is covered in further detail in section 4.9 of this chapter.

Scoped out

Heat and radiation

4.2.9 The EIA Regulations also introduced the requirement for the emission of heat and radiation to be considered. The scheme does not introduce any sources of heat and radiation and there are no sensitive receptors (for example, hospitals or schools) within the route corridor. Hence the topic of heat and radiation has been scoped out based on negligible risk.

4.2.10 PINS stated in the Scoping Opinion that “*owing to the nature of the Proposed Development it is considered unlikely that heat and radiation effects associated with the proposals are likely to arise. Given this, any further assessment has been scoped out. The Inspectorate considers that this is a reasonable approach to adopt.*”

Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF)

4.2.11 In response to the Scoping Report, Public Health England (PHE) requested that the possible health impacts of Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF) should be considered. The proposed development does not impact any receptors from potential sources of EMF due it being a road construction scheme. There are no electrical installations such as substations and connecting underground cables or overhead lines from the scheme, therefore there are no health impacts associated with EMF. The EMF have subsequently been scoped out of the assessment.

Transboundary effects

4.2.12 Regulation 32 of the EIA Regulations requires the consideration of any likely significant effects on the environment of another European Economic Area State.

4.2.13 Guidance on the consideration of transboundary effects is provided in PINS Advice Note Twelve: development with significant transboundary impacts consultation³.

4.2.14 On 11 October 2019, PINS confirmed on behalf of the Secretary of State, they have undertaken a transboundary screening of the scheme. This concluded that the scheme is unlikely to have a significant effect either alone or cumulatively on the environment in another European Economic Area State. On this basis transboundary effects have been scoped out.

4.3 Surveys and predictive techniques and methods

Requirements of DMRB

- 4.3.1 All aspects of the development, environmental assessment and design requirements of motorways and all-purpose trunk road projects are governed by standards set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB).
- 4.3.2 All EIA work and environmental reporting on the scheme has been undertaken in accordance with the standards set out in DMRB, including the following:
- DMRB LA 101 - *Introduction to Environmental Assessment*⁴
 - DMRB LA 102 - *Screening projects for Environmental Impact Assessment*⁵
 - DMRB LA 103 - *Scoping projects for environmental assessment*⁶
 - DMRB LA 104 - *Environmental assessment and monitoring*⁷
- 4.3.3 DMRB LA 101 sets out three 'levels' of EIA assessment and reporting: 'scoping', 'simple' and 'detailed'. These levels are not intended to be sequential (i.e. applied one after another in order), but 'consequential', in that the level to be applied at any stage of environmental reporting is determined on a topic-by-topic basis according to the following factors:
- The results of any previous assessment work (especially the Scoping Report).
 - The likely scale or significance of impact (not the scale of development).
 - The nature of the decision-making process to which the report relates.
 - The degree of uncertainty about the potential impact of the scheme.
- 4.3.4 DMRB defines topic specific requirements for each level of assessment and reporting. The levels of assessment to be applied to the various topics are given in each of the specialist topic chapters (ES Chapters 5-14 (Document Reference 6.2)).

Development Consent Order (DCO) Boundary and study area

- 4.3.5 The DCO Boundary is based on the land anticipated to be required temporarily and/or permanently for the construction, operation and maintenance of the scheme. The Land Plans (Document Reference 2.2) illustrate temporary and/or permanent acquisition of land and/or rights as part of the DCO Application.
- 4.3.6 Since completing both the 2019 Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) report⁸ and the 2020 PEI report⁹, the design of the scheme has continued to be developed and the DCO Boundary has been reviewed and refined as appropriate to reflect feedback from consultation. The changes to the DCO Boundary have been discussed and agreed with landowners and relevant stakeholders, where appropriate. The development and refinement of the DCO Boundary has not led to any changes that materially affect the content of the scoping opinion.
- 4.3.7 Study areas have been defined individually for each environmental factor in the relevant topic chapters (ES Chapters 5-14 (Document Reference 6.2)), taking account of DMRB, the geographic scope of the potential impacts relevant to that topic or of the information required to assess those impacts. The study areas are described within each relevant chapter of the ES.
- 4.3.8 The study area for each environmental factor incorporates the DCO Boundary as a minimum for the scheme.

