

TEXT_A1iN_ISH2_Day2_Session1_26022021

Fri, 2/26 1:17PM • 1:43:09

00:03

Good morning, Miss Patterson, can you please confirm that you can hear me in the live streaming of this event has commenced? I can confirm I can hear you and

00:17

the livestream has now commenced. Thank you very much.

00:22

So the time is now 10 o'clock and time for this hearing to resume.

00:26

This is day two of the issue specific hearing to into environmental matters in relation to the application made by highways England for the one in Northumberland, hammock twin engine. My name is Kevin Gleason, and I'm the lead member of the panel pointed to examine this application. I'm joined by my fellow inspector Andre Pinto. And together we constitute the examining authority.

00:53

Understand that there is no one attending today's session who has not attended nearly hearing TIFF so please indicate now I can provide a more comprehensive introduction.

01:08

So as we have no additional attendees, I can simply confirm that the same polling preliminary comments made earlier hearings applies today. Consequently, we can dispense with further introductory comments.

01:22

as detailed with people wishing to speak were provided at the start of the hearing yesterday. There's no need to ask people to reintroduce themselves now. I will ask them to do so the first time they speak this morning.

01:38

Before moving on to item six on the agenda. Are there any matters arising which needs to be addressed immediately?

01:51

I do not have any sir. I don't know if any of the other parties do. Okay, Mr. bester.

01:56

I'm not hearing from anyone else. So in that case, we'll move on to item six, which is transports and traffic.

02:11

And that sets out in the agenda. There are four specific bullet points I want to address this morning. And in addition to the core documents already identified at the start of the hearing, under the sites and I'll also be referring to the construction traffic management plan, which is rep three oh 15. And those 16.

02:35

And the rights of way and access plans, we have to double oh three.

02:49

So the first elements of this item,

02:54

as I highlighted in the agenda is for the examining authority to ask the applicant to present the case for the proposed developments in terms of predicted increases in traffic flows and to weather in light of the covid 19 pandemic the need for the proposed developments has changed

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Mr. basford

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Good morning sir thank you very much

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This is a point which

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we have

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cold so Lee a

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Mr. bus with I'm afraid you're breaking up quite badly to

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a

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county and this developer decided he's sorry.

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I've missed most of what you've said but you immediately came back at that point. So if you could start again I think please.

04:22

Okay.

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I will try and observe whether you flicker or not.

04:29

The position is as recognised by Northumberland county council, one where it is not solely traffic volumes which require this scheme there are a number of justifications for it. Northumberland county Council's low compact report which you and the Secretary of State are required by section four of the Planning Act 2008. To add regards to states paragraph for you when we provide a written note, we'll give you

05:00

The reference they say there are congestion and road safety concerns and Pompadour through the county and this development will provide a means to relieve these current impacts and improve free flow of traffic along the route. In doing so, it will also improve conditions for non motorised users who

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use the fruit for the same purpose. And that that's very helpful to remind

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high traffic volumes, there are other important policy reasons. The other thing to say is that in relation to the overall position, we do not know where things are, as a result of the covid 19 pandemic, and the long term impacts that there will be on traffic volumes and behaviours. And that's something which we will not know immediately. We do know that in normal circumstances, and we are certainly help it further hoping Of course, that those will resume before too long.

06:03

The scheme is needed. There is an analogy to be drawn with other schemes recently considered by the sector he has recently rehabbing the other regional scheme that has been considered lately was approved by the Secretary of State and he said in the

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it was too early to on the impacts of COVID-19 non travel demand and travel patterns. And he said, until such information is captured, state convinced it is too early to fully understand the impacts of COVID-19 on future travellers, demand and relations that scheme is satisfied based on the information.

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There is no change to the long term lead and benefits of the scheme. And we would say so that the same applies with equal force here.

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Now, this these are submissions, Mr. Paul Smith, advisors from Ws p, the consulting engineers, highways England, and he has looked at this and he has been responsible for much of the traffic modelling that relates to this project. And I will invite him now to elaborate a little more on what this means and how this has been considered. But my underlying submission is one you've just heard, that the need remains This is more than just dealing with capacity, there are

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matters which have been dealt with by this scheme. Thank you for yourself to the examination to the leader spectrum. explain these points.

07:36

Thank you, Mr. bassford.

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Yes, certainly, the traffic modelling process makes use of a set of growth assumptions that are sponsored by national government. This is through the tempo programme,

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which is part of the national transport model. We also make use of

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local development assumptions as well. So this is well founded in the sort of latest guidance, there's no update to the guidance in respect of COVID

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impacts at the moment, some of the growths

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that our inputs to the model

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range from roundabout 15%, up up through to 3035 to 40% based on the timeline through to the

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design year of the project 20 2038.

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So,

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within the model itself, there's a focus of travel demand into the corridor resulting from the improved capacity and we can see that traffic increases

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in the corridor or

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are effectively roundabout 90% over that horizon. So there's a significant volume of traffic which is relieving a number of the more unsuitable routes across the region. So it demonstrates quite a

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strong

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need for the routes and benefits of using the routes. As mentioned the congestion,

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road safety aspects are quite key as are the reallocation of demand from non motorised from D trunk routes to the benefits of non motorised traffic. And of course the scheme also improves the the network resilience.

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One of a

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relatively limited number of three routes to Scotland, you know, forming part of the coherent United Kingdom

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network

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in respect of COVID. itself,

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there's been a significant impact on on road usage over the recent year results from the lockdowns.

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So, there could be two potential impacts associated with COVID. First of all, travel behaviour change and secondly, impact on economic growth.

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The main thing to consider is that this this is highly likely to be

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temporary. That's conjecture at the moment. But the expectation is that that there will be a number of changes that

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will work for and against the the overall traffic volumes.

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Across the country, we have seen reduced commuting trips for certain occupations due to increased working from home.

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Equally, we've seen increased

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light goods vehicle delivery trips, reflecting a greater use of e commerce.

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The location of the scheme is well outside the standard commuting range for Newcastle. So we would expect that the commuting aspect would be relatively

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muted for for the region, it's observed that a lot of the travel on the corridor represents longer distance movements.

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And that's typically higher in this corridor than it is for many other locations across the country. One of the aspects of longer distance travel is that the the demand for longer distance travel tends to be more mandatory. If you're travelling a longer distance, it's normally because there's a particularly strong reason to do so. And and those strong reasons are likely to continue and persist

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even through any disturbances to general traffic demand itself.

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Another aspect that's evidence as part of the the COVID pandemic at present is a relocation of

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population from urban towards rural areas. And whilst that has to be balanced, based on the availability of residential locations and in the area, it's equally possible that Northumberland could see growth relative to other parts of the country. It's quite a attractive location to to relocate to and telecommuting makes that entirely possible. So under those circumstances, you might find that the local commuter traffic is retained. And there's an element of demand from increased

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localised residential locations, perhaps outside of peak times as if people are telecommuting.

