

A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham

Scheme Number: TR010059

7.22.1 Applicant's Responses to Deadline 4 Submissions – Appendix i: The Warreners Private Means of Access Options

Rule 8(1)(c)

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

April 2021

Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure Planning
(Examination Procedure) Rules
2010**

**The A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to
Ellingham**
Development Consent Order 20[xx]

**Appendix i: Site Inspection The Warreners Private Means
of Access Options**

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1 OVERVIEW

- 1.1.1. The response from Colin Moor at Deadline 4 [REP4-079] makes reference to alternative options to access the properties at Warreners House, at the southern end of Part A, from a northerly direction which would avoid access through West View. Presented in this technical note are two options considered by the Applicant which have been discounted and responded to at Deadline 5.

2 CURRENT PROPOSAL

- 2.1.1. The proposed Private Means of Access (PMA) to the properties at Warreners House comprises a northern extension of West View and has a proposed width of 4.8m with 0.5m verges with minimum horizontal radii of 30m ("Current Proposal"). The vertical alignment of the road closely follows the existing terrain to avoid large earthworks. The alignment is designed to accommodate a combined harvester and trailer. The design complies with the Residential Roads and Footpaths in Northumberland manual.
- 2.1.2. The Current Proposal includes the planting of a hedge along the boundary to provide privacy as shown on the Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A [REP4-010].