4.3.9 The EIA and ES is based on the DCO Boundary presented in the DCO Application.

Identification of baseline and future conditions

4.3.10 In order to identify the effects of the scheme on the environment, it is important to understand the environment that would be affected by the scheme (the 'baseline conditions'). Understanding the baseline allows the measurement of changes that would be caused by the scheme.

4.3.11 The baseline conditions are not necessarily the same as those that exist at the current time; they are the conditions that would exist in the absence of the scheme either (a) at the time that construction is expected to start, for impacts arising from construction or, (b) at the time that the scheme is expected to be open to traffic, for impacts arising from the operation of the scheme. Therefore, the identification of the baseline and future conditions involves predicting changes that are likely to happen in the intervening period, for reasons unrelated to the scheme. This entails taking current conditions and committed development into consideration and using experience and professional judgment to predict what the baseline and future conditions might look like prior to start of construction and operation.

4.3.12 It is essential for an EIA that sufficient data is obtained to form the basis of the assessment. Each topic chapter includes a description of the current (baseline) environmental conditions and future baseline scenario. This is based on the study area identified for each topic chapter.

4.3.13 The ES presents baseline information representing the conditions of the environment at the time of writing. When describing the future baseline scenario for each environmental factor within the respective topic chapters, readily available information such as local plans and climate change scenario data has been utilised to provide a description of the natural changes in the local environment over an appropriate timescale that the datasets support.

Defining assessment years and scenarios

4.3.14 The assessment of effects in this ES involves comparing a scenario without the scheme and scenario with the scheme. These are referred to as the Do-Minimum and Do-Something scenarios respectively.

4.3.15 The Do-Minimum scenario represents the future baseline with minimal interventions and without new infrastructure.

4.3.16 The likely significant environmental effects for Do-Something scenarios are assessed for the baseline year and future year, or series of future years, depending on the environmental factor.

4.3.17 For assessing construction phase effects, the baseline year represents the conditions prior to construction starting. If the DCO is granted, construction is expected to start in early 2023 and the scheme is expected to be open to traffic in 2026.

4.3.18 The opening year when the scheme is to become operational, i.e. open to traffic is 2026. The future year scenario (a period after the scheme opens for traffic) is 2041, 15 years after opening, when mitigation measures are likely to have achieved their desired outcome.

- 4.3.19 For assessing operation phase effects (such as the effects of traffic on noise and air quality) the baseline year represents the situation prior to any effect e.g. opening the scheme to traffic.
- 4.3.20 As noted in ES Chapter 2 (Document Reference 6.2), there are two future baseline years:
- Opening year - when the scheme is to become operational, i.e. open to traffic is 2026.
 - Design year - a future year scenario 15 years after the opening year when mitigation measures are likely to have achieved their desired outcome. For this scheme it is 2041.
- 4.3.21 Where there are any potential differences in the 2026 and 2041 future baseline conditions, this is identified within the 'Future baseline' sub-section within the 'Baseline conditions' section of each topic chapter (if relevant).
- 4.3.22 Current scientific knowledge and methods of assessment have been used to identify foreseeable changes.

Cumulative effects

- 4.3.23 Cumulative effects result from multiple actions on receptors over time and are generally additive or interactive (synergistic) in nature. They can also be considered as effects resulting from incremental changes caused by other past, present or reasonably foreseeable actions together with the scheme, identified as:
- Combined effects from a single project – the scheme (i.e. the interrelationship between different environmental factors where numerous different effects impact a single receptor).
 - Cumulative effects from different projects (together with the scheme being assessed).
- 4.3.24 The methodology for cumulative effects with other proposed developments is presented in ES Chapter 15 Assessment of cumulative effects (Document Reference 6.2). The cumulative effects of the scheme in conjunction with other proposed developments have been assessed and the findings are presented within the ES.