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It's really difficult to provide a definitive answer to this at the moment, I don't think even the DFT has an answer, but the idea is that one should plan for the future in a flexible way. And this this road provides both the transport and the economic imperative impetus to allow Northumberland to flourish. One other aspect

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Sorry, sir, no carry on. One other aspect relates to

13:54

leisure travel, and, in particular, there's reduced ability to travel overseas, and it's likely that as the lockdown reduces, then the opportunity for UK based leisure will increase as well. And once that's set in the minds of the UK population, then we may see that, for example, the Northumberland coast

14:22

increased in its its prominence in respect of domestic tourism. So another potential reason that the COVID situation may be mitigated, mitigated in terms of travel demand.

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Thank you. That's helpful. And

14:42

the only other point I wanted to raise on this issue related to

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the impact of COVID was in the Secretary of State's decision letter on the Awan berlitz coalhouse. scheme. He mentioned the TFT public

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In July last year, appraise living and modelling strategy, route map pro dating tag during uncertain times,

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and suggested that

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that was

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the would the ongoing work which was taking place and needed to be addressed.

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Is anything happening with that? Is, are there any outputs? Or is that still far too early to consider what the outputs are going to be? for this study at this time, it's a bit too early because that hasn't yet been published. We're expecting some guidance update, it might only be in trim

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in some sometime in March this year.

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Of course, it's it's typical for

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the highway studies to look at uncertainty and this this project is no different to that we've we've undertaken a range of sensitivity tests what what if not, not directly related to COVID, but to to a whole host of

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drivers of demand, which both

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look at downsides and upsides. And

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I think you'll you'll note that that's part of the submission that we've we've previously provided as part of this case.

16:34

That's fine. Thank you.

16:37

Yes. So you have that you have my submissions, and Miss Mr. Smith's input there.

16:45

As you will be able to tell, this is not a scheme where we have just or this is not a case where we've simply just said, Well, look, everything is business as usual. We don't need to look at this. We have

17:00

thoughtfully considered all of this and being prudent in the assumptions that we're making and we are alive to changes. So so we we did so this is properly taken into account and you may say in your decision, or your recommendation on the decision that this has properly been taken into account, and that there are good reasons for this. While Liz Robbie is not my expert or witness.

17:31

I believe it's the case of Northumberland county council that the Awan upgrades to which we're referring is a key outcome of the emerging Northumberland local plan, you may wish to hear her view on that.

17:48

And also, the point that Mr. Smith has made as a point that Northumbria county council picked up in the local impact report as well. And finally, I would say that the government remains committed to the scheme that was included in the roads investment strategy to at

18:06

March 2020, and remains a commitment. Thank you for that I will be coming to Northampton County Council shortly. And

18:17

just picking up on Mr. Smith's point about initial findings from the Department of transports review being published in March, presumably, if there's anything anything significant that comes out of that relevant to

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the bigger picture, post COVID then that would be addressed in future submissions before the end of the examination.

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I would expect that we'd be instructed to look at any any updates to the guidance from from highways England and and provide a perspective on that. Thank you. Okay, and before I come on to

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Northumberland county council, I've just a couple of follow up questions from the written questions we asked previously, and

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accepting that this isn't just an issue of traffic numbers.

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And what's already been said this morning about the other benefits of the scheme and objectives is trying to achieve. I have a number of questions just in relation to traffic numbers.

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The first one builds on

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the Atkins response to question tt 1.4

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and that provided details of traffic flows and other sections of the strategic road network. And he's indicated that flows between Moore and Felton are around 10,000 vehicles a day in each direction.

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What

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Wanted to them should have asked really in the written question was, what are the figures for the section between American L engine?

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Certainly they comparable, are they slightly less? Again, just the general picture, please, I can help you with that certain amount of Smith.

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Mr. Smith, yes. Yes. Yes, thank you, sir. So,

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certainly the the figures reduce to the north of Anak and the numbers between Anik and Ellen, Jim, our bisection direction between six and 7000 ADT. So it's it's moderately low volume. But in those circumstances, then the

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the benefits of the scheme shifts from congestion through to resilience and safety and a continual progression of high quality roads through the through the area.

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Thank you.

21:16

And similarly,

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response question TT one point 13 shows an increase in traffic flows for part A of approximately 13,000 vehicles, as a result of the scheme with all of this further increase, attributed traffic reassigning from alternative routes.

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This is beyond the increase in traffic growth, which is approximately 6000 vehicles.

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That was presented Part A, again, I didn't ask what would be similar figures for part B, and I except I'm putting on the spot a bit here. If you can't provide the answer to that immediately, then perhaps that could be provided in writing the deadline for if it needs any number crunching or anything else.

22:08

leave you to decide on that. Yes, sir. I think I might take you up on the the opportunity to clarify that figure, get back to you. That's absolutely fine.

22:21

I hope you can see where I'm coming from on this is just get an overall picture of and comparison, the different schemes, but most of the answers I wanted were given in the written responses anyway, this is just the final elements of it. So

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okay,

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the that there are some useful figures. The virtual post, it note tells me in figures in the case for the scheme, and in particular,

22:52

figure nine, seven, figure seven and nine, and table nine and 18. In each case, case for the scheme.

23:03

Thank you.

23:10

Good. So can I then ask Northumberland county council, if they wish to respond on any matters relating to the need of the scheme? COVID impacts and the questions I've just asked Miss Robbie.

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Thank you, sir. I'm just taking up Mr. bassets point there about

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the northern mechanic Council's planning policy position on on the proposal is right in that there is a

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policy in our draft local plan, tra three, which supports the juhlin.

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And whilst the plan isn't adopted yet, it's been it's been through examination and we're waiting

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that inspectors report

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on on the local plan at the present time.

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And and that that policy takes forward previous policies in the customer Plus Local plan and the unyk. District local plan, which supported the juhlin. We don't believe that COVID had any impact on on the need for those those policies to be in place.

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So I don't know whether I need to

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amplify that any any further. No, that's helpful. Thank you. Okay.

24:29

Any other David locks wants to come in on any of the other issues? That's been that's been raised.

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But to do that, please? Certainly.

