

## Sea Link ISH3 – ExA’s Action Points

### Traffic and Transport

11. The ExA requires the applicant to work with the County Councils (as Highway Authorities) to consider how any caps to HGV movements could be secured with wording also submitted, should the Secretary of State deem that capping is necessary. Please confirm whether this should be a requirement or part of a control document for securing the caps. This should also include which road links and junctions capping should be set and how the numbers of HGVs would be derived at to set the cap.

KCC: Any HGV caps should apply to the A256 and A299, and fall under the Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan.

15. Does KCC have any remaining concerns that need to be addressed during this examination in relation to Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AIL) access and the routes proposed? If so, explain how these issues could be resolved and how this should be secured.

KCC: KCC needs confirmation that the AILs will have rear-wheel steering – the applicant has confirmed this information is to come once contractor is appointed.

19. If there is anything else the Councils consider is necessary to include within the DCO with regards to traffic and transport matters, include this in your DL6 submission.

KCC: We are currently seeking legal advice in relation to the protected provisions for highway works, which we feel are significantly more favourable to the body carrying out the highway works than our standard s278 agreement. For example, it makes provision for KCC’s approval to be deemed to have been granted within 14/28 days if KCC hasn’t confirmed approval or refusal beforehand, it also does not provide for commuted sums, or dedication of new highway, which are key elements of our s278 agreements.

Furthermore, we have outlined the following additional measures we consider should be included in any DCO:

- A 30 HGV cap on Sundays and Bank Holidays, even with Highway Authority approval for the Bank Holidays. This would need to be given on a case-by-case basis, and not as a blanket approval for Bank Holiday working.
- A full Travel Plan monitoring scheme with the Highway Authority, the costs of which to be borne by the applicant.
- The applicant has offered to limit HGV movements using K-BM04 and K-BM05 to 10 HGVs per day, with no 2-way movements within the village and movements to be outside of school peaks.

- Provision of passing places on Ebbsfleet Lane North where required.
- The proposed Delivery Management System and Traffic Management and Monitoring System should also be responsive in real-time to network conditions, and adjust the movement of HGVs as required.

21. The ExA requires that the applicant and the highway authorities at SCC and KCC meet to discuss remaining matters of disagreement and try to find a way to progress on these matters as soon as possible. Provide an update at deadline 6.

KCC: A meeting was held on 31<sup>st</sup> March and a HGV cap was agreed.

22. With the submission of the junction modelling and the other information submitted by the applicant through this examination, do the Councils now consider that there is a sufficiently robust assessment of traffic and highways issues, both for the proposed development alone and also when considered cumulatively? If not, explain why.

KCC: Yes, we are of the view that there is sufficient evidence now submitted to demonstrate the specific and cumulative impacts of the proposed development's construction phase.

23. At this point in the examination, do the Councils consider that there would be any impacts to traffic and transport, particularly driver delay, which would be assessed as significant in your view? If considered that significant adverse impacts would remain after mitigation, is there further mitigation which should be secured? If so, how would this be secured and with what wording?

KCC: As confirmed in the ISH3 session, the modelled junctions were agreed between KCC and the applicant, as these represented the junctions where the level of cumulative impact was considered to be the greatest and most indicative. The modelling showed that the junctions are already expected to be over capacity in 2030 during peak hours, whether or not the proposed development goes ahead. Similar modelling for the Manston Airport DCO also showed the junction would be over capacity in 2039. Because the junctions are already congested, the additional construction traffic from the proposed development is not expected to lead to noticeable additional queuing or make conditions noticeably worse—especially since typical construction traffic will be around 46% lower than the busiest-day levels used in the modelling. To illustrate, the A299 Average Annual Daily Flow for 2024 was 23,965 vehicles, whereas Busiest Day development flows add 410 vehicle movements - a 1.7% increase. As the applicant discussed in ISH3, a full driver delay assessment at route level would be a lengthy exercise and in our view, would add little to what we already know about where the focus for mitigation needs to be. Furthermore, the results in our view do not warrant specific concerns for highway safety.

Would a requirement for the applicant to monitor and if necessary provide adaptive management/remediation mitigation be sufficient to overcome any concerns that the traffic and transport impacts would be significant? If so, please provide wording and explain how this could be secured.

KCC: As suggested in our previous response, adaptive management/remediation is, in our view, a feasible proposal when considering mitigating impact on the Major Road Network in the case of temporary peak overlap. In our view, the proposed Delivery Management System (DMS) and Traffic Management and Monitoring System (TMMS) are largely reactive in their nature and act in retrospect on network pressures. Queue monitoring at junctions can be achieved by providing/updating CCTV systems and integrating their use within the proposed DMS and TMMS measures, which has been discussed with the applicant and they are investigating.

24. Given the winter months the applicant undertook baseline traffic surveys, does there need to be a seasonal adjustment with the junction modelling to take into account busier summer months with tourism traffic? If so, please include with the junction modelling.

KCC: In our view, the baseline traffic surveys were conducted in a neutral timeframe, representative of the vast majority of highway conditions, including typical working patterns. Although the summer months do attract a higher total volume of leisure trips, these are generally spread out during the day and working week, correlating with lower commuting/school trips, and the impact on the peaks is less significant. The main concern is for more intensive periods of leisure traffic, notably Bank Holidays and when there are public events on. These are difficult to accurately and meaningfully reflect within the Transport Assessment as the traffic impact will vary significantly depending on weather conditions, tide times, the nature/attraction/publicisation of the event and so forth. Not to mention the short-term effect of these peaks and overlap with project traffic flows, it seems to the Highway Authority that the best intervention would be effective Construction Traffic Management, as discussed before. Furthermore, any adjustment to the modelling for this factor will only further confirm what we already know about where the focus for mitigation needs to be.

## **Socio-economics and tourism**

28. Are there remaining concerns with regard to the potential displacement of tourists by workers of the proposed development (or in combination with other workers of other developments in the area) in tourist accommodation?

KCC: KCC has no comment on this issue and defers to the relevant District/Borough Councils.

## **Cumulative Effects**

48. Applicant and local authorities to develop a joint position statement with regard to the unmitigated significant residual landscape and visual effects to see if there are further mitigation measures that can be included or compensation measures to offset any residual significant effects, if the Secretary of State considers that to be necessary.

[KCC: KCC defers to the relevant District and Borough Councils on issues related to landscape and visual effects.](#)