4.4 General assessment assumptions and limitations

Dealing with uncertainty

- 4.4.1 In assessing the effects of the scheme from an environmental perspective, the principle of the 'Rochdale Envelope' has been applied, in accordance with PINS advice note nine: Rochdale Envelope¹⁰. The advice note states:

The 'Rochdale Envelope' approach is employed where the nature of the Proposed Development means that some details of the whole project have not been confirmed (for instance the precise dimensions of structures) when the application is submitted, and flexibility is sought to address uncertainty.

Limits of Deviation

- 4.4.2 Limits of Deviation (LoD) are the limits within which the DCO will authorise the A417 to be constructed. Changes to the preliminary scheme design may occur typically as a result of ground conditions or environmental factors which it may not

be possible to identify in the period prior to the DCO Application. The LoD allow for a small tolerance with respect to any distances and points shown on the plans that accompany the DCO Application. All works would take place within the LoD, the extent of which have been subject to full consideration as part of the EIA for the scheme.

4.4.3 The DCO, once granted, will allow for the scheme to be constructed anywhere within the maximum extent of the defined LoD. This would include a vertical deviation and a lateral deviation. As a result, there is some necessary flexibility as to the exact scheme detail taken through to construction. A series of maximum LoD have been established and are defined in Chapter 2: The project (Document Reference 6.2).

4.4.4 The LoD are contained in the DCO and have been considered within the topic specific chapters of the ES (ES Chapters 5-15 (Document Reference 6.2)), having regard to the scope for change from the highway alignment. The assessment approach outlined here accords with the Rochdale Envelope approach outlined in this chapter.

4.5 Significance criteria

Environmental assessment methodology

4.5.1 The EIA process has taken into account relevant DMRB standards noted in section 4.3 Surveys and predictive techniques and methods. Other topic specific legislation and good practice guidance has been considered and details of these can be found in the topic chapters within this ES, (ES Chapters 5-14 (Document Reference 6.2)).

4.5.2 The assessment of each environmental factor forms a separate chapter of this ES. For each chapter within this ES, the following have been addressed in conformity to DMRB and the EIA Regulations.

- Legislative and policy framework.
- Assessment methodology.
- Assessment assumptions and limitations.
- Definition of the study area.
- Description of the baseline environmental conditions.
- Identification of potential impacts (including effects arising during the construction and operational phases).
- Identification of design, mitigation and enhancement measures, where appropriate.
- An assessment of the likely significant effects of the scheme.
- Details of any likely monitoring requirements.

4.5.3 Each topic chapter provides details of the methodology for baseline data collection and evaluation of effects based on EIA good practice guidance documents and relevant topic specific guidance where available.

Assessment of effects

4.5.4 The EIA process requires the identification of the likely significant environmental effects of the scheme. This includes consideration of the likely effects during the construction and operational phases of the scheme.

4.5.5 DMRB LA 104 provides a standard approach to the determination of significance of environmental effects for highway schemes. This includes consideration of the following;

- Assigning value (or sensitivity) of receptors
- Assigning magnitude of impact
- Assigning significance

Assigning value of receptors

4.5.6 Receptors are defined as individual environmental features that have the potential to be affected by a scheme. For each topic, baseline studies have informed the identification of potential environmental receptors. Some receptors are more sensitive to certain environmental effects than others. The value (or sensitivity) of a receptor may depend, for example, on its frequency, extent of occurrence or conservation status at an international, national, regional or local level.

4.5.7 Value (or sensitivity) is defined within each topic chapter and takes into account factors including the following:

- Vulnerability of the receptor to change
- Recoverability of the receptor (ability of recover from a temporary impact)
- Importance of the receptor

4.5.8 As a general guide, the definitions set out in Table 3.2N of DMRB LA 104 have been taken into account (except where topic standard/guidance requires otherwise). This includes a five-point scale for assigning environmental value (or sensitivity) as shown in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1 Environmental value (sensitivity) and descriptions

Value (sensitivity) of receptor/resource	Typical description
Very high	Very high importance and rarity, international scale and very limited potential for substitution.
High	High importance and rarity, national scale, and limited potential for substitution.
Medium	High or medium importance and rarity, regional scale, limited potential for substitution.
Low	Low or medium importance and rarity, local scale.
Negligible	Very low importance and rarity, local scale.

