



**Directorate for Planning Growth & Sustainability**  
Buckinghamshire Council,  
Walton Street Offices,  
Walton Street,  
Aylesbury  
HP20 1UA

mineralsandwaste@buckinghamshire.gov.uk  
0300 131 6000  
www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Clare Heeley  
AECOM  
Midpoint,  
Alencon Link  
Basingstoke RG21 7PP

20<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Clare,

**CC/0015/20 - South East Aylesbury Link Road (SEALR)**

**Further information required to support planning application under Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and Planning Application Considerations**

The consultation period on the above planning application has ended and we have received comments from a range of consultees **as well as residents' groups** and individual members of the public. Copies of these comments have been provided to you and they are available to view on our website.

Following our reviewing of the comments, we require further information in respect of the Environmental Statement before we can determine this application. There is also a number of planning related matters. This letter sets out the information required.

**Further Environmental Statement Information Requirements:**

**Update associated with 2017 Regulations**

As previously discussed, following our consideration of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 and the provisions contained within regulations 13, 14 and 25 of those regulations, it is considered the saving provision in Regulation 76(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 does not apply.

Further information is therefore required in respect to:

- Climate change
- Major accidents and disasters
- Human health impact
- A Statement of Competence

**Drainage**

Further information is required to demonstrate that the risks posed in relation to flood risk and surface water drainage can be adequately mitigated. This comprises:

- Further details of the Bedgrove Brook FSA, including maximum water depth, timings of inflows and outflows and freeboard provided along with cross sections through both the FSA and Bedgrove Brook.
- Further details of the reduction in flood depths referred to within Section 4.11 of the Surface Water Hydraulic Modelling Assessment.
- Further explanation on the need for the toe ditch in the eastern catchment to manage surface water flows as from the model outputs, there does not appear to be any interaction between the toe ditch and the surface water overland flow route.
- Provision of maps which show the difference in depth between the baseline and the proposed scenario (with mitigation) and sensitivity tests.
- Provision of cross-section across the flow routes within the western catchment of the SEALR with details of water level and peak flows.
- Hydrographs for, with and without scheme for the channels and ditches downstream of the road.
- Clarification on the flooding mechanisms occurring at the upstream side of the culvert in the western catchment with commentary on any changes from the pre-development scenario to post development scenario.
- Surface Water Drainage Strategy (updated to reflect the findings of the supporting technical report) and accompanied by a surface water drainage statement.

## Transport

We note that no section on transport was included within the Environmental Statement. The Transport Assessment was not formally as part of this document, though it was advised it should form part of the Environmental Statement at the scoping stage. We accept that the name of the document within the application is unlikely to change its content.

We do however consider that **additional environmental information is required in respect to the use of the transport model**, a review of some junction modelling, swept path analysis and forward visibility information, and the impact of the proposed development on non-motor vehicular modes of travel. Any secondary impacts, such as in relation to **air quality, noise, human health and climate change should be reviewed** in light of any updated transport information.

The following information pertaining to highways is required:

- **Junction 2: A41/ New Road should be subject to an assessment as it has a more than 5% increase in the 2021A scenarios.**
- The modelling of Junctions 2 and 3 should reflect the proposed Hampden Fields and Woodlands mitigation, including the Broughton Lane link and should be the combined model with the New Road junction. Clarification needs to be provided to confirm what changes have been made to the model for Junctions 2 and 3 in order to achieve the

improved results. The traffic flows used in the model should be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

- For junctions 4, 5 and 6 some of the flows are incorrect or omitted. This needs to be corrected.
- The model for Junction 6 is similar, but not the same as the model agreed and used to test and assess the Hampden Fields development. This model needs to be identical to the Hampden Fields model or an explanation as to why the model is not consistent with the Hampden Fields model is required.
- Junction 14 will need to be re-modelled with the right geometry.
- Junctions 18 and 19 will need to be re-modelled with a pedestrian crossing.
- Drawings should be provided for Junction 17, 20 and 21 to demonstrate that the models reflect the drawings.
- Junction 16, the linked ARCADY model should be used to determine the impact of the u-turning traffic. There is also a discrepancy in the phi value for the A413 north between the original model and the model with the U-turning traffic.
- Junction 22, an explanation of why this model differs from the agreed Woodlands and Hampden Fields models is required.
- Justification of the acceptability of the assessment results for the A413 Wendover Road/SEALR junction.
- A justification as to why there is a departure of DMRB standards on the northern Lower Road arm of the Lower Road Roundabout is required.
- A swept path drawing for the cul de sac to dwellings 8-28 Lower Road to demonstrate that a refuse vehicle can enter and exit the cul de sac is required.
- Confirmation on the level of forward visibility that will be achieved in the area of the existing access to County Farm Cottages

Information in the form of visibility splay drawings and predictive noise assessments is required in relation to impact of the proposed development on the level crossing and rail network to answer the following questions.