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So, yes, I'm David locks. I'm a chartered civil engineer, and I'm also head of technical services for Northumberland county council and have responsibility for the majority of the council's highways and transport services and yes,

25:00

Clearly, this is an important scheme for, for Northumberland and for the county council. And as well as being in the local plan. So So featured in our local transport plan for 2011 to 2026. And seeking improvements to the the a one and two ruling of it. I think that the point that I would like to make in regard to COVID and and changes from that, and the need for this scheme is very much that point around, and

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what are all of the benefits of the schema and that they are not just related to traffic volumes. And I think that the key issues that we see, regarding the AE one

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are issues around journey time. Clearly, for people journey reliability, very much is a key issue. And major problems with that in relation to the single carriageway and any slow moving traffic, or any incidents, or any roadworks that happen on the road currently

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causing problems for journey time reliability for people, which obviously then

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means that people aren't as likely to invest in the area if that's their view of the road. So we think it's very important for economic growth, and particularly tourism, which is very important for for us in Northumberland. It has major impacts on safety from having the new improved road particularly the

26:44

both the upgrade crossings which will will have significant benefits from for safety for users of the road, and users of our adopted side roads that lead into it. And but also the frustration for people trying to overtake inappropriately and problems that that causes for instance as well. Due to the nature of the road,

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we also feel that because of the nature of the road, it is very difficult for highways England to maintain the road without causing firstly disruption, but also

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meaning that traffic

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Excuse me, sir, sorry. And

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that traffic diverts off the a one and on to other routes, which are much less appropriate

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for the levels of traffic that they get. So there's a whole range of reasons there for why this scheme is needed that aren't just down to traffic volume. And another one of those being that the one itself creates quite a barrier to East West flows of traffic on the side road and also for non motorised users. So those brake separator junctions will have a significant impact and benefit in relation to that. And in terms of the impact of COVID. Today, as I was in deliver it said it's very difficult to quantify that

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as to what might might happen in the future. But and certainly tourism is an area that is growing in Northumberland and we do expect that to be something that's actually likely to increase traffic. And I would say that even in the last year during the pandemic, anecdotally and from evidence I've seen myself, there have been quite significant queues and delays of traffic on the section of single carriageway, even during the pandemic, particularly from people seeking leisure,

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journeys, etc. And particularly travelling northbound up the dual carriageway. Morpeth, where you meet the single carriageway they've often been delays there. So in general, we we feel that the scheme definitely remains needed. And, and that COVID won't have a long term impact on the need for that scheme.

29:23

Thank you very much. And can you just stay there please? I think the next question probably certainly that's for you to dress as well. And this is

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kind of follow up to written question. It was question tt 1.22 which referred to your relevant Rep. And

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it was in relation to whether pekao flows have been assessed in the s and discreted. junction modelling have been undertaken and

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The response which counts council provided that we up to 25 said, we have asked for why the traffic flow information to be provided in order to determine whether any impacts needs to be assessed away from the a one corridor to three assignments of traffic. And

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now, I can't see that's and I was England responded.

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Tyrion gets that question. Is there still an outstanding matter there for the GaNS council?

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Are you still waiting information? I think we may be, but it might be best to bring my colleague Matthew pain in to count that particular question. That's fine. And then I'll come back to the applicant to respond as well. Yes. Mr. Payne?

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Thank you, sir. And yes, we've we were in receipt of

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basically some extracts from from the model from PSP a few weeks ago, and we're still processing those in terms of understanding the full

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implications beyond the scheme limits. Obviously, there is discrete modelling in the, in the for the new junctions, in particular, the great separators, etc, which have been reviewed and are acceptable to us

anyway. And so yes, we're still ongoing, working our way through that modelling review, to ascertain whether we do need any extra screen modelling out with the screen.

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Okay, so the good news is that's work is going on to look at the numbers.

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What happens if you don't get to the right numbers? Or

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you don't get the information at all in time?

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Is there concern? Well, as they say,

31:56

yeah, we've

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got a fine detail. And what we need to do is actually go through the numbers that have been supplied, make sure that we understand them in context of are we know the wider network operate,

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and make a decision to go back to B, to get any extra additional discrete modelling if required. Okay. Thank you for that.

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And Mr. Buffington, do you want to sponsor Mr. Smith?

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This is very straightforward, sir. We believe we've sent everything that Mr. dorks and Mr. Payne requested and require.

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See, we know that they're working through the dock documentation, the modelling that's been supplied. And we know that takes takes time, we completely understand that we are at their disposal really to assess them in relation to the information that we've supplied, ready to discuss. And so far as we're concerned, these are the the normal run of the mill type of

33:11

discussions that you have between the strategic and local highway authorities, as we iterate the data so that both parties are our content. I don't think there are any points of principle here. I think it's simply a case of making sure that Mr. Payne Mr. locks are are content with information we're supplying? That sounds good. Thank you.

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Okay, to the final

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question, just wanted to raise into this point, talking about the need for escape,

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I suppose is not really related to need.

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Perhaps apps can help me here.

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Can you explain why

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it was decided not to actually submit a transport assessment report as part of the application. I'm assuming that's to do with information being provided in other documents, cutting or primarily the same case for the scheme. But it does strike me as slightly

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unusual not to have transport assessment reports for a major highway scheme.

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The best for

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the position that we have here is one where the information should all be before you. And so there ought not to be a concern about the absence of information.

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However, you may already have gathered that Ms. Amanda fog is going to speak to you in relation to this particular point. But the document where you'll find this type of information, it's often the case in relation to

35:00

highways England schemes is to be found in the case for the scheme, which contains this data and support and also have supporting appendices which ensures that you have that information there

35:12

must follow perhaps you would introduce yourself to the examination and then just explain how that is set out so that Mr. Gleason knows where to where to look for the particular items. Thank you.

35:27

Thank you, Mr. bassford. I'm Amanda Fogg, charter member of the Institute of logistics and transport and associate director at W SP. And Mr. bassford has essentially I think already answered the question and the information that you seek is set out in the case for the scheme document which is a highways England standard template which essentially combines the traditional transport assessment with what you might know as a planning statement. So you will find both both elements referred to in there and it also includes elements of the economic appraisal as well.

36:09

Okay.

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It's so the information is where I thought he was

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no surprise there, but

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we can say so that as matters go forward, because this is a standard highways England template and because highways England is the biggest customer of the infrastructure planning department of the planning Inspectorate.

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You and other inspectors will see this, this particular format more and more as, as time goes by, and the idea is to draw all of that information together in a single place for you. Okay. So this, I think, is the first time it's been done in this way, isn't it?

36:54

I believe that may be the Sorry, sorry. So yes, I believe it may well be the first case. In fact, originally, my team did prepare transport assessment and we then subsequently converted that into the required format by combining it with the with the planning statement. Okay.

37:15

That that's fine. I just wanted to see that clarification as to the way in which the material is presented to and that is sorted. Thank you very much. CHAPTER FOUR is the transport assessment of the casement scheme. So thank you.

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So moving on now to

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the next points, which is to consider the scope of the construction traffic management plan.

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So again, referring back to

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the council's local impact report. We have one on 71.

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Comments was made there.

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That Kansas Council was not in a position to confirm whether the negative aspects of the construction phase can be fully minimised. The applicants response to the lie are its rep three on 25 include statements.