Based on Table 3.2N of DMRB LA 104

Magnitude of impact

4.5.9 In line with DMRB LA 104 the magnitude of impacts on receptors are reported within the environmental assessments. The descriptions for magnitude of impact (as outlined in Table 4-2) are applied by the scheme. Where relevant, individual topic chapters set out variations in magnitude description requirements.

4.5.10 For each topic, the likely environmental impacts have been identified within the ES. The likely environmental impact arising from the scheme has been identified and compared with the baseline (the situation without the scheme). Impacts are divided into those occurring during the construction and operation phases.

4.5.11 As a general guide, the definitions set out in Table 3.4N of DMRB LA 104 have been taken into account (except where topic standard/guidance requires otherwise). This includes a five-point scale for assigning impact magnitude as shown in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2 Magnitude of impact and typical descriptions

Magnitude of impact		Typical criteria descriptions
Major	Adverse	Loss of resource and/or quality and integrity of resource; severe damage to key characteristics, features or elements.
	Beneficial	Large scale or major improvement of resource quality; extensive restoration or enhancement; major improvement of attribute quality.
Moderate	Adverse	Loss of resource, but not adversely affecting the integrity; partial loss of/damage to key characteristics, features or elements.
	Beneficial	Benefit to, or addition of, key characteristics, features or elements; improvement of attribute quality.
Minor	Adverse	Some measurable change in attributes, quality or vulnerability; minor loss of, or alteration to, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements.
	Beneficial	Minor benefit to, or addition of, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements; some beneficial impact on attribute or a reduced risk of negative impact occurring.
Negligible	Adverse	Very minor loss or detrimental alteration to one or more characteristics, features or elements.
	Beneficial	Very minor benefit to or positive addition of one or more characteristics, features or elements.
No change		No loss or alteration of characteristics, features or elements; no observable impact in either direction.

Based on Table 3.4N of DMRB LA 104

Assigning significance

- 4.5.12 The significance of effects must be reported in accordance with the EIA Regulations.
- 4.5.13 DMRB LA 104 recognises *“the approach to assigning significance of effect relies on reasoned argument, the professional judgement of competent experts and using effective consultation to ensure the advice and views of relevant stakeholders are taken into account.”*
- 4.5.14 Each ES topic chapter defines the approach taken to the assessment of significance. Where appropriate, topic chapters have adopted the general approach set out in Table 3.7 within DMRB LA 104 (see Table 4-3). Where relevant, individual environmental factors have set out variations in significance description requirements.

Table 4-3 Significance categories and typical descriptions

Significance category	Typical description
Very large	Effects at this level are material in the decision-making process
Large	Effects at this level are likely to be material in the decision-making process
Moderate	Effects at this level can be considered to be material decision-making factors
Slight	Effects at this level are not material in the decision-making process

Significance category	Typical description
Neutral	No effects or those that are beneath levels of perception, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error

Based on Table 3.7 of DMRB LA 104

4.5.15 The evaluation of significance takes into account industry and professional standards and guidance, codes of practice, policy objectives, regulations or standards, advice from statutory consultees and other stakeholders, as well as expert judgement of the EIA practitioners, based on specialist experience. For some topics, a simplified or quantitative approach is considered appropriate as set out in Table 3.8.1 within DMRB LA 104 (see Table 4-4).

Table 4-4 Significance matrix

Environmental value (sensitivity)	Magnitude of impact (degree of change)					
	No change	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	
Very high	Neutral	Slight	Moderate or large	Large or very large	Very large	
High	Neutral	Slight	Slight or moderate	Moderate or large	Large or very large	
Medium	Neutral	Neutral or slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate or large	
Low	Neutral	Neutral or slight	Neutral or slight	Slight	Slight or moderate	
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral or slight	Neutral or slight	Slight	

Based on Table 3.8.1 of DMRB LA 104

4.5.16 Where Table 4-4 includes two significance categories, evidence is provided to support the reporting of a single significance category.

