

A46 Coventry Junctions (Walsgrave)

Scheme Number: TR010066

1.4 Programme Document

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms
and Procedure) Regulations 2009

Volume 6

November 2024

Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure
Planning
(Applications: Prescribed
Forms and Procedure)
Regulations 2009**

A46 Coventry Junctions (Walsgrave)
Development Consent Order 202[x]

PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

Regulation Number	Regulation 5(2)(q)
Planning Inspectorate Scheme Reference	TR010066
Application Document Reference	TR010066/APP/1.4
Author	A46 Coventry Junctions (Walsgrave) Project Team, National Highways

Version	Date	Status of Version
Rev 0	November 2024	Application Issue

A46 Coventry Junctions (Walsgrave)

TR010066

Programme Document

July 2024

Programme Document – for A46 Walsgrave (July 2024)

1. Purpose of the Document

National Highways (the “Applicant”) has submitted this Programme Document to the Planning Inspectorate in compliance with the Expression of Interest request sent on 29 May 2024, which requested the level of pre-application services for the A46 Coventry Junctions (Walsgrave) (the “Scheme”) is seeking. The Programme Document sets out the main steps that the Applicant anticipates will be taken during the preparation of the application for development consent. As the Scheme has been in the ‘pre-application’ stage since April 2023, the Applicant has also provided an account of activities since that date to July 2024.

The Programme Document is now a requirement for all Development Consent Orders to complete prior to entering the pre-application stage, as set out within Planning Inspectorate’s Pre-Application Prospectus (May 2024). DCO applications currently within the pre-application stage, but not due to be submitted until after October 2024, are required to submit a Programme to the Planning Inspectorate by 10 July 2024.

2. Scheme Description, Broad Timescales and Level of Service

The Scheme is part of Government’s commitment to improve the A46 ‘Trans-Midlands Trade Corridor’ between the M5 and the Humber Ports as set out in the Road Investment Strategy (RIS 1 and RIS 2). The Scheme is located on the eastern edge of Coventry in the administrative areas of Coventry City Council and Warwickshire County Council (Upper Tier Authority) Rugby Borough Council (Lower Tier Authority).

This Scheme is categorised as an Alteration Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under sections 14(1)(h) and 22(1)(b) of the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) as:

- The highway to be altered is wholly in England.
- The Applicant as the strategic highways company will be the highway authority for the highway.
- The area of development at 36.6 hectares is greater than the 12.5 hectares threshold.
- The speed limit will be 50mph or greater.

The Scheme in summary comprises:

- Realignment of the existing A46 dual carriageway through the existing at grade roundabout (which will be removed), for approximately 880m to

improve the road geometry and allow for a 50mph speed limit.

- A new grade separated junction over the A46 mainline, approximately 800m north of the existing Walsgrave junction to connect the B4082 with the A46.
- A new overbridge structure across the existing A46, between the dumbbell roundabouts forming the grade separated junction.
- New merge and diverge slip roads at the grade separated junction for both northbound and south bound movements.
- Realignment of the B4082 to form a single carriageway link road, for approximately 900m, to connect the local road network to the new A46 grade separated junction with a proposed 40mph speed limit.
- Proposed maintenance accesses to the proposed road assets such as drainage basins and relocated VMS.
- Proposed road assets and street furniture such as traffic signs and lines, relocated variable message sign, street lighting columns, vehicle restraint systems (VRS), fences, noise barriers, anti-glare screens, retaining walls and kerbs.
- Improvements to facilities for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders (WCH) through provision of a signalised pedestrian crossing on the link road and future-proofing the Scheme to facilitate a route for WCH along the link road to the Hungerley Hall Farm accommodation bridge.
- Retaining the existing accommodation bridge for Hungerley Hall Farm.
- Replacement vegetation planting to compensate for the vegetation that needs to be removed to facilitate the Scheme.

The objectives of the Scheme are as follows:

- **Reduce congestion**

Improve the operation and efficiency of the existing transport network associated with Walsgrave junction to increase capacity.
- **Safety and maintenance**

Maintain the A46 to a safe and serviceable condition with maintenance being considered during design.
- **Growth**

Support and facilitate economic growth, generating employment and residential development opportunities.

- **Environment**

Reduce negative impacts on the wider environment whilst seeking environmental enhancement.

- **Customer**

Reduce negative impacts on users, local communities and the environment whilst balancing the need of individuals and businesses that use and rely upon the A46.

To the west of Walsgrave Junction, the area is densely populated with seven schools within 2km of the junction. University Hospital Coventry is located approximately 1.2km to the north of the existing A46 and the Walsgrave Junction serves as a blue-light (i.e., emergency services) route to the hospital.

