

This matter is being dealt with by:

**David Marsh**

Reference: SC/4312

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**Nottinghamshire  
County Council**

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By E-Mail Only

Dear Sir

13 September 2021

FOA Alex Maddox

**Proposal:** Request for Scoping Opinion

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion for the A614/A6097 Major Road Network Improvement Project between Ollerton and East Bridgford in accordance with Regulation 15(1) of The Town and Country Planning (EIA) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 (as amended). This project consists of six schemes (namely Ollerton roundabout; Mickledale Lane junction; White Post roundabout; Warren Hill junction; Lowdham roundabout and Kirk Hill junction)

**Location:** Ollerton Roundabout – the roundabout intersection of the A614, A616 and A6075

**Applicant:** Nottinghamshire County Council

I refer to your scoping request for the above development dated 7 June 2021 (A614/A6097 Corridor Improvements Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report – Rev 1) which relates to six highway improvement projects on the A6097/A614 corridor between Kirk Hill (East Bridgford) and Ollerton. This Scoping Opinion relates to the proposal at Ollerton roundabout. An Opinion has already been adopted for Lowdham roundabout, and Opinions on the other junctions will follow separately. From previous discussions the schemes taken as a whole will be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment. While some of the schemes will have limited environmental impacts each junction in turn will need to be considered and assessed in the context of the overall project.

The Environmental Statement must contain the information specified in Regulation 18(3) of the 2017 EIA Regulations and must meet the requirements of Regulation 18(4). It must also include any additional information specified in Schedule 4 to the EIA Regulations which is relevant to the particular development proposal and to the environmental features likely to be significantly affected. These statutory requirements are set out in the Regulations and it is not necessary to repeat them here.

## **The specific characteristics of the particular development/the development of the type concerned**

A scoping opinion is being sought of the County Planning Authority (CPA) with respect to a proposed planning application and accompanying Environmental Statement, as one of six applications, seeking permission for the reconfiguration of the junction of the A614, A616 and A6075 at Ollerton. The aim, in conjunction with the other projects along the transport corridor is to address existing congestion issues and facilitate future traffic growth. Regular peak hour journey time delays are considered to be a capacity restraint which has resulted in limits being placed on planned developments. At Thoresby Colliery west of Ollerton (A6075), planning conditions limit site development to 150 dwellings and 8,094 m<sup>2</sup> of employment development until capacity improvements to Ollerton Roundabout have been undertaken. The proposed project would allow a further 650 dwellings and 24,281 m<sup>2</sup> of employment development to progress.

The proposal is to enlarge the existing Ollerton Roundabout with the bus-only Newark Road arm to be removed. The junction currently has six approaches, and this would be reduced to five.

The Inscribed Circle Diameter of the roundabout would be increased from 37.5m to 60 m (kerb to kerb). Approaches from all directions are proposed to be widened to provide two entry lanes onto the roundabout.

Toucan crossing points (a crossing with signal controls) for both pedestrians and cyclists would be provided on the A6075 Mansfield Road and the A614 Old Rufford Road.

Permanent land take beyond the highway boundary at The Alders PH, the SSSI between the arms of the A614(N) and A616(W), and between the arms of the A614(N) and A6075(E) would be required. The area of land within the scoping boundary is approximately 3.1 ha.

## **The environmental features likely to be affected by the development**

In accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance a number of organisations have been consulted for their expert advice regarding the likely environmental effects of the proposed development. Consultations have also taken place with specialists employed within the County Council and other interest groups:

- Newark & Sherwood District Council \*
- Ollerton and Boughton Town Council
- Edwinstowe Parish Council
- NCC Highways Development Control \*
- Via Safer Highways \*
- Via Countryside Access
- Environment Agency \*
- NCC Flood Risk \*
- Historic England \*
- NCC Archaeology
- NCC Built Heritage \*
- Natural England \*
- NCC Nature Conservation \*
- Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust \*
- Via Landscape

- Via Noise
- Via Land Reclamation
- Severn Trent Water
- Cadent (Gas) \*
- Western Power
- British Horse Society \*

Where responses have been received they are marked \*, copies of which are enclosed. Any responses subsequently received will be forwarded and could result in this scoping opinion being updated.

### **Comments in respect of the scoping request report**

A list of potential environmental and socio-economic effects arising from the proposed development along with commentary of how effects are to be addressed should be included in the Non-Technical Summary.

The topics at 5.1.5 appear to cover most of the relevant subject areas applicable in this case and consideration is also to be given to alternatives and cumulative impacts (5.16) as is required under the Regulations. The CPA concur with the view reached on heat and radiation (5.1.9) and transboundary impacts (5.1.10). A specific consideration of risks and disasters will not be required (5.1.12).