4.5.17 Slight, moderate, large or very large effects may be beneficial or adverse. Except where guidance requires otherwise, the significance of effect is described using the terms **very large, large, moderate, slight and neutral**. In terms of the EIA Regulations, 'significant' effects are generally those where the significance of the effect is 'moderate' or greater. Effects determined to be slight or neutral are deemed 'non-significant' and as such are not reported in detail in the ES and do not require specific mitigation. The exception to this is where the combination of multiple slight effects has the potential to lead to a significant (i.e. moderate or above) cumulative effect.

4.5.18 Not all environmental factors use the above approach. For example, some topics do not use a matrix-based approach but instead use numerical values to identify impacts (e.g. noise and vibration). The approach for each environmental factor is defined in the relevant DMRB standard.

4.5.19 The assessment of the significance of environmental effects covers the following factors:

- The receptors/resources (natural and human) which would be affected and the pathways for such effects.
- The geographic importance, sensitivity or value of receptors/resources.

- The duration (long or short term); permanence (permanent or temporary) and changes in significance (increase or decrease).
- Reversibility - e.g. Is the change reversible or irreversible, permanent or temporary.
- Environmental and health standards (e.g. Local air quality standards) being threatened.
- Feasibility and mechanisms for delivering mitigating measures, e.g. Is there evidence of the ability to legally deliver the environmental assumptions which are the basis for the assessment?

4.6 Duplication of assessment

- 4.6.1 The ES has been prepared, taking into account other relevant environmental assessments with a view to avoiding duplication of assessment.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 4.6.2 A HRA has been undertaken for each Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) that could be affected by the scheme in accordance with the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017*. The HRA is included in the DCO Application as Document Reference 6.5.

Water Framework Directive (WFD) Compliance Assessment

- 4.6.3 A WFD Compliance Assessment has been undertaken and reported in ES Appendix 13.2 WFD Compliance Assessment (Document Reference 6.4). This considers the extent to which the scheme could impact on the current and future target WFD status of the water bodies. The results are presented in ES Chapter 13 Road Drainage and Water Environment (Document Reference 6.2).

Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)

- 4.6.4 An FRA has been undertaken to consider the influence of the scheme on local flooding and the mitigation measures embedded in the scheme design. This is provided as Appendix 13.3 Flood Risk Assessment (Document Reference 6.4).

Case for the Scheme

- 4.6.5 The Case for the Scheme and NPSNN Accordance Table includes consideration of the scheme's compliance with planning policy. This is provided as part of the DCO Application as Document Reference 7.1.

4.7 Design, mitigation and enhancement measures

- 4.7.1 One of the key requirements of EIA is that measures are taken to avoid, reduce and, where possible, remedy significant adverse environmental effects. These are termed mitigation measures and their development is part of an iterative EIA process.
- 4.7.2 Environmental assessment and design shall incorporate mitigation measures using a hierarchical system as per Table 4-5.

Table 4-5 Mitigation hierarchy

Mitigation hierarchy	Description
1 avoidance and prevention	Design and mitigation measures to prevent the effect (e.g. alternative design options or avoidance of environmentally sensitive sites).
2 reduction	Where avoidance is not possible, then mitigation is used to lessen the magnitude or significance of effects.
3 compensation/remediation	Where it is not possible to avoid or reduce a significant adverse effect, measures to offset the effect have been considered.
4 enhancement	Where possible enhancement measures have been incorporated into the scheme. Enhancement measures are considered to be over and above any avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures required to remove the adverse impacts of the scheme. Enhancement measures are not factored into the determination of residual significant effects. However, the potential additional benefits are still identified within the ES.

4.7.3 Mitigation measures have been developed in response to the findings of surveys, assessments and consultation. These mitigation measures are designed principally to address impacts whose occurrence, timing and location can be predicted in advance and are intrinsic to the design of the scheme.

4.7.4 Environmental assessment shall report on the following categories of mitigation:

- **Embedded mitigation:** project design principles adopted to avoid or prevent adverse environmental effects.
- **Essential mitigation:** measures required to reduce and if possible offset likely significant adverse environmental effects, in support of the reported significance of effects in the environmental assessment.