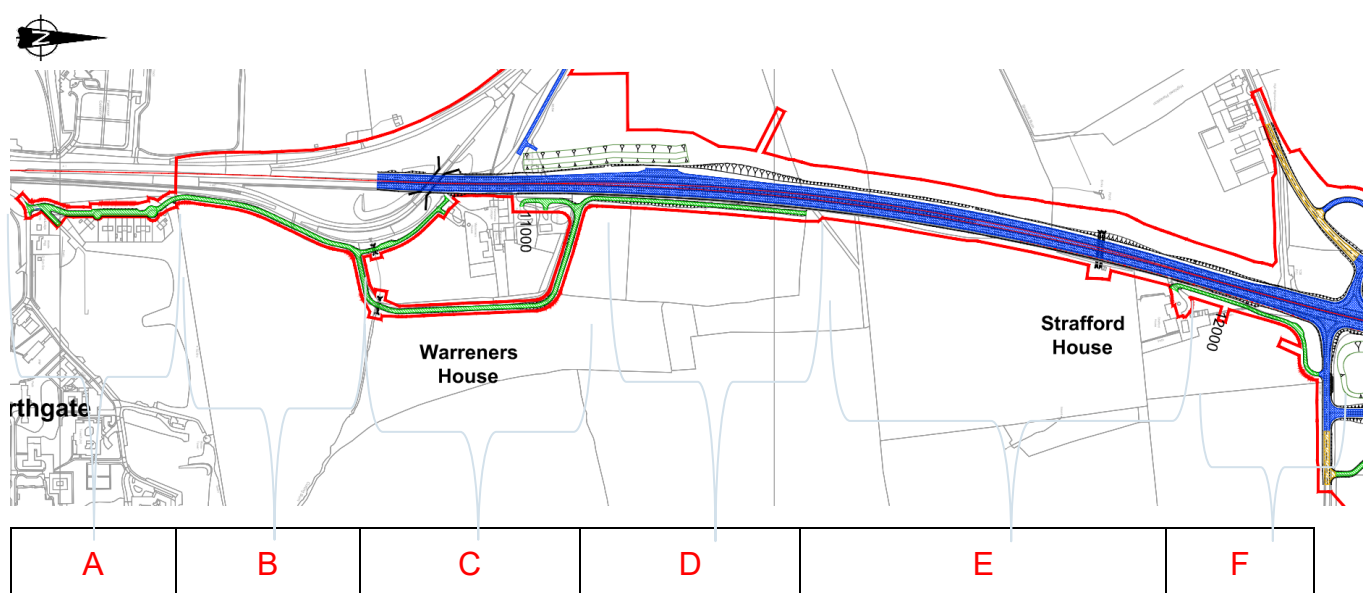


Figure 1 - Proposed Works

- a. Section A** – Work No. 5A upgrade of West View to adoptable standard (Section 38 agreement for works by Taylor Wimpey) enhanced following consultation with residents.
- b. Section B** – Work No. 5B new PMA constructed in bound material starting from the turning circle at the north end of West View, diversion of gas house, access to severed field plots, predominantly constructed in agricultural field
- c. Section C** – Work Nos 5B and 5C PMA wraparound of Warreners House to provide access to all properties, constructed in bound material and predominantly constructed in agricultural field
- d. Section D** – Work No. 5D field access constructed in unbound material to woodland and water meter
- e. Section E** – Work No. 1B online widening of mainline carriageway to the west, retaining existing A1 as southbound carriageway.
- f. Section F** – Work No. 8J new access from Hebron Road to Stafford House.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1.1. The alternative to Work No.5B in the draft DCO [REP4-004 and 005] proposed by the respondent was for a new private means of access (PMA) to Warreners House to be accessed off Hebron Road, to the east of the proposed Highlaws junction. Two alternative routes to facilitate this proposal have been assessed. Figure 2 below indicates the two options that have been considered.
- 3.1.2. The first alternative PMA, Alternative Route A, as shown on Figure 3, upgrades the repositioned driveway for Strafford House, (Section F) and run parallel to the existing A1 (Section E). This would tie into the northern extent of Section D. This Section D would be widened and upgraded from an unbound field access to a bound PMA carriageway. For this alternative Section C would still be required to permit access for all residents at Warreners House and the adjacent agricultural plots. Section B would be removed from the Scheme and Section A would revert to Taylor Wimpey to undertake.
- 3.1.3. The second route, Alternative Route B, as shown on Figure 4, would follow field boundaries (Sections F, E & D in Figure 1) from an upgraded entrance off Work No 8H Hebron Road, to tie into the north-eastern extent of Section C. Again, Section C would still be required to permit access for all residents at Warreners House and the adjacent agricultural plots. Section B would be removed from the Scheme and Section A would revert to Taylor Wimpey to undertake.

