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Date: 02 September 2021

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Dear Mr Heatley

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 - Regulation 6 Request for a Screening Opinion

Construction of a Four-Armed Roundabout to Improve/Replace the Existing Crossroad Junction, Dereham Road, Hempton, NR21 7JY

I refer to your letter of 30th April 2021 requesting a Screening Opinion in accordance with Regulation 6 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations') for the above development.

This letter sets out the County Planning Authority's response to your request, i.e. the County Council's Screening Opinion.

The Proposed Development

The proposal is for the construction of a four-armed roundabout within an area of 1.86 hectare (ha) at the junction of the B1146 with the Dereham Road and the C550 Hempton Road, at Hempton. The purpose of the scheme is to improve highway safety and reduce congestion by replacing the existing crossroads with a roundabout. The Proposed Scheme will include the following:

- A four-armed roundabout;
- The realignment of the B1146 either side of the roundabout to the north-west and south east;
- The realignment of the junction of Pond Road with the Hempton Road;

- Alterations to the bus stop layby on the north east bound side of the Hempton Road;
- The stopping up, removal of the existing pavement and reinstatement as landscaped areas, for the existing alignment of the B1146 either side of the existing junction and the existing alignment of Pond Road;
- New pedestrian crossings on the south-east arm of the roundabout; and
- New directional road signs on the approach to the roundabout.

Construction activities are likely to include the following:

- General construction activities;
- Drainage including new soakaways;
- HGV movements for construction activities;
- Importing and exporting of fill / excavation material;
- The construction and use of a compound area to the south of the site.

Appendix A attached with your letter provides a location plan to identify the land.

The development does not fall within Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations. The development does however fall within Schedule 2, Paragraph 10 Infrastructure Projects 1(f) Construction of roads (unless included in Schedule 1) of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations and the site exceeds the threshold for Screening, as the area of the works is greater than 1ha.

On this basis the “Selection Criteria” set out in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations need to be taken into account in determining whether the proposal would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. Under Schedule 3, the matters to be considered are the characteristics of the development, the location of the development, and the characteristics of the potential impacts.

Characteristics of the Development

In terms of the characteristics of the development and specifically its size and design, the scheme would involve the construction of new four-armed roundabout. However, because the site includes the existing crossroads at the junction of the B1146 (Dereham Road) and the C550 (Hempton Road) and approximately 70m in length of Pond Road from its junction with the Hempton Road, the additional area of land outside the existing road alignments that would be included in the scheme, primarily for the siting the new roundabout, would not be significant. The design of the scheme would result in the loss of a small area of common land, including the felling of one tree, but not otherwise result in the loss of any significant landscape features and any land disturbed would be reinstated on completion of the construction phase. It is anticipated that a construction compound would be established for the duration of the works to the south the site. On completion it is not anticipated that the completed scheme would give rise to any significant impacts on the character and appearance of the area or the local landscape. The works themselves would not be likely to result in a significant production of waste either during construction and none once the development is operational, and the proposal would not use a significant amount of natural resources. With regards to pollution and nuisances, whilst there may be a limited short-term increase in traffic and associated noise, dust and vehicular particulate emissions during the construction phase, including that arising from the management of traffic on the B1146 (Dereham Road), the C550 (Hempton Road) and Pond Road, these impacts would be limited in duration and short-term, with no subsequent on-going consequential increase in traffic, disturbance, generation of waste or pollution.