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The app can continue to liaise with Northumberland county council regarding the outline camp. The outcomes from discussions will be set out as agreed instead of common grounds with London Cannes Council, and any subsequent updates to the construction traffic management plan as required for future deadlines. So it's clear that work is going on.

39:05

To another point the applicants minimise the potential traffic impacts upon the environment as part of applicants case, can I just want to explore Where?

39:18

Well, whether there are any outstanding matters with regard to the Traffic Manager, construction traffic management plan, how there's been progressed. And both sides happy with progress on this kind of start with Mr. Boss for the end, please, sir, yes. This is one of those schemes where there is a lot of very positive engagement between the local Highway Authority and the

39:48

and the strategic Highway Authority. How is England and I'm pleased to say that there is there has been constructive and great engagement that was meeting as recently as the 15th of February and

40:00

Present, there have been no requests for additional changes by Northumberland county council to the ctmp. We continue to work with them and to revise documents we're working on establish common ground with them and should anything change if anything crops up, then there are opportunities during the examination and of course, you will be aware that the ctmp goes for approval under the terms of the requirements meaning that if anything were to happen at a later stage that can be accommodated to thank you. And just clarify, is it the intention that this will be a finalised document and

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not expected to be changed? Unlike the outline camp, where there will be a further revision?

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The all of the various plans fall into the potential future revision basis, the way it works, and I'm sure you'll have seen this before is that the outline is set and the critical things that that the plan has to achieve. All of those are set out in the documents before you the idea being that the finer detail is worked out by the contractor who will have the best information about the design. And then that is that is finessed. And then

41:33

that so you know, the things that are going to be secured that that the Rochdale envelope is, is managed. And this is a standard way of dealing with these things. So I can also confirm that it is an O ctmp rather than a rather than the final document. Thank you. That's helpful. Good. So does the county council wish to come back on that? anything further to add?

42:03

Just Just to say that, yeah, we have we have had some very constructive meetings about about the document, that just a couple of outstanding points, I think around

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the impact on community, such as long hauls land long from internachi, under a 697. A bit further distance the scheme but Lyanna major, major route, which is used as an alternative to the a one and the impacts, potential impacts on on those communities. But I think we're kind of we're getting to the point where we, we understand what that what those will be.

42:38

And just have a mechanism in place between the County Council on the anti with England to be able to react to situations to their rise on the highway network during the construction

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phase to you know, to react to

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individual incidents, etc, etc. and how the two authorities will work together.

42:59

Okay, thank you. Just real quick, if you can just say that, please. Because the next question is for you as well. I was just going to say in response to that to the to the extent that anything needs to be updated as a result of that, then, obviously, liaison continues with

43:17

the County Council and will pick those up. Thank you.

43:21

So much, Robbie. Next question was in relation to was the same documents to ctmp.

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Our question tt 118

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said the section five point 10 of the ctm p provides adequate guidance at this stage to guide the scope of the public right of way management plan to be secured through requirement for and think county council responded to rep one Oh, 73.

44:00

And the applicants

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provided further updates of the ctm p deadline threes we've discussed.

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So my question is just have you reviewed that? And does that adequately address the concern which was raised

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in relation to TT? 118? Is Robbie?

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Thank you, sir. I believe it has but I think I could just if I could just ask Matthew painter to confirm that. But I believe that all that's been that's been dealt with and and the documents have been updated. Thank you. Mr. Pay. Yeah, I believe the same as well. But I would want to make doubly sure we have to with our public rights of way off to David Brooks, who can be with us today just to make absolutely sure that that that those points have been addressed. Thank you. So perhaps that could be done deadline for if you can confirm in writing that. You're happy

44:57

because Thank you

45:04

So I've no further questions on the construction traffic management plan. Is there anyone else who wishes to speak on that point?

45:16

In which case, let's move on to the effects of the proposed developments on public rights of way and non motorised users.

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Can I begin by asking the applicant to provide an overview of both extents as opposed permanent closures, or diversions to public transport network and the effects on users of that network? I think the

relevant documents as I highlighted earlier is wrapped to Tableau three, which is the most updates public roads query plan, but perhaps

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an overview would be helpful, because that documents is quite detailed and not necessarily that easy to follow. Mr. bassford.

46:09

So the extent of the closures and the diversions for the public rights of way are set out in the in the developer consent order, and shown on the public rights of way plan. So that shows the physical changes that are

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that are expected to take place as a result of the scheme, the way that this is approached. And it's it is a job that involves

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imagine, imagine a meeting in an office remember those, the

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the team gathers together. And because this is to do with rights of the public, it is an exercise which involves engineers, the Lamson property team, the environmental team and legal team, we get together, and we work from one end of the scheme to another and we examine everywhere where there is a prospective interference with the rights of way as a result of the scheme. And what we're talking about here are the rights of way and whether people can pass and really pass on the rights of way rather than for instance, the visual impacts which, which Mr. Williams spoke to you about the other day,

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we look at each time that this takes place, and we consider the whether there is actual value to the right of way in question therefore, whether there needs to be a reprovision or not. So, there are instances where we have

47:47

we where we have identified that there is not what is known as a Terminus ad, which is the which is a destination on a right away some of the rights of way that are affected are

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our dead ends, as it were. Now in those circumstances, and there isn't a Belvedere or a particular viewpoint, they just tailed off into the middle of a field, those so those circumstances that would not be a reprovision

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because the work we've done shows that they're not terribly well used either. The next thing that we will consider is whether the interference results in a diversion to a right of way which is not as commodious, which is a term we use, which describes the effect the inconvenience as a result of a diversion. And that means that a person has to walk in a long way to get to where they're going.

48:57

Now, why is it particularly important on this scheme, the rural nature of the

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of the area in which the scheme is being undertaken, means that people do use the rights of way not just for better reasons to

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get

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or local facilities. And so, therefore, that is those are matters which are also taken into account where where the particular approach is considered. So that was the overall approach. Now, the relevant documents you need to refer to in relation to this are a PP zero 54 and zero 55, which are the population and human health chapters of the environmental statement. And those, show the, those show the information that you need in order to consider that

50:01

If you have specific points, I will introduce Mr. Morrow, to consider this. But that is the general approach to dealing with rights of way that we usually take on a scheme of this nature on which we have applied here.

50:19

Thank you, I suppose what I was looking for as a general indication of how many rights of way are likely to be affected at key points along the alignments? Is there an easy answer on that? Suppose it's a case of going through and looking at each one.

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I think that's a case of needing to count the rights of way and

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and what may happen sometimes the right way make

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into the order limits.

