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### **Sent Via Email**

Dear John,

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) SCOPING OPINION**

**Proposal: 3/2019/0977 - Construction site D adj to Burnside Farm Back Lane Slaidburn BB7 3AJ and Construction site E adj Fober Farm Dunsop Road Newton BB7 3ED**

Thank you for inviting Highways England to provide EIA scoping comments regarding the above proposals.

Highways England has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such we work to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity. It is an ambition to ensure that major roads are more dependable, durable, and most importantly – safe.

We note that the location of the proposed works to the Haweswater viaduct are located some way from M6 motorway, but that site traffic associated with these for the Bowland section would utilise Junction 31 of the M6.

Highways England is aware of the proposal by United Utilities to carry out major works to the Haweswater Aqueduct over a number of years and at various locations along its route across the north west region, and has recently met with United Utilities to discuss these plans at a general level.

Any transport assessment (TA) in relation to this development proposal and its impact on the SRN must be undertaken fully in accordance with the Department for Transport

Circular 02/2013 'The Strategic Road Network and the Delivery of Sustainable Development'. Reference should also be made to 'Planning for the future: A guide to working with Highways England on planning matters' and the relevant chapters in the Planning Practice Guidance.

We request that the scope for any TA accompanying the proposed development be agreed with Highways England.

This will include:

- The spatial coverage of the TA. Agreeing details of the road network and junctions where the impact of the development will be assessed;
- The temporal coverage of the TA. Agreeing the days of the week and time periods to be assessed. The opening year for the site will also be agreed along with any future year assessment that might be required;
- Baseline data to be used to inform the TA, including traffic flow and collision data;
- Trip generation and distribution assumptions to be adopted in the TA; and Modelling tools necessary to assess the impact of the development.

Highways England would expect the TA document to cover the following chapters:

- Background and Context – setting the scene within which the TA has been developed;
- Existing Conditions – describing the site within the context of the local and wider highway network (e.g. SRN), including details on local road safety conditions;
- Planning Policy Context – set out the local, regional and national planning policy context as it relates to transport and access for the site;
- Trip Generation, Distribution and Assignment – detailing the trip generation estimates produced, and how they have been distributed and assigned to the agreed impact area;
- Baseline and Forecast Year Traffic Flows, With and Without Development – based on the agreed assessment years and the estimated trip generation from the site opening year, how future flows in the impact area have been identified for the baseline situation and the with development situation. These traffic flows will form the basis of the highway impact assessment;
- Details of the nature and frequency of abnormal load movements;
- Highway Impact Assessment – an analysis of the impact of the proposed development traffic on the agreed impact area and if appropriate include suitable mitigation measures developed to counter any adverse impacts. The impact assessment should also examine the performance of the site access; and
- Summary and Conclusions –summarising the key findings and the conclusions.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment**

Highways England has reviewed the accompanying scoping report. Whilst it is for the local planning authority to determine the final scope of the Environmental Statement, any future planning application must be supported by sufficient information for Highways England to assess the potential for any traffic or other impacts on the SRN to arise.

Based on the discussions we have had with United Utilities, the TA must be in accordance with the DfT Circular 02/2013 (referred to above) and should take account of the effects of all site traffic utilising M6 Junction 31 during the weekday AM and PM peak periods for those junctions.

Having considered the report, the general approach to the TA is reasonable, and there are no fundamental concerns that we wish to raise, but do make the following comments:

- Committed development to be factored-into the assessment of the peak hour traffic impacts to M6 Junction 31 needs to be confirmed by the respective local planning authorities where those junctions are to be located, not with Highways England (paragraph 572).
- New accesses to the SRN associated with a scheme of this nature are not permitted under the terms of Circular 02/2013 (paragraph 581). Reference to 'maintenance compounds' is within the context of highway maintenance compounds.
- A safety analysis of the SRN junctions affected should be included within the TA considering the record of incidents over the last five years.
- The TA should reflect all vehicle traffic being generated by the proposals during the weekday peak hours and not be presented in percentage impacts.
- Highways England will need to review and agree the trip generation and assignment for the proposals in order to consider the traffic impacts upon the SRN. We would recommend that this is based upon close contractor involvement by United Utilities so that the assumptions made are realistic and robust. It may be useful for this to be agreed with Highways England in advance of submission of the planning application itself in order that we can then provide a view as to what an appropriate level of modelling assessment of the SRN junctions may need to be given the number of peak-hour vehicle trips there would be likely involving Junction 31.
- Depending on the levels of traffic generated, an analysis under the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges standard TD22 for to assess the appropriateness of the slip roads at Junction 31 to accommodate the increase in flows could be necessary.

Due to the scheme location, there are no environmental matters affecting the SRN that we would need to comment on.

We hope that you will find our observations helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any more information or clarification on the advice in this letter. For

any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation, please send your correspondence to [planningnw@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:planningnw@highwaysengland.co.uk).

Yours sincerely,

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