To the immediate north-west of Walsgrave Junction and along the western side of the A46 north of the existing junction are areas of agricultural land associated with Hungerley Hall Farm and further north with Walsgrave Hill Farm. To the immediate south-west of the Walsgrave Junction and north of Smite Brook the land is associated with Hungerley Hall Farm, south of Smite Brook are areas of public open space, beyond which are residential areas. A high voltage electricity line runs north-south on the western side of the A46, crossing the B4082 immediately west of Walsgrave Junction.

With regards to environmental constraints, immediately adjacent to the east side of Walsgrave Junction is Coombe Country Park, part of which includes Coombe Pool Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Coombe Abbey Grade II* Park and Garden/Conservation Area. To the north-east of the existing junction and northwards along the eastern side of the A46 are areas of agricultural land associated with Walsgrave Hill Farm. The area to the east of the A46, including the highway itself, is designated as Green Belt.

The draft Development Consent Order (DCO) will include the compulsory acquisition powers required to deliver the Scheme. The Scheme design is currently being refined, however, the area within the draft Order Limits covers an area of approximately 36.6ha. Of this approximately 34.6ha will be permanently required for the operation of the Scheme, including an environmental mitigation area which covers approximately 3.9ha. Approximately 2.0ha will be required temporarily during the construction phase.

The Applicant is requesting the Tier 1: 'Basic' service level as we are intending to submit the DCO application in November 2024 and the review of draft application

documents is expected to take place from 18 July 2024. This is our key final pre-application activity which would occur prior to the guidance of pre-application activities taking effect in October 2024. There is minimal direct interaction required with the Planning Inspectorate prior to submission, and the Applicant is highly experienced in preparing DCOs of this nature, scale, and level of complexity. There is also an up-to-date National Networks National Policy Statement which was designated on 24 May 2024 providing clear policy guidance by which we have carefully prepared the Scheme to reduce the likelihood of examination issues.

3. Programme for Pre-application Activities

Due to the advanced stage of the Scheme, many 'pre-application activities' have already been undertaken between April 2023 to July 2024. A broad description and nature of these activities have been set out below, in date order:

April 2023

The Applicant first contacted the Planning Inspectorate to make them aware of the Scheme in early April 2023 by email. A 'New Case Information Request' form was then submitted on 24 April 2023 officially informing them of the Scheme and an Inception Meeting was organised. A Scheme webpage was created on the Planning Inspectorate National Infrastructure website: [A46 Coventry Junctions \(Walsgrave\) - Project information \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](https://nationalinfrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/A46-Coventry-Junctions-Walsgrave-Project-information). The Scheme reference number was provided as TR010066.

June – August 2023

An Inception Meeting (held virtually on Teams) was held with the Planning Inspectorate on 8 June 2023 to introduce the Scheme and seek initial advice and thoughts on the design and development undertaken to date. The Applicant provided an overview of the Scheme at the meeting. Following the meeting the Planning Inspectorate provided Section 51 advice on their website <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR010066/TR010066-Advice-00001-1-FINAL%20230608%20A46%20Walsgrave%20Inception%20meeting%20note.pdf>.

To summarise, the main points of discussion were:

- The Planning Inspectorate was given an overview of the Scheme to date including the expected submission date of the DCO, which at the time was September 2024.
- The Planning Inspectorate advised on timings of having draft documents reviewed.

The Planning Inspectorate suggested that the Applicant familiarise themselves with the A57 link Roads DCO approach to Green Belt considerations. Queries were raised regarding Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) with local authorities, Local Plans, the farm bridge, the nearby overhead line, legal support, and traffic modelling, which the Applicant provided answers to.

The Scheme is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development, as defined by The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. A Scoping Opinion was sought from the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State in line with section 7 of these Regulations., with an EIA Scoping Report was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 30 June 2023. The purpose of the Scoping Report was to establish the scope of the EIA and the level of detail required. A Scoping Opinion was adopted by the Secretary of State on 10 August 2023.