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But without it necessarily being

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the

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constant, we will have

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that you may have a large number of impacts within the order limits, but in the greater scheme of things, that grapes in terms of what happens, so we will gather that together, are you interested in the linear length? Or the number of interactions or the number that are

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that are extinguished without reprovision? What what sort of information can be supplied to you just to assist your recommendation? Okay.

51:35

To start with am trans gets a full picture of what the impact is, on

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how many public roads were likely to be affected? How many are going to be closed? extinguished completely?

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And how extensive any reprovision? I suppose the background to this question, really is that

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slightly surprised? that's

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keeping you are going to be affecting public rights of way that there haven't been any

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representations made to oppose that I would have thought, a scheme of this length, that we might have seen some objections somewhere, also noting that the county council doesn't have major concerns about this issue. So just want to make sure that

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we aren't missing anything in the bigger people

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can very much understand that. And in fact, you will have seen in the representations a number of representations in favour of the scheme from nmu s and M use. And I appreciate that this is counterintuitive, and so turns the examining authority very much into its inquisitorial mode, in case there is a dog that hasn't barked, but the thing to remember about this scheme is that it will be addressing a

53:14

a relatively busy road through a rural area, which is single carriageway, and so therefore has a certain density of traffic. So it is an obstacle to East West movement. And that's going to be replaced by a dual carriageway, yes, but a dual carriageway which will have grade separated crossing points. And that is something which is welcomed, we know by the county council, but also by other groups who have fed back very favourably about what is proposed. So, counter-intuitively, this duelling of the road improves the east west,

53:59

east west ability to cross the corridor. And that's that's actually something which has been welcomed by groups and I think, by the county council who has been engaged on the point as well. Thank you.

54:14

Mr. Hall's, you have your hand up.

54:22

Good morning again.

54:24

Unfortunately, I've been talking about this for some time and, and we are in a position where

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the new plants effectively MC was landlocked and prevent any access to the west of the property going forward. Now, there is a pathway, I must confess, I don't even sign the full

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public

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access. But it's been maintained over the years by the count county council as a pathway that allows me to cross the road and head west to then sort of join up with other paths on the way

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side now with the EU plans that's going to be taken away and won't be able to egress to the west of the property in the future.

55:12

Okay, and Mr. Bassman to answer to that. And then that can bring the Kansas Council and see if they have any comments on that.

55:22

Insert, maybe something else. Sorry. It may be something that needs to be taken outside of the hearing. But

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I'm happy to have initial comments.

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That is a point where I'm just trying to turn up the relevant drawings, rights when access plans, which

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if we look at those with Mr. Hawes, it is going to be sheet one of 19 because it always is. Yes. Now,

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on that, we have a bridle way, heading to the east, which is to the south of Mr. Horse property to the

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north of Mr. Horse property. We do not have a public right of way so far as we're aware that we are effecting which, which suggests that Mr. Hall's path may not be a public right of way, but maybe a permissive path or something which he has enjoyed

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without it becoming a public right of way.

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And so that is the fat is where we would say the position lies. Now. It's, it's the position for Warren as house house and the buildings at that location as matters stand is that there are underpasses and other means of getting from one side of the road to the other. And so that is that is not likely to be terribly result of the project.

57:03

Yes, and the team has confirmed that there isn't a public right of way.

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Passing east west from Mr. Hall to gate.

57:16

Thank you. I can see on the plan. Yes, the bridleway to the sales. Were 407010 and nothing else show but

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yes. Okay. Understood.

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can ask them the county council, if they wish to comment on

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any of the proposed changes to public roads for a network? Understand Mr. Brooks, who is the key officers here, but is anyone else prepared to speak? Mr. Dogs?

57:54

Yes, that that. Thank you, sir. As you say, David Brooks, isn't here today when he was on the hearing on Tuesday about some of the DTO matters on on the rights of way. But I've spoken to David.

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And, and I want to say, just as introduction that

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David and his team are extremely good

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and valuable rights away offices that we have at the county council. And perhaps some of the reason why they haven't been objections is that there have been a lot of discussion between David and his team and the applicant, as these proposals were brought forward. And, you know, David and the team have a very good understanding of the rights of way in Northumberland, and good contacts with the user groups. And, and I think, as as things have moved forward, have been able to make suggestions and help the applicant in putting forward a good a good network to replace those things that are needing to be changed. And it in terms of the general view, on the rights of way and

59:13

the issues for non motorised users. And clearly the a one has presented a long standing barrier to people travelling East West, on the rights of way in the smaller roads, particularly I think for cyclists and horse riders, and, and the position provision of the great separated junctions along the route will be a significant benefit. And for that, and again, particularly for the cyclist and the horse riders

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to make those journeys in a safer environment.

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Some of the diversions of the public footpaths will make some of those public footpaths and less convenient in terms of distance and the

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Because there is further to walk to get to the grade separated junctions, and some of the newly dedicated footpaths will run adjacent to the one to get to those junctions. And so that does lessen the immunity of those rights of way slightly. But the only other alternative to that would be to continue to allow at grade crossings, which obviously are there in parent safety risks that are trying to be addressed.

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So in general, and

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we've worked closely with the applicant on on this and we are generally

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pleased with with the outcome of what's happening with the rights of way. I think that the hearing on Tuesday, Mr. Brooks indicated that in general, we were now happy with most of the drafting. And in relation to the the decio. And the plans, there were one or two minor things still to iron out which were working with the applicant on.

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And the only area I think where we feel that that perhaps and opportunities being missed is the issue about potential improved nmu cycling links between more than Felton.

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Can I stop you there because that's the topic I want to come on to shortly but and I just want to finalise the public right of way issue first. And I see Mr. Hawes has got his hand up again. Mr. Horse, do you want to come back? I should have brought you back to the previous comments, Mr. Bassett. Please. Yes. If you don't mind, I just like to close off comments from the past. Yes. Yeah. I mean, obviously the the road or the path I'm referring to there isn't

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recognised public footpath in the sense that it's

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marked in the maps which, sorry, but it is meant to, and it is a benefit that I have enjoyed for 30 years, from the point of view of is maintained and managed by the Common Council. And as you can see on the map, it is shown on the map are big, noisy rates of weird noise, a formal public footpath, but nonetheless it is open to the public. So I have had the benefit, I am losing that benefit, and therefore future access is that the western I property is no longer an option and obeyed Mr. basford refers to underpasses and overpasses. There's no such option at my property.

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Thank you, Mr. Buffett, you want to

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come back on that? Sir, I don't think that there is very much for me to add, they're safe to say that it isn't a public right of way. And as such, it's not properly considered as part of this discussion.

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I think we can we can leave it there whilst noting that Mr. Hawes regrets the fact that he will be faced by a dual carriageway as opposed to a single carriageway, if he wishes to cross the road there. And we would probably discourage him from crossing the road at that location.

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Okay, Mr. Hawes?

