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Mr Michael Goddard
Senior Project Manager
Highways England

Your Ref:

Our Ref: TR010056

By email only

Date: 29 June 2021

Dear Mr Goddard,

Planning Act 2008 (as amended) – Section 51

Application by Highways England for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A417 Missing Link Project

Advice following issue of decision to accept the application for examination

On 29 June 2021, under delegated powers, the Planning Inspectorate decided that the application for the above project satisfied the acceptance tests under section 55 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). The Planning Inspectorate's acceptance checklist and the application documents have been published and made available on the project page of our website.

In undertaking checks at the acceptance stage, the Inspectorate has made some initial observations in relation to the application. This letter comprises advice to the Applicant provided under section 51 of the PA2008 in respect of these initial observations. The Applicant should pay attention to its content and consider how appropriate action might be taken in response.

Consultees identified on a precautionary basis

Given the individual circumstances of this case, the Planning Inspectorate advises taking a precautionary approach to consultation under s42(1)(a) of PA2008 to ensure that all persons potentially affected by, or potentially likely to have an interest in the application are given the opportunity to participate fully in the Examination of the application. On this basis, the Applicant may wish to serve notice on the body listed in Box 6 of the section 55 checklist when it serves notice of the accepted application under s56(2)(a) of the PA2008; unless there is a specific justification why this is not necessary.

Application Document Tracker (Doc 1.1b)

As noted in the section 55 Checklist, the Tracker does not list all documents and therefore will have limited scope and benefit. It would be helpful to the future Examination if it contained a breakdown of the Environment Statement chapters, figures and appendices (Docs 6.2 - 6.4).

Volume 2 Plans, Drawings and Sections (Docs 2.2 to 2.8 and 2.10 to 2.13)

The main Key Plans do not include the proposed highways layout. The inclusion of the same would assist the future Examination by making it easier to identify the required sheet number.

Works Plans (Doc 2.4)

It is difficult to identify individual works on the plans because of the amount of sub-works, particularly in respect of Work No.1. It would be helpful to the future Examination if the plans could be made clearer.

It is noted in the Checklist (Box 30) that there are a number of instances where Work No. annotations do not correspond with the sheet numbers specified in Schedule 1 of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO). The Applicant is advised to carry out a review of how the Works Plans interact with the dDCO.

General Arrangement Plans (Doc 2.6a)

It would assist the future Examination if Sheets 1-6 included further high-level information about the scheme such as shaded areas of environmental mitigation and enhancement, retained woodland etc, as shown on the Environmental Master Plan (Figure 7.11).

Traffic Regulation Measures Classification of Roads (Doc 2.7c)

The legend annotation between points 1 and 2 on Sheet 1 does not match the solid black line for all other entries made under Schedule 3, Part 4 (Unclassified Roads) of the dDCO.

Environmental Features - Statutory and Non-Statutory Designated Sites of Nature Conservation (Doc 2.9)

The scale of Sheet 2 in particular makes it difficult to read. The Applicant should consider how this could be resolved. For example, there is little or no information on the right-hand side of Sheet 2, which could be excluded.

Please pay close attention to the advice set out in this letter and act on it accordingly. This will contribute towards a more efficient examination and give any future Examining Authority comfort that the documentation is complete and accurate.

We trust you find this advice helpful, however if you have any queries on these matters please do not hesitate to contact our office using the contact details at the head of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Hefin Jones

Hefin Jones
Case Manager

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