- Will the construction of the bridge have any adverse impact on the sighting at the level crossing?
- Will the noise of the construction works have any adverse impact on a user's ability to hear the whistle board that is located 400m from the level crossing?
- Once the bridge is constructed will the road noise have any adverse impact on a user's ability to hear the whistle board that is located 400m from the level crossing?

- Once the bridge is constructed will the structure have any adverse impact on a user's ability to hear the whistle board that is located 400m from the level crossing?

## **Landscape**

Written comments from the Landscape advisor have yet to be received. A verbal update has highlighted preliminary **concerns** about the appropriateness of the sensitivity of viewpoint 6 and the resulting effect in years 1 and 15. Further information will be provided once the written comments are available but at the time of writing it appears further Environmental Information will likely be necessary.

## **Ecology**

The Ecology Chapter is required to be updated so that it is based on the structure and content of the CIEEM EclA report template set out in Appendix 3 of the CIEEM EclA Guidelines, and that the correct version of the guidelines are referenced. An addendum on species that required further seasonal survey work (bats, water vole, otter, reptiles, great crested newt, badger, bird) is required. Further information in order to assess any impacts on Great Crested Newts is also needed.

Updates and clarification are required in respect to paragraph 8.6.10, 8.6.14 and 8.7.6, table 8\_15, residual effects and the cumulative impacts section.

The Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) should be amended to include greater reference to the ecological requirements of the scheme for maintaining and creating functional habitat for certain species, as per the details of the EclA. The LEMP should also include any receptor-specific post-construction monitoring. The content of the LEMP should be based on the guidance set out in British Standard BS42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development (or subsequent revised version).

The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report should include reference to the LEMP as well as the landscape drawings. The BNG calculation is dependent on the proposed landscape scheme and therefore the BNG assessment will need to be revised in line with any changes in the scheme.

## **Alternatives**

Further information on the **reasonable alternatives considered** (for example in terms of development design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects is required.

We note that in paragraph 3.2.15 of the Chapter 3: Assessment of Alternatives a two-lane dual carriageway was initially discounted. In paragraph 3.3.4 of the same chapter it appears that a two lane dual carriageway was considered to run as a one lane only dual carriageway. The application as submitted is for a two lane dual carriageway. **We are confused as to what option was investigated and initially discounted.**

In light of the above information, the UK Government having declared a climate change crisis, Aylesbury having been awarded Garden Town Status and the support for walking and cycling

within the VALP it is considered a greater assessment of the reasonable alternatives considered should be provided.

Further information on alternatives studied by the development is required in relation to:

- Consideration of alternative junction types (e.g. signalised crossroads) at Lower Road and Wendover Road
- Consideration of alternative roundabout designs with same entry capacity (specifically what are the reasons for selecting a roundabout with ICD of 69 metres for Lower Road Roundabout and 80 metres for Wendover Road - is this the most appropriate way of achieving capacity in this setting, and was consideration given to altering other factors, such as flare length, to achieve the capacity). It is noted the need to realign and enlarge the proposed roundabout at the western end of the route appears to be one of the reasons why the two-lane dual carriage way was initially discounted.
- Information on the limitations for railway crossing (e.g. future OEL clearance over railway, span/width/depth limitations of bridge) and alternative road slopes/bridge design consideration with particular reference to the landscape and visual impacts and impacts on amenity of residents of Stoke Grange.

Further information on alternatives and the comparison of environmental effects is required in relation to:

- How the control of speed of the road and roundabout junction (and associated impact on human health/risk of accidents) was considered in the assessment of alternatives.
- How the impact of the junction size on journey time (associated with geometric delay with larger and staggered junctions) for pedestrians/cyclists (and the effect on this of the attractiveness of walking/cycling in light of climate change and human health) were considered in the assessment of alternatives.

### **Cumulative Effects**

Any Environmental Impact Assessment can only consider the development applied for, though does need to consider both the direct and the indirect impacts of the proposal. In terms of assessing the cumulation of effects in the Environmental Statement, Part 5(e) of Schedule 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 refers to 'other existing and/or approved projects'. A site allocation in an emerging development plan where planning permission has not been granted is not considered to be an existing or approved development.