Embedded mitigation

4.7.5 The first preference in mitigating any impact is to seek engineering design measures to entirely avoid or eliminate the impact. Where this is not possible, the mitigation should seek to reduce the magnitude of the impact. Impacts can be avoided or reduced, for instance, through changes to the horizontal or vertical alignment of the scheme, junction strategy or other aspects of the scheme layout; or through changes in the methods and/or materials to be used in construction.

4.7.6 The scheme assessed within this ES includes a number of engineering design measures that have been designed to avoid or reduce significant adverse environmental effects arising, where practicable. Those measures forming part of the scheme design are summarised within ES Chapter 2 The Project (Document Reference 6.2). Such measures are therefore not proposed or reported in the topic chapters of the ES as mitigation.

4.7.7 The embedded mitigation measures identified in ES Chapter 2 The Project (Document Reference 6.2) are summarised in the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC), contained within the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) in ES Appendix 2.1 Environmental Management Plan (Document Reference 6.4).

Essential mitigation

- 4.7.8 Where avoidance of an impact through engineering design measures is not possible, or is only partly effective, further mitigation measures may be required. Essential mitigation falls into three broad categories:
- Measures that do not remove an impact but make it less significant. A typical example on the scheme includes planting trees to screen views of the road where it is visually intrusive.
 - The like-for-like replacement of a feature that would be lost. For example, this includes the creation of hedgerows on the scheme alignment to replace those that cannot be avoided.
 - The provision of a beneficial effect that is related to the impact but is not a like-for-like replacement of the feature to be lost. A typical example would be the construction of a bridge to replace an existing culvert, allowing associated watercourse renaturalisation and improving the wildlife corridor function.
- 4.7.9 Mitigation measures can produce adverse as well as beneficial effects e.g. an environmental noise barrier can increase visual intrusion.
- 4.7.10 Measures identified during the EIA process to further prevent, reduce and, where possible, offset any adverse effects on the environment are described in the relevant topic chapters and shown on ES Figure 7.11 Environmental Masterplan (Document Reference 6.3).
- 4.7.11 The essential mitigation measures identified in the topic chapters of the ES are summarised in the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC), contained within the EMP in ES Appendix 2.1 Environmental Management Plan (Document Reference 6.4). Details of essential mitigation are also included in ES Figure 7.11 Environmental Masterplan (Document Reference 6.3) and described in the relevant ES topic chapters (ES Chapters 5-15 (Document Reference 6.2)).
- 4.7.12 The significance of an effect is reported after an assessment of the effectiveness of the design and mitigation measures (the residual effect). Assigning significance to an effect after an assessment of the effectiveness of the design allows for positive contribution of all mitigation that is effective, deliverable and committed.

Construction mitigation

- 4.7.13 There are potential impacts to the environment that could occur as a result of the construction process including incidents during construction. The timing and location of these impacts cannot be accurately predicted at this stage. An example would include spillages of fuels, oils or other chemicals.
- 4.7.14 The assessment considers reasonably foreseeable construction impacts. The likelihood of occurrence and the severity of any such incidents can be reduced through good construction site management practices. To help ensure adequate consideration of risks identified during the EIA which would relate to the construction period, an EMP has been prepared in ES Appendix 2.1 Environmental Management Plan (Document Reference 6.4). This sets out how construction stage mitigation measures would be implemented to manage those risks and certain requirements for the contractors.
- 4.7.15 The EMP details the roles and responsibilities, control measures, training and briefing procedures, risk assessments and monitoring systems to be employed during planning and construction for all relevant environmental factor areas.

- 4.7.16 Each ES topic chapter describes measures identified to date to be adopted during construction to avoid and reduce environmental effects, such as pollution control measures.

Implementation and enforcement of mitigation

- 4.7.17 Mitigation will be secured by way of requirements in the DCO. The scheme must comply with these requirements.
- 4.7.18 The EMP in ES Appendix 2.1 Environmental Management Plan (Document Reference 6.4) will be implemented and is secured through a Requirement of the DCO. This will be approved in line with the EMP submitted with the DCO Application as part of the ES.
- 4.7.19 Contractors at detailed design and construction will be legally obliged to comply with the Requirements of the DCO.

