

This document is intended to fulfil the action assigned to Mark Hawes in the Open Floor Hearing on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February. The action involves responding to the Applicant response submitted via REP3-026 Highways England Deadline 3 Submission - 7.15 Applicant's Responses to Written Representation (table 1-6). Due to the inclusion of large pictures this document has been split into two parts. This document is part 2 and is intended to be read after part 1.

In responding to this document each commentary refers back to the unique identifier used in table 1-6.

#### **Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 6**

1. As the Applicant responding to the Visual effect section acknowledges that they have not visited my property I thought it useful to share some photographs which further illustrate the impact the scheme has on visual effect. Please see the section at the end of this document for further details.

#### **Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 7**

1. Point 1 from the Applicant. We welcome confirmation that the noise barrier will be constructed but disappointed to read that cost is the only reason why it does not extend to the end of the property boundary. The response from the Applicant suggests that their sole focus is to protect the noise impact upon the buildings, with little consideration or provision for its impact within the garden area.
2. Point 2 from the Applicant recognises that it is necessary to regularly resurface the road to minimise the noise impact. Unfortunately, I am not confident that this will happen as suggested. The stretch of the A1 south of this scheme has not been resurfaced in the last 25 years and is heavily pitted and worn. The only maintenance on this stretch of the road has been to fill pot holes.
3. Point 3 from the Applicant recognises that the increased traffic and speeds, (at opening) will raise the level of noise above Significant Observed Adverse Effect (SOAEL) safe levels. This is very alarming given the known adverse effects noise has on health. This statement reinforces the disappointment that the Applicant is not prepared to extend the noise barrier or consider other mitigation. The Applicant speculates that without the scheme the noise levels will eventually exceed SOAEL thresholds. I am very doubtful of this forecast as the Applicant has previously suggested that the average speed of the traffic will decrease without the scheme going ahead. As there is a direct correlation between speed and noise it is logical to assume that noise levels will not increase markedly as suggested. Even in the unlikely event that noise levels did increase without the scheme this will happen at a much slower rate and well beyond the rapid digital increase expected in 2024.
4. Point 4 from the Applicant. As previously highlighted the Applicant does not provide any indication of the adverse noise impact within the garden area where we spend most of leisure time. The garden is the main attraction of the property and is the primary reason why we bought the property. The projected increase in noise is likely to significantly change our use of the garden and the property unless additional mitigation can be provided.
5. Point 6 from the Applicant. It is reassuring to read that the Applicant did consider other mitigation measures but disappointing that none were taken forward. In looking at the possibility of an earth bund the applicant suggests that this is not feasible due to the lack of space. We are surprised by this conclusion as there is a sizeable area at the end of the noise

barrier which would be ideal for an earth bund. I would welcome the opportunity to explore this further with the Applicant.

**Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 7A**

1. Point 1 from the Applicant. We welcome confirmation that the noise barrier will be constructed.
2. Point 4 from the Applicant. Given the significant adverse impact it is particularly disappointing to read that cost is the only reason for not providing noise barrier coverage to the full length of the property. As a full-length barrier would also help mask some of the visual impact, I am surprised that this was not also factored into the cost benefit analysis. Similarly, having made a decision to shorten the barrier it is disappointing that other cheaper options are not provided.

**Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 7B**

1. Point 3 from the Applicant. As previously highlighted the assessment the focus on noise impact is solely on the building and not the garden where we like to spend most of our leisure time. In acknowledging that the noise barrier is the only mitigation it stands to reason that those areas not sheltered by the barrier will be a lot noisier. For example, the point of access to the property will be circa 20 metres from the dual carriageway and totally exposed to the road and increased noise.

**Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 7C**

1. As highlighted in the DCO the introduction of the scheme will see a change in how the road is used. There will be a greater level of long-distance travel which is less constrained by peak hours. As such it is likely that the biggest increases in traffic (and noise) will be in the periods outside of peak hours, particularly the early evening period in the summer. This is where we will notice the noise increase the most as the current levels of traffic at this time are very low. Unfortunately, it is when we enjoy using the garden the most. It is unfortunate that this is not recognised by the Applicant as they only consider the impact of noise in two time periods. This would appear to be a very clunky approach given the wide range of noise variation between 06.00 and 00.00.

**Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 7D**

1. As previously highlighted the Applicant does not provide any indication of the adverse noise impact within the garden area where we spend most of leisure time. The garden is the main attraction of the property and is the primary reason why we bought the property. The projected increase in noise is likely to significantly change our use of the garden and the property unless additional mitigation can be provided.

**Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 7E – New Access road**

1. Although we can hear some road noise in the woodland when the wind blows from the west, otherwise the area is far enough away from the current a1 road to not suffer. On previous visits from the Applicant, it has been noted how peaceful and quiet the area is.

2. The noise from vehicles using the new access road will intermittently spoil the enjoyment of this area. This noise will be noticeably louder than any other experienced in the area. Based upon current usage this is expected to exceed 20 vehicle journeys a day.

**Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 7E - Depot**

1. As highlighted previously, I have no doubt that the close proximity of the soil store and the limited noise mitigation measures, will mean HGV vehicles accessing the soil store will increase noise levels during construction.

**Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 7F**

1. The thrust of the original comment was to highlight that there will be no longer be anywhere within the property where we can escape the noise of cars or avoid a view of a tarmac road. This still stands true despite the response from the Applicant.

**Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 7G**

1. The Applicant response states, "Operational vibration is scoped out of the assessment methodology as a maintained road surface will be free of irregularities as part of project design and under general maintenance, so operational vibration will not have the potential to lead to significant adverse effects." . In living at the property, it is very noticeable when large vehicles pass the property at fast speeds the house does vibrate. As this is not frequent it is something that we can tolerate. With increased speeds and HGV traffic we believe that this will become a common occurrence, taking the issue above any reasonable tolerance levels.
2. The Applicant has suggested that vibrations only occur when there are irregularities in the road surface. We do not believe that there are any irregularities in the current surface, so how does that account for the current vibrations felt at the property.
3. The Applicant suggests that the road will regularly be resurfaced to minimise the risk of vibration. As previously highlighted, the stretch of the A1 south of this scheme has not been resurfaced in the last 25 years and is heavily pitted and worn. The only maintenance on this stretch of the road has been to fill pot holes.
4. Given the closeness of the property to the carriageway and the adverse impact that vibrations have on a property of this age, it was disappointing to read that a vibration survey was never carried out on this project.

**Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 9 – Air Quality**

1. The Applicant has provided a lot of detail in this section to explain the approach to forecasting air quality. This includes a lot of technical detail, which I am not in a position to challenge or question. However, in deriving the results the Applicant is very focused on demonstrating that government threshold limits will be achieved and appears to have neglected the human element here. As recognised by the Highways England own on-line literature, increased traffic travelling at faster speeds will result in a degradation in air

quality. Any degradation in air quality could have a direct impact upon my family's health. As highlighted in the Applicant's response if the models are proven to be incorrect then there are no options for recourse.

### **Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Summary Response**

1. Point 1 Applicant Response. The Applicant states, "*does not accept that there are 50 issues which remain outstanding.*" As part of the PIER consultation in May 2020 we made a submission, which included a detailed list of over 50 issues. Although we have yet to receive a response to this submission, we are currently looking to meet so that we can go through the list to confirm the latest status. Having recently updated the list to reflect the deadline 3 responses from the Applicant the number of outstanding issues is growing rather reducing. I intend to share the latest list with the Applicant prior to our meet.
2. Point 2 Applicant Response. The Applicant suggests that the list of 50 issues is partially composed of detail design queries that I shared at our recent on-site meet. This is not correct. The list of queries shared with the Applicant at the site meet are very much questions rather than issues and do not form part of the 50 outstanding issues.

### **Follow-up response to deadline 3 comments from the Applicant – Reference 6**

1. As the Applicant responding to the Visual effect section acknowledges that they have not visited the property I thought it useful to share some photographs which further illustrate the impact the scheme has on visual effect. We understand that an Accompanied Site Inspection is planned to for Warrener's house A1 bus stop which sits outside my property but there are no plans to look at the impact of the PMA within. If considered useful and appropriate we would be more than happy to accommodate a site inspection within the Northgate Farm property. The shared pictures include:
  - a. View to the South of the property and the route of the new PMA
  - b. View to the North East of the property
  - c. View to the West of the property
  - d. View to the North West of the property

#### **View to the South of the property and the route of the new PMA**

The following two photographs are taken from the South East corner of the property. This view will change dramatically when the new PMA is constructed. The intended route of the road is along the trees and then across the immediate foreground. Following construction, the road will be very much in the foreground of this view. When the hedgerow matures the road will become hidden but the hedgerow will block the outlook across the field.



The following photograph is taken from the South East corner of the property. This view will change dramatically when the new PMA is constructed. The intended route of the road is along the trees and then across the immediate foreground. This is one of our favourite spots for relaxing and enjoying the views.







### **View to the North East of the property**

The following photograph is taken from the North East corner of the property looking to the North. This view will change dramatically when the new PMA is constructed. The intended route of the road is directly across this view blocking any outlook



### **View of the Hedgerow and trees to be felled.**

This is taken from the North East corner of the property looking back at the hedgerow and trees to be felled.





**View of the Westerly outlook from the North West corner of the property.**

This is taken from the North West corner of the property looking West to where the new Swale1 Maintenance road will be constructed and the soil store will be set up. This will involve several trees being felled and North Gate House being demolished. The proposed noise barrier does not have an impact here.



**View of the North West outlook from the North West corner of the property.**

This is taken from the North West corner of the property looking North West. This photograph highlights:

1. The Coronation Trees to be felled.
2. In addition to the dual expansion the road starts to widen here for the layby runoff.
3. The approximate position of the new layby is illustrated by the sign.
4. From this vantage point in the future, you will see a very different outlook which includes the expanded carriageway, the new Layby, the PMA access road leading to our property and the Swale 1 maintenance access road.



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