No further information is being sought in relation to cumulative impacts under the EIA Regulations.

### **Final Regulation 25 Comments**

Once we have received the Regulation 25 information outlined above the information the application will be publicised a second time for a thirty day period.

## Planning Application considerations

While we are pleased to see provision for pedestrian and cyclists has been made we are concerned about the lack of connectivity with the D-AGT 1 scheme and Stoke Grange. We are unsure why people would choose to walk and cycle along a dual carriageway with no-way on/off the road to surrounding developments. Where two non-competing schemes are coming forward at the same time, it would be reasonable for each to consider the effects with the other taken into consideration. We note that housing, green space, gypsy and traveller pitches, cycling and walking links (and other features) are allocated on the site though emerging policy D-AGT1 of the VALP and that development on the site is to come forward in accordance with a yet to be developed masterplan. This masterplan is to elaborate on policy D-AGT1 by advising on the site layout and disposition of land uses. We consider further information should be supplied to include reference to outline application 19/01628/AOP, particularly in regard to flooding, landscaping, biodiversity, walking and cycling. Evidence that connection with the Southern Link Road (through Hampden Fields Development) has been addressed should also be provided.

In addition to the above information, it would be very helpful if a scale drawing which merges figure 16 of the Transport Assessment with the South East Aylesbury Link Road Long Section Drawing could be provided. As a minimum, this drawing should show the chainage, existing and proposed ground levels, location and form of the bridge, location of the green corridor referred to within the Transport Assessment and location of the railway line. It may also be helpful to indicate the height of the noise barriers on this drawing.

In a number of comments members of the public have raised queries about the type and appearance of the proposed acoustic barrier. It would be helpful if further information on this could be provided prior to determination of the application.

During the consultation period, concern has been raised regarding the suitability of the transport model used for this application in relation to the emerging VALP and other planning applications subject to decision (e.g. Hampden Fields and Woodlands). It is stated in section 5.1 of the Transport Statement that assessment of the proposed scheme has been undertaken utilising the Aylesbury Transport Model (ATM) and that this is a cordon model of the countywide model for Buckinghamshire maintained by Transport for Buckinghamshire. A model validation report is included in Appendix E of the Transport Assessment. It is understood use of this model was advised by our Highways consultee at the pre-application stage. A plain English summary of why the model is suitable and its relationship with the emerging VALP and other planning applications will be sought from our Highways consultee.

Network Rail were consulted as a Rail Infrastructure Manager under Article 16 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. In their response, they raised concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on the level crossing. Stoke Mandeville No.2 Level Crossing as existing caters for the users of footpath SMA/2/2 and SMA/2/3. This is not proposed to change as a result of the proposed development. The safety impact of the proposed scheme on the level crossing is considered to be a material planning consideration and further Environmental Statement information has been requested in relation to this. No further comment on what may be an appropriate action from a planning perspective can be provided until this information is available.

Network Rail have quoted part j, Schedule 4 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 in their comments. This relates to development which is likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over a railway and requires that the operator of the railway and Secretary of State for Transport is consulted. With the information currently available, it is not considered likely that the proposed development would result in either a material increase in the volume or a material increase character of traffic using the Stoke Mandeville No.2 Level Crossing. Further information has been sought from Network Rail on why they consider this part of the Development Management Procedure has been triggered but to date an answer has not been forthcoming.

I am aware that part of the land subject to the proposed development has been laid out and maintained as 'public open space' as part of planning permission AV/1036/85. Within the NPPF, open space is defined as "All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity". It is acknowledged that the land is not designated Local Green Space but mindful of the NPPF definition, the land is considered to be open space. Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Paragraph 97 of the NPPF sets out that open spaces should not be built on unless certain criteria are met. This needs to be demonstrated.

As the application is made by the Council, in line with the constitution, it will need to be determined by the Planning Committee for Strategic Sites. The Committee dates, along with the date that the officers' report are published on the Council's website and the likely last date on which we will be able to accept information to make a particular committee date is set out below.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Reports Published</b>	<b>Information required by</b>
01 October 2020	24 September 2020	10 August 2020
29 October 2020	22 October 2020	07 September 2020
19 November 2020	12 November 2020	28 September 2020
17 December 2020	10 December 2020	26 October 2020

I trust this is of assistance. Please let me know if you required any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Kelham

Senior Planning Officer  
 Planning, Growth & Sustainability  
 Tel: 01296 383809

CC. Thomas Fitzpatrick, Buckinghamshire Council