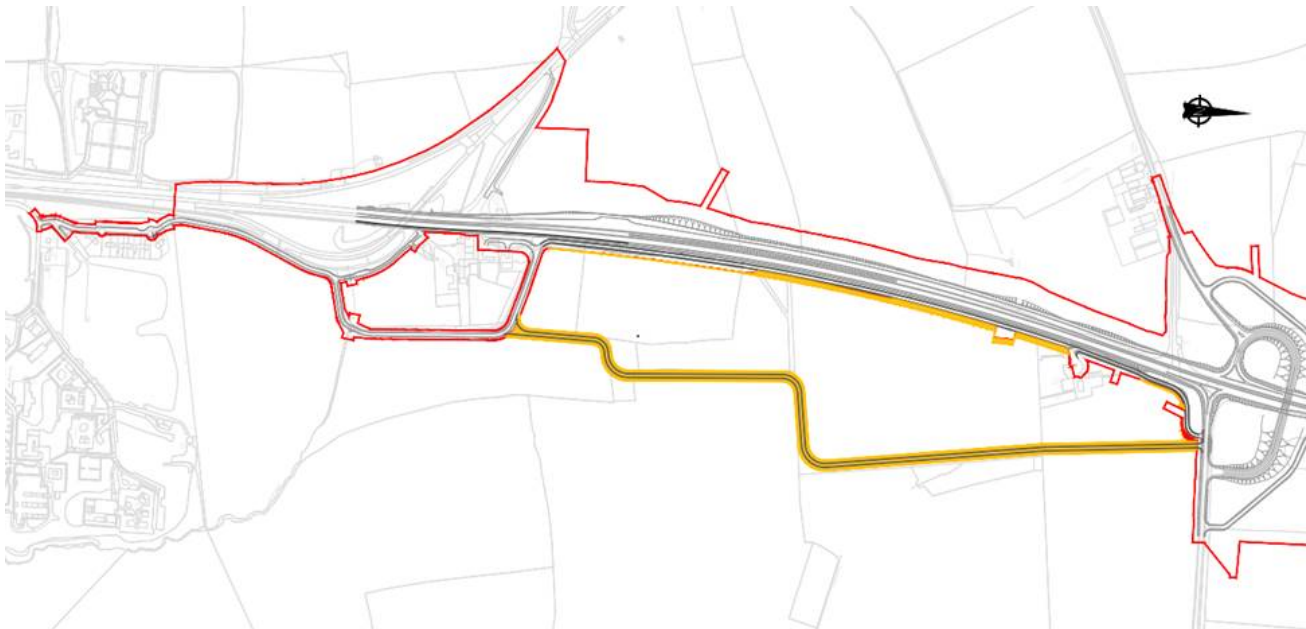


Figure 2 - Alternative Routes

3.2 ALTERNATIVE ROUTE A

- 3.2.1. Alternative Route A would require additional land take from Trafford House and would result in the removal of much of the existing woodland to the south of the current access to Trafford House off the A1. This woodland provides a screen for Trafford House and to mitigate this loss through replacement planting would result in the loss of some additional garden space. The planned alignment of the Trafford House entrance would need to be amended to allow Trafford House vehicles to move off the PMA until the gates had been opened. This would result in further impact to the garden area of Trafford House.
- 3.2.2. The Scheme currently does not propose any shared access for Trafford House (unlike all of the properties at Warreners) and therefore this would be a negative impact on the property value. The additional land take would also have a negative impact. If Alternative Route A was taken forward, there would be the potential for a blight claim from Trafford House.

BUILDABILITY

- 3.2.3. Alternative Route A would result in an increase in the length of new PMA required to provide access to the residents of Warreners House and the adjacent fields. The additional length of PMA from Trafford House to tie in with the north end of Section D would be approximately 520m. Again, the saving in comparison to the DCO Scheme would be the removal of the 300m length of Section B from Figure 1. However, the Scheme would need to increase the size of the junction with Hebron Road to accommodate the increased usage and use by agricultural vehicles, widen the PMA over the length of Section F itself, provide a new length of PMA on Section E with glare protection to the main carriageway and upgrade Section D to a wider PMA constructed in bound materials. The adoption works for West View would still be required to be undertaken by Taylor Wimpey. The diversion of the West View gas house would be avoided but this saving would be offset by an additional two water main diversions and an additional culvert crossing of Shieldhill Burn. Given that the extent of the construction works required to construct Alternative Route A would be greater the Applicant considers that this alternative PMA would also not reduce health and safety risks during construction and would impose a greater maintenance burden during operation for the PMA owners.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

- 3.2.4. Alternative Route A is likely to be built on a slight embankment for drainage purposes, generally following the existing topography and therefore there is a potential for the change in earthworks to affect noise levels elsewhere. As the operational stage study area has been derived based on the Scheme extents, this may prompt the requirement for an extension to the Scheme operational study area to account for the change to the Scheme extents. As the PMA is a private access there should be no impact to the Scheme operational stage assessment from the access road itself.
- 3.2.5. The mitigation measures would remain the same for the construction phase and the Applicant would likely conclude that no significant effects are predicted, as is currently the case.

BIODIVERSITY

- 3.2.6. Alternative Route A would increase the loss of arable, arable field margin (HPI), hedgerow (HPI) habitat and woodland (HPI) habitat. This alternative access would potentially increase damage to retained woodland/trees and hedgerow due to their proximity along the A1 southbound carriageway. Alternative Route A would potentially decrease the suitability of the proposed wildlife culvert which would need to be increased in length to pass under the PMA in addition to the A1.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

- 3.2.7. Alternative Route A is not predicted to result in any adverse impacts on heritage assets, however further assessment would be recommended once the design were determined to identify if any mitigation is required. .

POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH

- 3.2.8. Alternative Route A may result in different journey times for accessing the relevant properties at Warreners House with an increase in journey times if travelling to and from the south, but with no demolition / significant changes in land take the Applicant does not expect this Alternative Route A to result in any significant effects for both residential property or agriculture from a population and human health perspective.