Environmental enhancement

- 4.7.20 Enhancement is a measure that is over and above what is required to mitigate the adverse effects of a scheme. Enhancement opportunities have been considered throughout the design development and are reported within the ES topic chapters.
- 4.7.21 The following items may be relevant to the design and delivery of enhancement opportunities:
- National and local policy requirements.
 - Policy and performance requirements of the overseeing organisation.
 - Scheme specific objectives.
- 4.7.22 Where essential mitigation is being delivered for other purposes, this offers an enhancement opportunity where it does not compromise the original objective of that land.

4.8 Monitoring

- 4.8.1 Where the environmental assessment reported in the ES concludes that there are significant adverse environmental effects, schemes must undertake proportionate monitoring of associated mitigation measures, in accordance with the EIA Regulations.
- 4.8.2 Mitigation and monitoring measures have been identified and developed through the design and environmental assessment process and documented in the ES.
- 4.8.3 Monitoring measures should be undertaken as required during construction, handover and through the operation and maintenance periods. These measures are secured by the EMP in ES Appendix 2.1 Environmental Management Plan (Document Reference 6.4).
- 4.8.4 DMRB LA 101 states the purpose of monitoring is to:
- Ensure measures envisaged to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset significant adverse effects on the environment are delivered.
 - Build data on the effectiveness of design and mitigation measures thereby driving improvement in environmental performance for future projects.
 - Satisfy licence / permit requirements (where applicable).

- Identify remedial action as a consequence of underperformance or failure of mitigation.

4.8.5 The results of monitoring shall be reported through updates of the EMP during construction and handover phases.

4.9 Major accidents and disasters

Introduction

- 4.9.1 This section presents the findings of the route-wide assessment of likely significant environmental effects arising directly from the scheme if it were to be affected by a major accident and/or disaster ('major events'), in accordance with Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations.
- 4.9.2 The legislative context is described in ES Appendix 4.3 Major accidents and disasters legislation and methodology (Document Reference 6.4).
- 4.9.3 The EIA Regulations require consideration of the expected significant adverse effects of the scheme on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the scheme to major events. This section sets out the legislation and methodology behind the assessment and presents a baseline of existing sources of risk assessment to provide an assessment of the probability, likelihood and frequency of a major event deriving from the vulnerability of the scheme.
- 4.9.4 The study area for this assessment is the DCO Boundary of the scheme plus a 500m buffer around the scheme.
- 4.9.5 The methodology is provided in ES Appendix 4.3 Major accidents and disasters legislation and methodology (Document Reference 6.4). This describes the approach used to assess the potential for significant effects (during construction and operation) of major accidents and disasters and the assumptions and exclusions.

Terminology

- 4.9.6 For the purpose of this assessment, a major event is defined as an event that threatens immediate or delayed loss of life or permanent injury and/or serious long lasting or permanent damage to the environment and requires the use of resources beyond those of the client or its contractors to manage. This could be internal to the scheme (e.g. retaining wall collapse) or an external event that could affect the scheme (e.g. a flood).
- 4.9.7 A disaster is defined as a naturally occurring phenomenon such as an extreme weather event (e.g. storm, flood, temperature) or ground-related hazard events (e.g. subsidence, landslide, earthquake) with the potential to cause an event or situation that meets the definition of a major event.
- 4.9.8 Major events shall include both man-made and naturally occurring events.
- 4.9.9 Vulnerability refers to 'exposure and resilience' of the scheme to the risk of a major accident and/or natural disaster in the context of the EIA Regulations. An identified, unplanned event, which is considered relevant to the scheme and has the potential to be a major accident or natural disaster, subject to assessment of its potential to result in significant adverse effects on an environmental receptor, is referred to as a 'risk event'.

Baseline conditions

- 4.9.10 The baseline conditions for the study area are discussed in each of the relevant ES chapters (ES Chapters 5-15 (Document Reference 6.2)).
- 4.9.11 In addition, the assessment of major incidents and disasters shall consider previous major events in the study area as part of the baseline. The main sources of historical major events in the area of the scheme are vehicle collisions due to inclement weather.
- 4.9.12 Snow is known to fall on Crickley Hill, which often causes long delays on the A417. On 15 November 2019 this caused widespread flooding resulting in school closures and long delays for motorists especially from the Air Balloon roundabout through Birdlip and onto Cowley¹¹.
- 4.9.13 Low visibility due to fog is common around the Air Balloon roundabout. This has been known to cause road accidents and long queues¹².