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I've heard what you've said. And I've heard the answers from the applicants as well. I can't see

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any

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particular way forward on this just the moment but it is something again, that's we'll look at when we do undertake site visits and trying to understand the issue fully. But just to say that we are aware of what your representation is on this, and we'll take it into account. Okay.

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Yes,

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thank you. Okay, so let me just say something further on public rights of way before we move on to

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none non motorised users.

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I did have a couple of questions about specific relevant representations that were made by individual property owners. Some of those

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were matters where people are questioning whether they'd still have access to their property. And,

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Mr. password, what I'll do is I'll just give you the reference numbers of the relevant reps. And maybe you could come back in writing the next deadline. just confirm. I think

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For them hearing there's agreement on the matter surrounding those access points, but be helpful to them to be clarified. And they are relevant reps. Oh, 28. Just tell us, Alan. Oh 38 call Dawson.

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Oh 43 Sean Robinson.

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And that that's it, just those three. Within those there are references to access properties and

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public rights way issue. So written response on those matters would be helpful. clarification.

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Very good. We'll check, we will check what we have already said. There, there is just one one other thing to say in relation to Mr. Horse point, and he is referring to what I suspect may be the former alignment of the a 697, where it would have joined the one before and Google streetview is our friend here. If one were to drop that little man onto the outside Mr. Hall's garden gate, the five bar gate there and then to turn to face the other side of the road, it's immediately apparent that the road in the right of way in question which it is not, of course, is for Mr. Hall's property reached by crossing a dual carriageway as the road start stands at present vaulting a vehicle restraint system. And then crossing the second carriageway before a five bar gate is reached on the other side of the road.

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You'll be able to see this if you do a virtual or a an actual site visit. But that to the saints, the road is obviously already dual carriageway, and one would have to go a little bit further north. In order to pass beyond the dual the dual carriageway section on this you can see the sorts of traffic on the road in order to cross it so so you'll be able to consider that and give it weight when you look at it online or in person. Thank you. Mr. Hawes, you have your hand up again.

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apologise Africa back for this again. But unfortunately, some inaccuracies in all of that statement. Okay, first of all, the point I leave my entrance, I am able to walk across a single carriage where is the road I'd never ever considered struggling, the dual carriageway and the are not accessing the road. That's been suggested there. It is further south without losing a path, which as I suggested earlier, has over a number of years now being maintained by Northampton County Council.

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Now, more recently, they haven't done much work on the maintenance of that, but the last five years, but nonetheless is a path that is really used. And I use it quite often to get access to the other footpath to the west.

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So there's no struggling of any fences or any characters in order to achieve that. So you'll be you'll be able to check this

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simple matters of fact, and the geometry of it is a matter of fact, you could look at that I will double check and if need be, I can ask further questions at a future hearing or in writing if anything is still unclear. Okay. Mr. Hawes.

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Thank you. Thank you. Okay. So let's then move on to the second part of this item, which is in relation to

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provision for non motorised users, or the calls in the application will walk a cyclist and also I this

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I'd like to begin then

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with county council Mr. locks.

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You're about to to comment on this before I intervened. And

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if you can set out what are the council's

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concerns at the moment about this and where you are in discussions with the applicant.

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And then ask the applicant to respond and gain context. This I think is provided by

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the national networks national policy statements.

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Section 3.16 and seven which emphasise the government's commitments to sustainable travel and step changing cycling and walking provision. So that's really my starting point in thinking about these things and asking questions.

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So

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laws.

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If you'd like to make your comments now, please.

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Thank you. So, yeah, just really, I think in general were content with the overall provision for nm use in the scheme other than

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the concern with believe that there's an opportunity missed in relation to

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probation for nmu and cycle provision between Morpeth and Felton and

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both on the D trunk section of the a one

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and also on the network parallel to the one running from Morpeth, up to priests bridge or the river line where where the Detroit section will start.

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We feel that there's a possibility that cycling provision could be included within the scheme for for that length. With note from previous discussion we had with the applicant consultant in when we were looking at the scheme in early days that they acknowledged that the the current nature of the one suppresses usage by cyclists by its very nature.

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It's very busy, it's high speed road etc.

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And we just feel that there is an opportunity there that

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could have been taken could be taken to improve that that ability for cycling. We know that on the length from the north end of the D trunk section between walk and field and

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the Westmore junction, Felton road that a three metre wide footway, cycleway segregated footway, cycleway is being provided alongside the 7.3 metre wide road.

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But at the moment, there is no provision being suggested on the D trunked section itself.

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And also, as we say, we think with minor modification, there may have been an opportunity for changing the rights of way network and other aspects on the length between the D trunk section and Morpeth to allow cycling which would potentially mean slight change to

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the

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tip to the what what those rights away are and also surface and

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potentially private access as well. And

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so, that's our overall view, we note that the applicant doesn't feel that certainly on the D Trump section that it is necessary or appropriate to provide

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such a feature. And they know that there will be less traffic on the road, which is clearly true. But we do have concerns that it is a very wide road wide carriageway over 10 metres wide. And that that is likely to lead to some people using it at relatively high speed so it won't have that low speed feel to it. And where therefore, we think that there should be some segregation for cycling and walking on that, that there isn't actually a footpath all the way along it

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at all.

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It does sort of tie in with another point we have generally about about the treatment of the cross section of that a one that we feel is too wide for the nature of what it's going to be used for in the future and the fact that it could be narrowed, does give ability on that the trunk section to provide a separate cycleway feature in within the overall current highway boundary. And so that's that's the general situation with that. So unlike the trunk section, which you described is wide and potentially dangerous.

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Is it is your concern.

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One of safety or

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what balance is there between providing

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a link for cyclists generally, and the issue of safety for cyclists and pedestrians

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I think it's both both really equally

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you know that the situation is that the link road that will be coming from the new Awan, Fenn, rather junction will be 7.3 metres wide link road at the north end of the D trunk section where we 7.3 metres wide, but the bit in the middle

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won't be and, and we will be much wider.

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And that that does take traffic that runs up and then goes across to all the nap Clinton and that area. So just concerned that some people will track travel along there with the width of it, people will not realise how fast they're going and and

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could could be certainly a safety issue for other traffic as well at the junctions and the accesses as well as for cyclists and pedestrians so that there's, you know, that that aspect and then equally, that we think that there is an opportunity here to to just improve things for cyclists. Okay. Again, I think this is a an issue,

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which myself and Mr. Pinto will look at when we eventually get to go on site that help inform our view. But thank you for that. So

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Mr. Hawes, I'll come back to you in a moment I'll ask Mr. bassford. To respond first of all.

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Thank you, sir. And thank you to Mr. Locks for his his thoughts that now that at the heart of this is a difference in the nature between Northumberland county council and I always think that housing

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strategic Highway Authority for the strategic road network.