September 2023

A second virtual meeting was held with the Planning Inspectorate on 26 September 2023 to provide an update on the progress of the application and scheme design, and to present the approach proposed to statutory consultation. The revised Order Limits, Materials, Assets and Waste were also discussed, as well as DCO plan requirements. Following the meeting the Planning Inspectorate provided Section 51 advice on their website – [TR010066-Advice-00002-1-FINAL 230926 A46 Walsgrave Project Update Meeting note.pdf \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/media/10066/Advice-00002-1-FINAL-230926-A46-Walsgrave-Project-Update-Meeting-note.pdf)

To summarise, the main points of discussion were:

- The Applicant detailed their Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) engagement with local authorities and set out the consultation format and dates. They notified the Planning Inspectorate of the Section 42 consultees.
- The Applicant and the Planning Inspectorate discussed the Scoping Opinion regarding Materials, Assets and Waste' and concerns about scoping this out of the Environmental Statement. The Applicant discussed their Environment team's plans to scope this out of the ES, by providing further evidence to justify their approach. The Applicant enquired about which consultation bodies would be most appropriate and relevant to discuss the scope of the ES with.
- The Planning Inspectorate recommended that the Applicant considered Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedures (APFP) Regulation 6 when developing building plans and documents.
- The DCO submission date was discussed, and the Planning Inspectorate advised that they require sufficient notice due to required pre-submission tasks and resource planning. Draft documents were discussed with a predicted submission in May 2024. The Planning Inspectorate advised the Applicant on which documents are often included in draft documents submission and

recommended leaving sufficient time after receiving feedback to edit documents prior to submitting them as part of the application.

October 2023 – December 2023

Under section 46 of the PA 2008, the Applicant has a duty to supply the Secretary of State (via the Planning Inspectorate with such information in relation to the proposed application for the purpose of complying with section 42, before the commencement of the statutory consultation under section 42. A section 46 letter and application information was sent to the Planning Inspectorate on 19 October 2023, notifying that under Section 46 of the PA 2008 that the Applicant intends to apply under section 37 of the PA 2008 for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Scheme and that the statutory pre-application consultation under section 42 of the PA 2008 was taking place between Wednesday 25 October and Wednesday 20 December 2023. The Consultation Documents were shared with the Planning Inspectorate and were available on the Scheme website: <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/A46Coventry>.

A link to the Consultation Brochure is provided below:

https://nationalhighways.citizenspace.com/he/a46-walsgrave-2023/supporting_documents/A46%20Walsgrave%20junction%20%20Consultation%20brochure.pdf

The Applicant consulted with the local community in accordance with the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC), as prescribed by Section 47(7) of the PA 2008.

- Consultation materials were available on the Scheme website <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/A46Coventry>, as well as at six deposit locations in the vicinity of the Scheme.
- Information packs were also sent to landowners, some local residents and organisations.
- The consultation was advertised in the local press, by displaying posters at local amenities and through postcards delivered to houses and businesses nearby.
- During the consultation period the Applicant held three public information events for local residents, businesses and stakeholders where we provided more information about the proposals. Three pop-up events in areas of high footfall were also held, to raise awareness of the Scheme and encourage people to participate in the consultation. These were open to everyone and advertised in the materials, and the location and times were published on the Scheme website.
- A total of 229 responses were received during the consultation period. The route was taken forward for further detailed design. A link to the Public consultation summary on the Scheme website is provided:

<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/media/4qiiwzw2/a46-walsgrave-summary-report.pdf>

March 2024

A third virtual meeting was held the Planning Inspectorate on 26 March 2024 to following the Statutory Consultation and changes to Scheme including Order Limits. Following the meeting the Planning Inspectorate provided Section 51 advice on their website – [TR010066-Advice-00003-1-240326 FINAL A46 Walsgrave Project Update Meeting Note.pdf \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](#)

To summarise, the main points of discussion were:

- Changes to the Order Limits due to the removal of the ponds. The Applicant confirmed that the farm access bridge would be retained.
- A statutory consultation overview was provided. The Applicant explained that the initial target for the consultation period was 43 days, but this was later extended to 59 days to accommodate newly identified Category 3 Land Interests. The Planning Inspectorate enquired about how the results of the consultation would be addressed in the consultation report. The Applicant stated that it had delegated each individual comment to specialised teams to evaluate and compare with other comments and the Applicant would communicate if and how the proposals are amended along with reasons in the Consultation Report.
- The Applicant informed that the proposed draft document submission target is late May to early June 2024. The Planning Inspectorate stated that one submission of all the documents was preferable.
- An updated DCO application submission target of October 2024 was provided.
- 'Good design' and how the Scheme would incorporate this was briefly discussed.

June 2024

A fourth virtual meeting was held the Planning Inspectorate on 12 June 2024 to discuss the changes to the Scheme design and amendments to the Order Limits. The Materials, Assets and Waste technical area of the Environmental Statement was also briefly discussed. The Applicant also confirmed the draft documents to be submitted for review by the Planning Inspectorate. The section 51 advice has not yet been published on the Planning Inspectorate National Infrastructure website.

April 2023 - Present

The Applicant has a number of 'pre-application activities' for the Scheme planned between July 2024 to November 2024. Details of these activities, and potential outputs, are detailed below.