The Environmental Statement should include a detailed description (2.3.5-2.3.8 and 8.3.3-8.3.33) of the site to provide context to the Ollerton roundabout project.

The planning submission should incorporate an analysis of the proposed development against relevant planning policies (referenced at 8.3.1).

In terms of presenting the proposal for Ollerton roundabout there will be elements of the overarching Environmental Statement that will be relevant and have related impacts, particularly with regard to transport, emissions and ecology (9.6.8) (unless it is proposed to provide ecological mitigation at each junction), climate and cumulative impacts. Whilst the format in the Scoping document deals with each topic with a commentary on each junction, where site specific issues at other junctions have no relevance or environmental impact on the Ollerton roundabout junction they *can* be omitted from the Ollerton submission. This will help with the focus of the Ollerton roundabout application while providing all relevant information and context.

The consultation exercise undertaken by the CPA in connection with the scoping report has raised the following matters regarding the scope of information you propose to submit:

#### Highways

A Transport Assessment will need to consider in particular: any adverse effects of the redistribution of vehicles, which may have otherwise avoided the junction in question, due to it being currently over capacity; the highway safety implications of the proposals, to include consideration of the roads and junctions where vehicles have redistributed; and consideration of the impact on vulnerable road users.

Ollerton roundabout has had a low level of accidents for many years, and making it more complex with greater capacity for more and faster motor vehicles will be detrimental to that good record.

The proposal introduces potential conflicts by marking some of the exits as twin lanes which will further promote drivers to negotiate the roundabout in pairs. This layout is also likely to increase downstream speeds and overtaking as a result of having those twin lanes demarked at the exits.

Via Road Safety advise that the proposal will lead to an increase in collisions and injuries compared with the current layout because of the additional conflicts introduced by the extra lanes. Roundabouts with more than four entries have been problematic at almost all locations in Nottinghamshire (Ollerton having been safer because the compact layout restricts the number of vehicles that can negotiate it at the same time). The new layout may also lead to additional problems with two-wheeled vehicles (powered and non-powered) which can become "lost" amongst larger vehicles, as well as being more vulnerable in the event of collisions.

The proposed scheme will increase the throughput of the junction in terms of motor vehicle capacity. This is likely to increase the number of journeys made using motor vehicles, in the immediate local area as well as in the wider region, increasing risk of collisions, not only at this junction but at all points on those additional journeys.

The signal-controlled crossings will need to be made attractive to users with joined-up high-quality infrastructure (walking and cycling routes) and should be given attention during the detailed design. Additional footways are proposed around this junction where pedestrians will be required to cross three of the roads at the splitter islands without the aid of formal control which is likely to be very difficult at certain times and will create new conflicts. Via Road Safety question why these new footway links are being proposed and, if they are necessary, further consideration of control crossing facilities is recommended.

Assessment of the risk of an increase in collisions, including non-car road users and those crossing the junction, and the need for mitigation will need to be considered.

British Horse Society has noted that the controlled crossing proposed across the A6075 aligns with the entrance to the pub/diner rather than with the end of the bridleway. Users of the bridleway are more likely to use the crossing than pub visitors as the pub has its own carpark. There also appears to be another controlled crossing across the A614 south which provides connectivity to. This allows access to Newark Road (Bus-only Lane) into Old Ollerton. Consideration needs to be given to the provision of safe crossing of the A6075 and A614 (south) by horse riders in addition to cyclists and pedestrians.

## Ecology

Natural England has provided advice on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), and without wishing to repeat it at length in this letter is included as Annex A to the attached consultation response.

Having regard to the proximity of the Ollerton Roundabout to high-quality bat foraging habitat, NCC Ecology advises that bat activity surveys need to be undertaken, and that the impact of artificial lighting and noise should be considered with the use of lux diagrams and noise contour plans, unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant changes to the noise and lighting environment as a result of the roundabout improvements. Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust has highlighted the need for a methodology for how impacts of changes to noise, light and disturbance are to be assessed. The need

for bat surveys is identified in order to be able to assess the predicted noise changes on bat foraging activity.

Given the diverse bird assemblage supported by the wider SSSI/SAC adjacent to the Ollerton Roundabout (including heathland/woodland and nocturnal species), as well as the comments in Table 9-3 that *Suitable nesting and foraging habitat is present for nightjar and woodlark within the Scheme boundary. Therefore, effects to both species due to the removal of suitable habitat as part of the works and therefore potential impacts to the ppSPA, cannot be discounted*, targeted bird surveys should be undertaken unless sufficient data is available from other sources, such as Birklands Ringing Group/NBGRC (noting that the latter do hold bird data so it is unclear why none was returned as part of the desktop study) and/or that it can again be demonstrated that there will be no significant changes to the noise and lighting environment as a result of the roundabout improvements.