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And so its role is different to that or more funded County Council, which is responsible for the local highway network, including public rights of way.

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WC, H, and, and so forth. Incidentally, the term WC H is the now preferred term. And as a person looking at documents and saying, Why is this not called term

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nmu I was told that this is now an update and so we head forward, we will know them as WC a trauma then nmu. So just as you've got used to nmu it's WC h NASA.

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It's more restrictive.

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I

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personally, I don't agree with it. But who am I to decide?

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It's one of those just following orders points. Okay.

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The so the

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so the position is that we have to look at the national networks national policy statement, as you say, and the were directed to paragraph three point 17. As you say, there is a direct national road network to play and helping pedestrians cyclists, which we agree with, the government expects applicants use route which is us to use reasonable endeavours to address the needs of cyclist and pedestrian and the design of new schemes now that we have undertaken in relation of course, to the crossing of the improved and new road to make sure that there are those grade separated junctions and that the effects on the local highway network and the PRA W's is is suitable and proportionate, and that their needs are taken into account. Government also expects applicants to identify opportunities to invest in infrastructure in locations with national road network service communities and extra bear walking, which as I've said, it's just it's more or less exactly what I have just said because we are reducing separate says as counter-intuitively as a result of this scheme,

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creating historic problems, retrofitting late solutions and ensuring easy and safe for cyclists to use junctions all of which we would say we are doing in this scheme.

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So that then brings us on to the changes to the highway network as a result of the de trunking of existing sections of the a one trunk road. And what's that results in is the former alignment of the a one becoming a local road for which Northumberland county council will be responsible.

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And there will be a dramatic change in the usage of that road because it will be the it will no longer be on the desire line. For the vast majority of users travelling north and south. its entire character will be changed.

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As a result of the traffic notwithstanding its geometry, it will just be doing a different thing. And it will not be connected in the same way to the strategic road network that will, in and of itself make it a more pleasant environment for walkers and cyclists.

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The next thing to say is that the

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that there has not been put to highways England that there is a safety consequence supported by evidence as a result of the change. And that is, there has not been any proof to hire England that there is a need for any change to the geometry and the

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the

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carriageway treatment in the D trunk sections so, so as a result, we we can't say to the government and to the regulator that highways England should be funded for these types of works. And because there's not a necessary mitigation I was in the then does not consider it appropriate to provided.

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The

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position then is that if Northumberland county council wishes to carry out those works, that is a matter for Northumberland county council winters in receipt of the D Trump sections of the road.

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This brings us to the link roads, the link roads will be provided as a part of the scheme so that the roads remain connected. And those will be built to modern standards, because highways England will build them to a modern cross section. But that does not mean that it is necessary then to provide different highway standards on the balance of the D trunk T one, it's simply that we will provide the new construction in accordance with current standards. And if we were for instance, to constrain the link roads, then we would produce pinch points and bottlenecks, which would mean they would not function appropriately so. So that is why being constructed in that way.

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Now that that is as it were the bad news, highways England continues though, and I hope you've seen this in our dealings with Northumberland county council and we're very grateful for their engagement with with us highways England does have what's known as designated funds. Now, these are not available on a scheme specific basis. And they can't be used for mitigating the effects of a scheme. That housing that is working.

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The post it notes has just popped up to say almost exactly what I'm saying. And so I was looking at other funding streams which could be used to assist this. But because this is not mitigating the impacts of the scheme,

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it does not there is no automatic entitlement funds. And these have to be applied for separately and a merit based case made for those. But but the team on this scheme is working with Mr. locks and Mr. Brooks, and is looking at how that could be provided outside of this decio process because we were keen to continue to engage with the county Highway Authority to make sure that that their concerns can be reflected, even if we're not able to address them as a part of this process. Thank you and just picking up a couple of those points, then. So you've drawn a distinction between mitigation and the additional elements that might be benefits beyond the scheme

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and on the local roads.

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But that's not

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is that's distinction drawn by the

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national policy statements.

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Could you clarify that? I'd like the county council to to comment on that as well. And then the related points about the other funds designated funds might be available.

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From the submissions I've seen from the county council.

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The suggestions have been made that's

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well, it appears to me that there's been a lack of coordination or or

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lack of progress in looking at

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progressing applications to secure those funds. And some concern that this is going to be an add on best rather than an integrated part of this

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Mr. Buffett, can you come back on that, please? Then I'll go to Mr. Hawes. And then I'll ask Ken's counsel to respond.

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So, the the the first thing to say is that is that this is not an integrated part of the scheme because it isn't necessary. housing that is a regulated entity and it's funded through its regulated settlement, the government makes clear that it is funded for things which are necessary and these works are not necessary as a part of the scheme.

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The National Policy Statement refers to

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addressing impact and, and investing in opportunities where the local route the national road network, severs communities and acts as a barrier to cycling and walking, which we've done

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by correcting his Doric problems, which we've done, and that by retrofitting latest solutions. Now,

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what it is talking about there is all in the context of barriers. It is not about the provision on local highway networks of works that are not necessary.

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The Awan will be in its de Trump's state,

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new infrastructure of benefits to cyclists, the inclusion of additional works within that detract cross section is simply not needed. Because it will already simply as a result of being dramatically less trafficked the

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and a more commodious route for non motorised users, or WCAG, as we know it. Now, and, and so simply not needed in terms of progress in seeking designated funds. That's a matter which is outside this DCA process. It's it is something that as part of the regulatory settlement is not available to play in as a means of securing a benefit. And this is something which housing is now working with. Northumberland county council to address if there has been a, a,

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a need to have advanced that more quickly. That's regrettable, but we are. And we really do acknowledge this grateful for the current engagement on that point and the housing we're just working with, with the County Council in order to to bring that forward. Now.

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The

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there is there are works on the a 697, which everything that is promoted through that. That means which shows that we do commit to those sorts of exercises. And

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we also need to know through the county council, what the benefit, what the benefits will be. And we will have to work with them to show the benefits of any

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changes to the cross section of the DEA Trump T one in terms of its value. So

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this is this since it is not necessarily a result of the scheme, it has to show a benefit outside the

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ETL process.

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Instead, thank you,

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Mr. Horse.

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Yeah, thank you for the chance to come back again,

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as a regular cyclist, I would say this would be provided a major benefit, in the sense that it would make that good.

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And I would definitely use it if that provision was made available. And I'm sure many of the secretary would do likewise. So there's a direct benefit there. And given the government's agenda to generally improve the cycle routes at the moment, it'd be great to kill off two birds one stone. Can I just clarify which elements of the scheme you're saying would give great benefits of the drunk elements of the roads and might be able to make them safe for cyclists? That would be a major boon and distance. Thank you.

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Mister logs, you want to come back on those points?

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Yes, that Thank you. And, yeah, a few points really.