- Following on-going engagement with Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and Key Stakeholders throughout the pre-application stage, the Applicant is preparing Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs) with the following prescribed bodies:
 - The Environment Agency
 - Warwickshire County Council
 - Coventry City Council
 - Rugby Borough Council
 - Historic England
 - Natural England
- Targeted consultation with landowners and the local authorities are taking place following Scheme refinement prior to submission – including meetings and letters. Due to the minor refinements, no full S42 consultation has been required.
- DCO submission documents are being finalised.

Below is an indicative programme of pre-application activities with the Planning Inspectorate and timescales from July 2024 to submission of the DCO application in November 2024:

1. 18 July 2024 - Submission of draft documents (listed in Section 5) for Planning Inspectorate review and advice.
2. 18 July to Mid-September 2024 - Planning Inspectorate review and provide comments on draft DCO submission documents.
3. End of September 2024 – Meeting with the Planning Inspectorate to discuss any comments and advice provided following the review of draft submission documents, including how the Applicant will integrate the Section 51 advice into the application documents.
4. August 2024 - Three months' notice of the application submission date will be provided to the Planning Inspectorate. It is acknowledged that there is a three month notice prior to the submission of the DCO application whereby the Applicant should provide the Planning Inspectorate with its expected date of submission. There is unlikely to be any change in level of service required for the A46 Scheme due to submission in November 2024.
5. 4 November 2024 - 10 days' notice to be provided to Planning Inspectorate of date of submission of the DCO application. There is an official 10 day notice period before submission of the DCO application that we must give to the Planning Inspectorate, where a shapefile of the Order Limits will also be submitted.

6. 14 November 2024 – DCO application submission target date.

4. Engagement (AoCM & Associated Activities)

The Applicant commenced monthly Local Authority meetings in May 2023 with Warwickshire County Council, Coventry City Council, Rugby Borough Council, to discuss Scheme updates, upcoming activities, escalations from discipline specific meetings and any other business relevant to the scheme. Further to this, meetings have been held with Coventry City Council on both technical and environmental issues. Environmental liaison with Rugby Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council have been held as required and based upon consultation for environmental issues only, as neither council will be adopting technical assets.

Discussions have been held with Coventry City Council on a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) and a draft version of this agreement is currently with the Local Authority for review. This is expected to be completed soon, upon which both parties will enter into a PPA for pre-application activities.

Regular discussions have been held with the Environment Agency on the overall flood modelling, specific consideration of Coombe Pool reservoir, flood risk assessment, and groundwater.

Regular discussions have been held with Natural England about a range of issues including badger tunnel design, flood bund, SSSI noise mitigation, barn owl mitigation, air quality, and designated sites. Statutory consultation on the Scheme was held between 25 October and 6 December 2023.

Engagement with Historic England has been limited due to the relative lack of heritage constraints relevant to the Scheme. Historic England agreed to defer conversations relating to the listed buildings on-site, and the Coombe Abbey Grade II* Park and Garden/Conservation Area to Coventry City Council, which has been the subject of regular engagement as outlined above.

The Applicant consulted with the local community in accordance with the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) as prescribed by Section 47(7) of the PA 2008.

The Applicant invited all consultees, including those identified under Section 42, Section 47 and Section 48 of the PA 2008, to submit feedback within the consultation period noted above.

A total of 229 responses were received during the consultation period. When the respondents were asked if they supported or opposed the proposals, 46% of the agreed that the scheme was needed, with 51% of respondents agreeing with the Scheme's fundamental highways design including the road route and junction arrangements.

Following consideration of the responses to the statutory consultation, a full design review has taken place to take into consideration the feedback received resulting in some key changes to the Scheme design.

Following statutory and options consultation, the Applicant has continued engagement with stakeholders to keep them updated about the Scheme and to discuss technical elements of the DCO plans. This took the form of scheduled meetings, conference calls and email correspondence (targeted consultation). No formal additional full statutory consultation was required following the statutory consultation from October to December 2023, due to the changes to the Scheme design not being deemed as significant.

5. Draft Documents and Section 51 Advice

The draft documents agreed to be provided to the Planning Inspectorate for S51 advice on 18 July 2024 includes:

- Draft Development Consent Order (DCO).
- Draft Explanatory Memorandum.
- Draft Sample Works Plans and Land Plans.
- Draft Consultation Report.
- ~~Draft List of Other Consents & Licences, Consents and Licences Position Statement.*~~
- ~~Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report.*~~
- Draft Book of Reference.
- Draft Statement of Reasons.
- Draft Funding Statement.
- Draft Environmental Statement Extracts – Chaps 1-4.

*Were not submitted