Stage 1 Long list

- 4.9.14 An assessment has been undertaken as described in ES Appendix 4.3 Major accidents and disasters legislation and methodology (Document Reference 6.4). The long list is provided in ES Appendix 4.4 Major accidents and disasters long list and short list (Document Reference 6.4).

Stage 2 Short list screening

- 4.9.15 The short list is provided in ES Appendix 4.4 Major accidents and disasters long list and short list (Document Reference 6.4) and includes 20 major events. Of these, eight have been identified for further consideration. These include:
- Slope instability, including landslides and rockfall
 - Sinkholes
 - Flooding
 - Blizzards, storms and gales
 - Air quality events
 - Structural failure (i.e. Bridge collapse)
 - Pollution of watercourses
 - Demolition contamination
- 4.9.16 ES Appendix 4.4 Major accidents and disasters long list and short list (Document Reference 6.4) provides details of where these are given consideration in the ES.

4.10 Consideration of climate change

- 4.10.1 The ES considers effects related to climate change as per the requirements of the EIA Regulations. ES Chapter 14 Climate (Document Reference 6.2) outlines an assessment of the effect of the scheme on climate and the vulnerability of the scheme to climate change. The combined effects of the scheme and potential climate change on the receiving environment, resources, and community (the in-combination climate change impacts) are considered by each topic chapter, and the findings are presented as ES Appendix 14.3 In-combination climate change impacts assessment (Document Reference 6.4) to ES Chapter 14 Climate (Document Reference 6.2).

- 4.10.2 Climate change projections have been embedded into the future baseline of the technical assessments. Current and future climate baselines are outlined in ES Chapter 14 Climate (Document Reference 6.2) for key climate parameters, including winter and summer temperature and precipitation. The projections have been obtained from the *Met Office UK Climate Projections 2018 (UKCP18)*, which provides the most up-to-date assessment of how the climate of the UK may change over the 21st century.
- 4.10.3 Climate change is considered in both the assessment of the scheme effects and the design of mitigation and enhancement measures. The consideration of the scheme's resilience to climate change is assessed qualitatively, based on the future climate trends outlined in ES Chapter 14 Climate (Document Reference 6.2). The assessment of the scheme's contribution to climate change, through release of greenhouse gas emissions, is a quantitative assessment against the legislated UK Government's carbon budgets.

References

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- ² Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017
- ³ Planning Inspectorate (2020) Advice Note Twelve: Transboundary impacts and process, Version 6 available at <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/advice-note-twelve-transboundary-impacts-and-process/>
- ⁴ Highways England (2019) DMRB LA 101 - Introduction to environmental assessment
- ⁵ Highways England (2019) DMRB LA 102 - Screening projects for Environmental Impact Assessment
- ⁶ Highways England (2020) DMRB LA 103 - Scoping projects for environmental assessment
- ⁷ Highways England (2019) DMRB LA 104 - Environmental assessment and monitoring
- ⁸ Highways England (2019), A417 Missing Link: Preliminary Environmental Information Report, Accessed 19 May 2021: https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a417-missing-link-public-consultation/supporting_documents/Preliminary%20Environmental%20Information%20Report.pdf
- ⁹ Highways England (2020), A417 Missing Link: Preliminary Environmental Information Report, Accessed 19 May 2021: <https://virtualengage.arup.com/A417-missing-link/pei-report/>
- ¹⁰ Planning Inspectorate (July 2018) Using the Rochdale Envelope, Version 3 <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Advice-note-9.-Rochdale-envelope-web.pdf>
- ¹¹ Gloucestershire Live (5 Nov 2019) <https://www.gloucestershirelive.co.uk/news/cheltenham-news/live-snow-hits-gloucestershire-latest-3536003>
- ¹² Gloucestershire Live (23 Oct 2019) <https://www.gloucestershirelive.co.uk/news/cheltenham-news/live-thick-fog-m5-golden-3456230>