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We were certainly also looking because I think a lot of the applicants responses on this are about what the original scheme objectives were.

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But clearly since then, things have moved on

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in the world and in the view

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In terms of cycling and walking, and we'd certainly picked up on the DFT statement in 2020, that they published in in gearchange a bold vision for cycling and walking,

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which said that we will ensure that new local and strategic a road schemes include appropriate provision for cycling.

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And so, you know, that that was something that we felt should be taken into consideration in in looking at this.

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So,

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if I start with the deep trunk section, and in terms of the

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the suggestions on on changing the cross section,

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we first

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I think provided a suggestion of a change to that cross section with a 7.3 metre courage way back in 2018.

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And, clearly, as

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has just been said, The, by the applicant, the

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nature of the use of that road will be dramatically changed

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by the

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by the new Trump new dual carriageway being put in place.

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But nothing seems to be being done to the actual nature of that the trunk section to take account of that dramatic change to its usage. And in relation to speed, one of the things that highway engineers know and understand that deal with speed and road safety is that speed of traffic is much more regulated by

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Excuse me, is much more regulated by the geometry of the road in question than it is by a speed limit

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that is put on it.

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So, there is a definite concern there about like the speed along that road and about safety in relation to that. And clearly that change in the character of usage

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is

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something that is being brought about by the scheme that is being put in place by the applicant. And therefore, if there are things to do, if there are issues with speed and safety following on from the scheme, if nothing is done at this stage, then that will fall as a liability on the County Council. And for which funding, it's clearly not easily accessible or available. So that's the issue generally in relation to that width of

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the courage way.

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We do feel that that there's an opportunity there to improve

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cycling provision on the trunk section. And

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as we've said in in our submissions in terms of designated funds, again, that was first

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mentioned that that might need to be considered through designated funds in April 2018. So it is a disappointment to us that we are here now and haven't reached a point where through whatever means

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of funding that is can be considered and brought to a conclusion we would want to see changes in in the character of that dietram section included within the decio process rather than being left as something that might happen if funds do become available.

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I think the the other aspect that we haven't really touched on much is having looked at all of the rights of way and access plans. And we have looked and felt that there it would potentially be an opportunity to

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have

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an off road cycle route parallel to the a one running from

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from the firm or area up to

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the south end of the D trunk section. And, and clearly the one itself along that length is a barrier to people cycling in terms of their won't want to cycle up the dual carriageway on on that length of reach. So that those are

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Are our points in our feelings at the moment about

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about? Thank you looks.

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Okay, I'm going to ask Mr. basford to respond. And then since it's now 1135

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after Mr. password is finished, we'll take a short break.

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They take too long, so they will be finishing fairly soon. But

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yeah, let's move to that then Mr. passwords. That's

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ms locks. The

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position here is one about need, and necessity and about mitigation. And to that extent, the fact that the point was raised in 2018 means that it's still not been shown

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over two years later, that there is a need for these works. That said, housing does acknowledge that it will have seen like slow progress has been made in relation to this particular matter. In relation to seeking designated funds in respect of the trunk elements of the network.

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That is not to say that housing that has not been pursuing designated funds matters. And bear in mind, these are discretionary funds. They're not available as of right there. They're sort by application. It has been working on designated funds in relation to the a 697 cycle way. So it has been working with Northumberland county council, albeit that it does accept that this is a point that has been that that will have felt slow to Northumberland county camps. And that's regrettable.

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The effect on

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volumes of traffic using the D trunk a one is approximately 90% it will go down from about 800 to 1000 vehicles now to between 20 and 240. And that's looking at the peak hours. So of course in the interpeak and outside the peaks at either side, that will be even lower. So that is that is quite a dramatic change, as we said in terms of usage of the road. Now, Mr. lockss

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quite correctly said that road geometry does affect vehicle speeds. But the point here is that this will be a very wide carriageway will have much fewer HGTV users far fewer cars far fewer events, the character of traffic as will change as a result of the D trunking. as will the volumes. Therefore, it's up to Northumberland county council to show that as a result of this change, there is then a greater peril to cyclists and therefore we need to take action to mitigate an adverse effects there is no predicted adverse effect in that respect. Now, Mr. Locks also mentioned that the a one

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does not itself

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present a hospitable cycling environment. And so therefore a parallel cycle route is something to be commended. Now, that displays the issue that we have before you which is that cycle routes parallel to the one or not the responsibility of highways England which is responsible for this strategic road network. They're the responsibility of Northumberland county council. So what what is going to happen as a result of this scheme is that Northumberland county council is going to be given a highway network which it can then do by that but it is not for highways England to do it. What How is England will do is work with Northumberland county council looking at designated funds to see what it can do, not what it must do, but what it can do in order to assist in that regard.

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Thank you, Mr. best fit. So it's now just approaching 2212.

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Mr. Lord, you on screen. Did you want to come back on anything? I would like to if I could if I may.

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Just a couple of things really. And

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Mr. Buffett just showed said that in the last two years it hasn't been shown that that it's been needed to change the cross section. And during that period, which is since we provided a cross section to the applicant to say this is what we would like the new B trunk or the D trunk section to look at. We've been told throughout that highways England are seeking

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designated funds to carry out these know to look at carrying out these potential works to

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narrow the cross section and provide a cycleway. So we haven't been asked during that period to provide evidence of need. And it does feel a little late in the day now to be being

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asked that ought to be saying that it hasn't been proven that it that it's needed. And so I would just like to come back on that point in the way that it was put

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the issue about

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providing a parallel cycleway, it is now that things are being changed

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as part of this scheme, and changes are being made the right of way network, etc. And it would seem to me that it would be the appropriate time, given the government's desire to ensure that new local and strategic road schemes include appropriate provision for cycling, that now would be the time for that to be considered

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as part of this scheme. And also, just finally, I really wouldn't want you too feel that talk about the designated fund scheme on the a 697 really has any bearing on

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what we're talking about here, which is in relation to the duelling, that that is a separate matter. That's that's to do with

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a cycle link, a minus cycle link

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from the 8697 down to more with, but not really in relation to the duelling scheme in any way. Okay. I think we could continue with this discussion, I think what would be helpful would be for both current counsel and the applicants to summarise that positions at the next deadline. And it is an issue that, as I've said before, we can return to through further written questions or to future hearing if the examining authority feels he needs further information. So I think at that point, we'll close that issue. So it's now just coming up to

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court to

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12. And can I suggest that we adjourn until five past 1220 minutes people to have a break on the basis that I don't think we're going to have to have the full one and a half hour session. Next, we haven't got that much more to complete, but it would be worthwhile having a short break now.

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Are people happy with that?

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I'm not hearing anything to the contrary. So we'll go on that basis. With adjourn now. Hands will come back at five past 12 Thank you very much