



Meeting note

Project name	A46 Newark Bypass
File reference	TR010065
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	07 September 2022
Meeting with	National Highways
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Project Inception Meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Scheme Overview

The Applicant provided the Inspectorate with background information and an overview of the project.

Newark is situated halfway between Nottingham and Lincoln, close to the A46, A1 and A17. The route corridor of the A46 Newark Bypass project is the last single carriageway section between the M40 and Lincoln. The A46 in this location is a strategic link between the M1 and Leicester and the A1 and Lincolnshire.

The scheme entails the widening in both directions to dual carriageway of the road from the Farndon roundabout from the west of the town centre to Winthorpe roundabout to the north-east. The key features of the scheme include an upgrade of the Farndon roundabout, and the introduction of a grade separation of the Cattle Market junction, new slip road to the Brownhills roundabout, new bridge over the A1 and a connection between the Winthorpe Roundabout and Friendly Farmer Roundabout brought back into use. The aim is to improve the flow of traffic along the A46 and to provide a local access route on the A1 into Newark and A17 routes away from the Newark area.

The Applicant advised the key structural features include three crossings of railway lines: two crossings of the Lincoln line, the crossing of the electrified East Coast mainline. Two crossings of the river Trent are also required. The other feature is a 75-metre skewed crossing of the A1.

The Applicant presented the A46 Newark Bypass preliminary design drawings to the Inspectorate, outlined the design of the proposed project and confirmed the opening of the scheme is proposed for the middle of 2028.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Applicant provided the Inspectorate with a summary of the stakeholder engagement to date which includes the following:

- Non-statutory consultation was held in 2021
- The Applicant has sought input on the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) from lead and neighbouring local authorities to help with how they are going to communicate with communities
- Holding regular meetings with key stakeholders during the design development phase
- Resident drop-in sessions
- Discussions with the relevant community liaison officers regarding hard-to-reach groups including Gypsy, Roma and travelling communities
- Regular liaison with Robert Jenrick MP
- Talking with Canals and River Trust
- Engagement with Network Rail

The Inspectorate asked the Applicant about the engagement with the Gypsy travelling community and whether the engagement was for informative purposes or whether the scheme affects the land they live on. The Applicant confirmed the engagement was for information purposes only as the community are located near to the bypass.

The Inspectorate asked the Applicant if River Trent was tidal in this location. The Applicant confirmed it is not tidal at this point.

Environmental work

The Applicant provided an overview of the key environmental constraints associated with the project which include the following:

- 70% of the Proposed Development is located within flood zones including zones 2 and 3. Compensatory flood storage and flood risk assessment are therefore an important consideration for design development.
- The scheme crosses the River Trent twice.
- In terms of Ecological designated sites – no European designated sites are located within the red line boundary or within close proximity to the site, however two local nature reserves and 39 local wildlife sites are within 1km of which 11 are within the red line boundary.
- There are a number of scheduled monuments located within the red line boundary and in close proximity. These include Newark Castle.
- Numerous listed buildings and structures are located within the scheme vicinity.

1. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant about flood compensation and management of flood flows. The Applicant confirmed that studies by the flood risk team are ongoing. At present, the Applicant is predicting that there is a requirement for 100,000m³ of

compensatory flood storage. The Applicant noted that areas of land for flood compensation were being investigated and that the proposals were subject to ongoing discussions with the EA.

2. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant if they are setting a biodiversity net gain (BNG) objective for the Proposed Development. The Applicant confirmed in the last year National Highways moved the target for the project from a minus 15% requirement to a net gain requirement. The project is currently aiming for around the 5-6% increase mark. The Inspectorate noted the future legal requirement for 10% net gain.
3. The Inspectorate raised a query regarding agriculture land and the extent of archaeological investigations in these areas. The Applicant confirmed that geophysical surveys are ongoing to the north of the Proposed Development and that to date, a potential Roman settlement and civil war defence line have been identified.
4. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant if they were engaging with marina operators. The Applicant confirmed they were engaging with marina operators as they need temporary access to land from within one Marina and three are located within proximity of the Proposed Development.
5. The Inspectorate asked if the Applicant had considered viewpoints from those using the canals and rivers. The Applicant believe these viewpoints had been included but noted the comment and will confirm this information at a later date.
6. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant if borrow pits will be required within the area and if so where they may be undertaken. The Applicant confirmed ground investigation works will start 19 September, so it is too early to confirm full requirements at this stage. The potential to share materials generated from other developments was discussed.
7. The Inspectorate queried material import and whether there was any potential to use the navigation and rail routes to minimise the impact on the local road network. The Applicant confirmed this may be a possibility but unlikely to be financially viable.
8. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to pay particular attention to the cumulative impact of carbon and air quality matters and to look at outcomes of recent Development Consent Order (DCO) decisions. The Applicant noted that the proposed development did not affect any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA).

EIA work

The Applicant provided an overview of the EIA process to the Inspectorate as follows.

EIA work to date

- Environmental surveys are ongoing.
- Consultation and engagement with key environmental stakeholders is ongoing.
- The red line boundary for the Scoping Report was received by the Inspectorate on 26 August 2020.

- Preparation of the Environmental Scoping report was in its final stages with submission imminent.

Future EIA work planned

- Publication of preliminary Environmental Information report and non-technical summary with the commencement of Statutory Consultation
- Continuation of surveys
- Continuation of consultation and engagement regarding the environmental statement and supporting documents
- Development of draft Statements of Common Ground with key environmental stakeholders

Project timetable

The Applicant outlined the timeline for the project as follows:

Scoping report	9 September 2022
Statutory Consultation	26 October – 12 December 2022
Draft Consent Order (DCO) application submission	July 2023
Start construction	Summer 2025
Open to traffic	Summer 2028

Questions raised by the Applicant:

1. The Applicant asked the Inspectorate when the project will be live on the National Infrastructure Planning website. The Inspectorate confirmed they will confirm a date after the meeting.
2. The Applicant asked the Inspectorate if there were any Advice Note updates planned within the next few months. The Inspectorate advised the Environmental Advice notes are under review and will keep the Applicant updated on any further changes.

Questions raised by the Inspectorate:

1. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant if they were looking at any Section 53 access to land requests. The Applicant confirmed they were not aware of any.
2. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant whether there would be a need for Compulsory Acquisition. The Applicant advised that further investigation is required, and they will update the Inspectorate at a later date. The Applicant confirmed there is no crown land identified.
3. The Inspectorate noted that statutory consultation was positive and asked the Applicant if local authorities were resourced to be liaising with the Applicant at an adequate level. The Applicant confirmed local authorities were adequately resourced.

4. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant if the drafting of the DCO had commenced. The Applicant confirmed that this had not yet started. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to start drafting the DCO at an early stage. The Inspectorate also advised the Applicant to provide sufficient detail when looking at limits of deviation.

Next steps

The Inspectorate and Applicant agreed the next steps as follows:

- The Inspectorate suggested to the Applicant to hold a meeting prior to the start of statutory consultation meeting during October / November 2022.
- Draft document review timings to be confirmed at future meetings.
- A meeting to be arranged post statutory consultation.
- The Inspectorate requested the Applicant keeps them updated if the project timetable changes.