LANDSCAPE

Character

- 3.2.9. Alternative Route A would require the removal of existing mature woodland, adjacent to Trafford House (518m²) and a further area of woodland (approx. 1,100m²) at the southern end of Section D. This is substantially more than the woodland identified for removal in the proposed route of the PMA. The alternative access would widen the cross section of the Scheme corridor in total, broadening the effects on the local landscape north of Morpeth. The provision of the alternative PMA would likely require anti-glare barrier to be installed between the A1 and the PMA and potentially a safety barrier, both of which would potentially impact on the capacity to plant and establish the replacement Coronation Avenue trees and the essential hedgerow proposed on the mitigation plans. Not replacing these trees would compromise the Applicant's commitment to restoring the Coronation Avenue, which has been identified within the Local Impact Report as substantially contributing to the landscape character of the area. Where woodland is removed, a compensatory area would need to be identified and secured, outside the current Order limits.

Visual

- 3.2.10. The PMA extension would increase awareness of the access road in views from Trafford House and consideration would need to be given to extending the Order limits in order that the land can be secured to plant a hedgerow on the east side of the PMA.
- 3.2.11. Additional removal of woodland adjacent to Trafford House would reduce the screening capacity of the remaining planting, a screen fence may need to be provided as a southern extension of that currently proposed, depending upon the alternative proposals and detailed

design. As a consequence, the impacts on Strafford House may be made worse. The visual impacts are currently identified in the DCO application as being significant.

- 3.2.12. The change to a bound PMA in Section D would slightly increase the visual impacts from the garden of Northgate House, views to the north from within the garden space would include the bound PMA within Section D together with the bound PMA in Section C, as identified by the owner. The visual impacts on Northgate House are therefore likely to be slightly worse as a result of this alternative access.

ROAD DRAINAGE AND THE WATER ENVIRONMENT

- 3.2.13. The conversion from unbound to bound surfacing on the Section D track to the north of Capri Lodge would change the permeability and require a drainage system with attenuation measures to ensure no increase in flows to a new outfall. Works would be required on the existing Shieldhill Burn culvert to ensure that it is capable of withstanding the additional loading. Paragraph 3.2.15 in Appendix 10.1: Flood Risk Assessment Part A [APP-254] outlines that satellite imagery and flood mapping indicates that the current culvert does not have sufficient capacity and a proportion of the water flows overland and back into the culvert. The new arrangement would likely hinder this, requiring additional flood management or compensation measures.

AIR QUALITY

- 3.2.14. There should be no change to the conclusions of the air quality assessment as a result of Alternative Route A. There would be no significant air quality effects on human receptors resulting from the operation of Scheme.
- 3.2.15. The mitigation measures would remain the same for the construction phase and, with the application of these measures, there would be no significant air quality effects arising from the construction of the Scheme.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- 3.2.16. It is anticipated that Alternative Route A would lead to the loss of slightly more agricultural land, however, this would not affect the overall assessment of effects for agricultural land.

Material Resources

- 3.2.17. Alternative Route A would make no significant difference to materials and waste assessment outcomes.

CLIMATE

- 3.2.18. Alternative Route A may lead to a slight difference in the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the Scheme but this would not be enough to make any significant difference.

SUMMARY

- 3.2.19. The Applicant considers that Alternative Route A would result in an increase in the environmental impact of the PMA together with the increased length of PMA required and the upgrade to other sections of proposed PMA and access tracks to provide access to the residents of Warreners House and the adjacent fields. Given these points and the risk of blight on Strafford House, this option is not considered viable. Furthermore, the extent of

the construction works required to construct and maintain this alternative PMA would be greater. Therefore, the Applicant considers that this alternative PMA option would not reduce health and safety risks.

3.3 ALTERNATIVE ROUTE B

BUILDABILITY

- 3.3.1. Alternative Route B would result in a significant increase in the overall length of new PMA required to provide access to the resident of Warreners House, the adjacent fields and water meter. The approximate length of Alternative Route B is 1200m. The only saving from the DCO Scheme is the removal of Section B from Figure 1 with a saving in length of approximately 300m; the upgrade works for West View to adoptable standard would still be required to be undertaken by Taylor Wimpey. The diversion of the West View gas house would be avoided but this saving would be offset against a water main diversion and an additional culvert crossing of the Shieldhill Burn. Other works such as the fencing of the alternative PMA over its length would also be required. Given that the extent of the construction works required to construct Alternative Route B would therefore be significantly greater the Applicant considers that this alternative PMA would increase health and safety risks during construction and would have greater maintenance requirements during operation by the PMA owners.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