In relation to bats and potential roost sites, it is noted that in some cases buildings adjacent to the proposed works areas have not been surveyed as they lie outside the scheme boundary. It will need to be demonstrated through the assessment process that there will not be significant indirect impacts on potential roost locations as a result of noise, lighting or general disturbance.

With reference to the Sherwood ppSPA (Paragraph 9.6.5) in-line with the 'risk-based approach' set out in Natural England's Advice Note (March 2014), a consideration of potential impacts on the ppSPA should be undertaken as part of the HRA assessment (required due to proximity to the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC). Although it will be referenced in the Scoping Opinions to be adopted for the White Post and Warren Hill junctions, it should be noted that given that both junctions lie within the 5km buffer zone for the ppSPA they should be scoped in for the purposes of the HRA. The Lowdham Roundabout and Kirk Hill Junctions do not need to be considered except as part of an in-combination assessment.

With reference to Biodiversity Net Gain, the creation of habitat should be delivered as far as possible at each of the individual junctions comprising the overall combined scheme through the planting of native trees, shrubs and hedgerows and the seeding of native wildflower seed mixes. The proposed Ollerton Roundabout improvements should be landscaped to reflect characteristic Sherwood habitats, e.g. acid grassland or heathland, with Silver Birch or Oak trees (if trees are considered appropriate), given the location as a gateway to some of Sherwood's most ecologically-important sites.

Appropriate species surveys will need to be undertaken (Table 9-3).

Attention is drawn to NWT comment on Bio-diversity Net Gain, funding and management which should be addressed in the submission.

## Noise

Noise change impacts on sensitive species (roosting and foraging bats and nesting birds) will need to be assessed depending on the outcome of surveys.

## Emissions

As part of the greenhouse gas impact assessment consideration should be given to the impact of emissions arising from increased traffic growth and potential to ease congestion (15.1).

The need for accurate modelling of greenhouse gas emissions identified by NWT should be noted.

## Historic Environment

The setting of heritage assets, impacts and mitigation will need careful consideration. Particular regard should be given to the recommendations of Historic England. Section 7.7.6 identifies the correct Historic England Good Practice Advice notes and these must be reflected in the Cultural Heritage section.

The scheme extends into the designated conservation area of Ollerton Village and impacts on this designated heritage asset may potentially cause unacceptable levels of harm. The conservation area contains a cluster of designated listed buildings which are also shown on the designations plan. However, they are not identified on the key of this plan, although a correct list appears in the EIA scoping report text. It is important to recognise that these designated heritage assets each have a 'setting' that contributes to their significance and that could be impacted upon and potentially harmed by the proposals. Ollerton Hall is a grade II\* listed building within view of the roundabout and as such this designated heritage asset will require careful consideration and response within the scheme submission. Ollerton Hall and other heritage assets should be set as receptors in the LVIA to ensure that suitable evidence is provided in the EIA. Noise receptors should be treated similarly.

Harm to designated heritage assets (in this case the conservation area and individual listed buildings) is in some cases avoidable (or can be significantly reduced) through carefully considered design. For instance, noise and light pollution can be considered at the design stage to ensure that they do not impact adversely on these heritage assets. Detailed consultation prior to the submission of the planning application, to ensure collaborative input into the designs, is encouraged. Early consultation with NCC Historic Buildings and conservation officers at the Newark & Sharwood District Council should take place before designs are fully developed to ensure that there is opportunity to avoid adverse impacts and, where possible, introduce suitable enhancements to the scheme that can demonstrably mitigate these.

## Flood Risk and Risk to Groundwater

The Environment Agency draws attention to matters to be considered in the Flood Risk Assessment and also identifies potential risk to groundwater, including the need for a controlled waters risk assessment.

Attention is drawn to the County Council's adopted Guidance Note on the Validation Requirements for Planning Applications which sets out national and local information requirements for planning applications:

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/planning-applications/pre-application-advice/apply-for-planning-permission>

Should you wish to discuss any of the above matters further please do not hesitate to contact me as the case officer.

Subject to the matters above (and any subsequent matters that are raised through the submission of further consultation responses, the details of which shall be forwarded to you on receipt) the A614/A6097 Corridor Improvements Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report – Rev 1 proposed submissions and methodologies relevant to the overall scheme where there are synergies and proposals specific to the Ollerton roundabout scheme are appropriate for the project and represents the County Council's formal scoping opinion.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Marsh', written in a cursive style.

David Marsh  
Major Projects Senior Practitioner  
Nottinghamshire County Council