Location of Development

With regard to the location of the scheme, the site does fall partly within a sensitive area as defined by the EIA Regulations. The site comprises an area of what is understood to be common land to the north of Hempton Green and to the immediate south of The Green in Hempton. It includes limited features with approximately a dozen scattered broadleaf trees but with the rest of the Hempton Green providing an area of uncultivated open grassland, that extends into the area of the Remains of St Stephen's Priory, to the east of the site. The area to the south-east of the existing junction, falls within the Hempton Green County Wildlife Site (CWS), and comprises extensive areas of bracken, trees and woodland. Designations affecting or within 250m of the site including the following:

- The River Wensum Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which are located approximately 190m north-east the site (at its closes point to the north-eastern limit of the proposed application site boundary adjacent the junction of the Dereham Road and The Green;
- Four Listed Buildings, that are all located within 250m to the north of existing crossroads and include; the Church of the Holy Trinity which is Grade II Listed, located within 50m of the western end of the western limb of the proposed roundabout; the Bell Inn which is Grade II Listed, located approximately 50m to the north of the proposed application boundary on Pond Road; The Green which is Grade II Listed and located immediately adjacent to the proposed application boundary at the junction of the Green and the Dereham Road; and Wensum House which is Grade II Listed and located on Back Street approximately 60m north of the proposed application boundary at the junction of the Green and the Dereham Road;
- In addition to there are a number of buildings in the wider surrounding area that have been locally listed by North Norfolk District Council;
- The Hempton Conservation Area, which includes most of the proposed application site including the substantive area of the new roundabout. The southern boundary of the Conservation Area broadly runs along the line of the B1146, with all the land to north of B1146 lying within the Conservation Area and including almost all of the built-up area of Hempton to the north;
- The Remains of St Stephen's Priory Scheduled Ancient Monument, which lies adjoins the east side of B1146 to east of the proposed eastern limb of the new roundabout (with the submitted plan showing the application site as including a small part of the area of the Scheduled Monument);
- The Hempton Green County Wildlife Site (CWS) extending across the land to south of the B1146 and to the east of the C550 Hempton Road;
- The network of Public Rights or Way including a number of footpaths and bridleways, particularly to the south of the B1146 that include Hempton Footpath 4, Hempton Footpath 6, Hempton Footpath 9 and Hempton Bridleway 18 that cross the site; and
- Sections of the B1146, the Dereham Road and the C550 Hempton Road, to the north, east, south and west that are shown on the Environment Agency's surface water flood map, as being liable to a low, medium and high risk of surface water flooding; and
- The land the north of the B1146 is common land

Although the scheme will result in the loss of small area of common land, will impact on the footpaths crossing the new road alignment and extend into the area of the adjacent Scheduled Monument, it is not anticipated, following the completion of the construction of

the roundabout, that it would have any significant or on-going effects on any of the above listed designations.

Types and Characteristics of Potential Impact

With regard to the characteristics of the potential impact, the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact, would not be likely to be significant and there would not be likely to be any transboundary impact. There is a likelihood of a short-term and limited localised impacts from noise, dust and vehicular particulate emissions during the construction phase, but that these would be temporary and reversible. Once completed scheme is likely to give rise to a small increase in the level of surface water run-off but it is anticipated that this would be managed by built-in attenuation measures and that there would be no significant impacts on ecology. Accordingly, it is anticipated that there would not be any impact on the nearby European site, the River Wensum SAC, or any of the other adjacent and nearby designated sites and no significant impacts on the landscape, the built or historic environment or people.

Consultee Responses

The County Council has consulted with a number of consultees, who have commented on the need for EIA and the scope of any supporting assessments. A copy of the consultee responses are attached with this decision letter.

Conclusion

In conclusion and for the reasons set out above, the County Planning Authority considers that the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact would not be likely to be significant. It is therefore of the view that **the proposed development is not “EIA development”** (as defined in Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations) and accordingly that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would not need to be undertaken, and that an application for the proposed development need not to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. In coming to this conclusion, I have taken into account the “Indicative Thresholds and Criteria” on the Government’s Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) website. These indicate that for the construction of roads (unless included in Schedule 1), that EIA is likely to be required for new development over 2 km in length, with key issues being emissions, traffic, noise and vibration, the degree of visual intrusion and the impact on the surrounding ecology.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the case officer, Andrew Sierakowski on 01746 718799.

Yours sincerely



Nick Johnson
Head of Planning

Enc. Consultee Responses.