- 3.3.2. Alternative Route B is likely to be built on a slight embankment for drainage purposes, generally following the existing topography and therefore there is a potential for the change in earthworks to affect noise levels elsewhere. As the operational stage study area has been derived based on the Scheme extents, this may prompt the requirement for an extension to the Scheme operational study area to account for the change to the Scheme extents. As the PMA is a private access there should be no impact to the Scheme operational stage assessment from the access road itself.
- 3.3.3. The mitigation measures would remain the same for the construction phase and the Applicant would likely conclude that no significant effects are predicted, as is currently the case.

BIODIVERSITY

- 3.3.4. Alternative Route B would have adverse implications in comparison to the DCO proposal. This alternative would increase the loss of arable, arable field margin (HPI) and hedgerow (HPI) habitat, compounded by potential increase in damage to retained woodland/trees and hedgerow (due to their proximity along the alternative route). Additional bat surveys (in relation to adjacent trees) and badger surveys would be required to rule out any adverse effect, as the route falls outside the current study area. Alternative Route B would need to be fully assessed to determine any other ecological constraints.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

- 3.3.5. Alternative Route B goes through the middle of a site of a cropmark enclosure which could be Prehistoric, requiring a re-visit of the Scheme proposed evaluation strategy in the Written

Schemes of Investigation (WSIs). A geophysical survey over the area may be required to get a better understanding of what the cropmark is and how far it extends. If buried heritage assets are located here, they would be subject to permanent adverse impacts due to ground disturbance with potentially significant effects. The magnitude of the effects would be dependent on the value of any buried heritage assets present.

POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH

- 3.3.6. Alternative Route B would result in different journey times for accessing the relevant properties at Warreners House with an increase in journey times if travelling to and from the south. There would be additional land take from the land parcels for Alternative Route B, which would need to be assessed .

LANDSCAPE

Character

- 3.3.7. Alternative Route B would sever two field boundaries, impact on approximately 4nr hedgerows and sever a small block of woodland, requiring a physical break in the landscape element. This landscape is characterised by small blocks of woodland within a substantially arable landscape and the Scheme would need to mitigate this woodland loss requiring DCO order limits widening. It would introduce a new impact on Strafford House, the main elevation and garden space facing to the south, although removing the risk of blight. This route would introduce a new hard element within the existing open countryside.

Visual

- 3.3.8. Alternative Route B would introduce a new access road and vehicle movements with open views to the south-east and experienced by the occupants of Strafford House – this receptor is already identified as being subject to a significant effect, mitigation along the western side of the access road could reduce visual impact so that only vehicles are particularly noticeable. The effects on Northgate Farm are unlikely to change as a result of the changes.

ROAD DRAINAGE AND THE WATER ENVIRONMENT

- 3.3.9. Alternative Route B crosses the alignment of Shieldhill Burn. At this point the watercourse is in a pipe and flows overland along the natural alignment to re-join the open channel downstream. The alignment of this alternative access road would cross this overland flow route and so additional flood risk measures would also need to be considered.

AIR QUALITY

- 3.3.10. The flows along the PMA are likely to be so low that there would be no material change to the air quality assessment for the proposed PMA or the alternative route. However, there would be a requirement to update the assessment for air quality and construction dust (as it would trigger the criteria of a change in route alignment), even though the conclusions are unlikely to change.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- 3.3.11. It is anticipated that Alternative Route B would lead to the loss of slightly more agricultural land, however, this would not affect the overall assessment of effects for agricultural land.

MATERIAL RESOURCES

- 3.3.12. Alternative Route B would make no significant difference to materials and waste assessment outcomes, despite a likely increase in vegetation waste from removal of trees for the new access road.

CLIMATE

- 3.3.13. Alternative Route B may lead to a slight difference in the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the Scheme due to the increased construction requirements, but this would not be enough to make any significant difference to the existing assessment.

SUMMARY

- 3.3.14. Alternative Route B would result in a significant increase in the overall length of PMA required to provide access to the resident of Warreners House and the adjacent fields, but removes the risk of blight when compared with Alternative Route A. Given that the extent of the construction works required to construct the alternative PMA would therefore be greater, Alternative Route B would have adverse impacts on biodiversity, heritage, landscape and flooding. Further, the Applicant considers that the alternative PMA would not reduce health and safety risks during construction.



Figure 3 - Alternative Route A

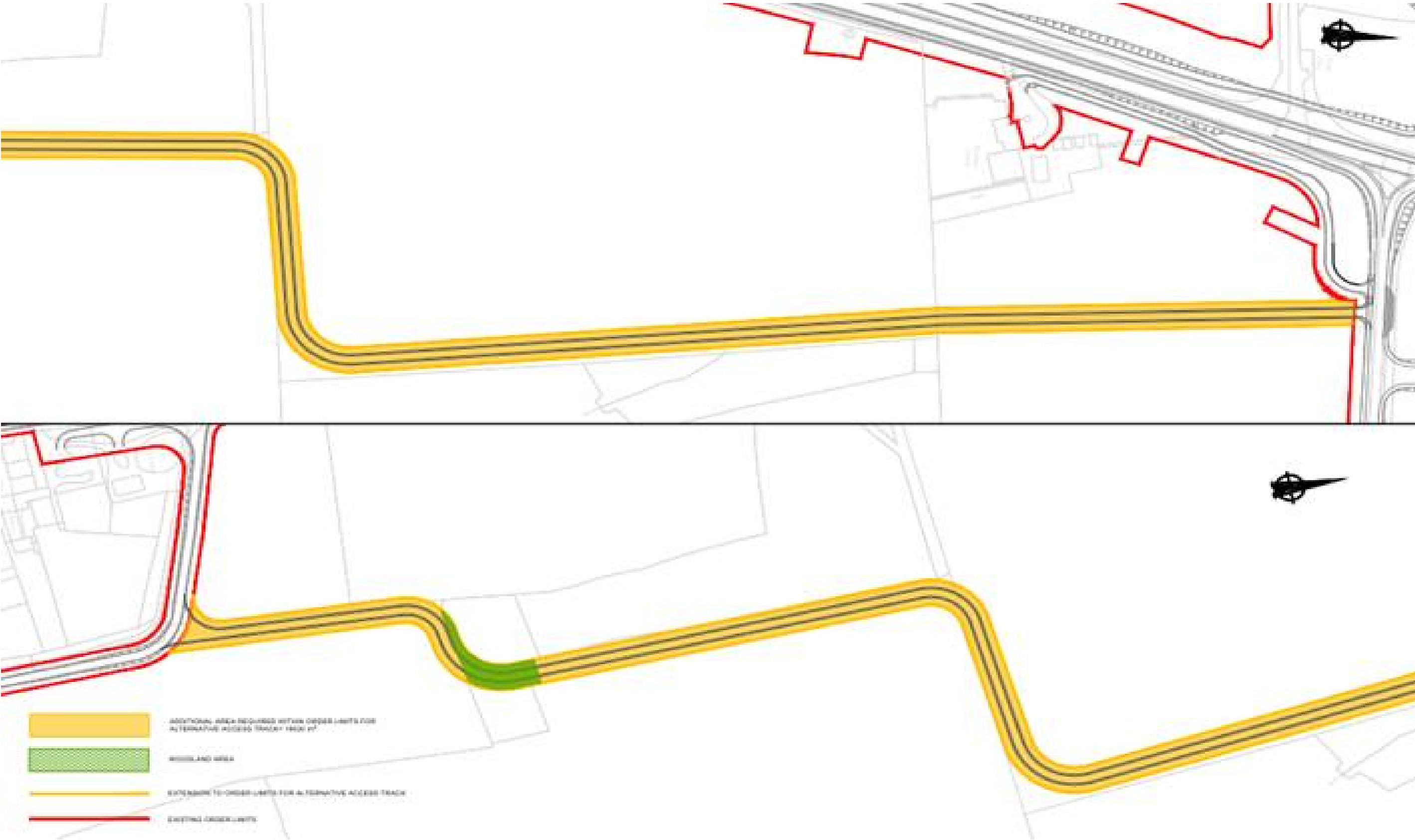


Figure 4 - Alternative Route B

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