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By email only

27 July 2021

Our Reference: 21/03205/SCRE & 21/03253/SCRE

**Environmental Screening Opinion- The Town and Country Planning
(Environmental Impact Assessment) (England) Regulations 2017**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Proposed Development:

Request for EIA screening opinion for Cambridge Re-Signalling, Re-Lock and Re-Control Project (CR3)

At:

**Milton Fen, Waterbeach, Six Mile Bottom, Meldreth Level Crossings,
Cambridge Station**

Further to your request for a screening opinion under the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (2017) received on 7 July 2021, this letter provides the formal response on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council.

I understand that you have also requested screening opinions from East Cambridgeshire District Council, West Suffolk Council and Breckland District Council for the parts of the scheme within those administrative areas.

Proposal

As per your covering email, the proposed works within the administrative boundaries that have been considered in this request are as follows:

- South Cambridgeshire – Upgrade of Milton Fen, Waterbeach, Six Mile Bottom and Meldreth level crossings and associated resignalling works. The works are to be consented through a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) or an application for full planning permission.
- Cambridge – Works associated with the resignalling works at Cambridge Station. The majority of the works are likely to be permitted development.

Consultation

Whilst there is no statutory requirement to consult on screening requests under the relevant EIA regulations, the Local Planning Authority undertook consultation of key consultees. The responses have been summarised and can be found in *Appendix 1* attached to this letter. The full consultation response can be accessed online via the website below:

<https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/search.do?action=simple&searchType=Application>

Assessment

The Councils agree that the proposed works do not fall under Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations 2017, because in relation to part 7 (1) for railways, the works do not include the construction of a railway over 2100m.

In relation to Schedule 2 development, the Councils agree that the scheme could fall under part 10 for infrastructure projects, specifically (d) for the construction of railways if the area of the works exceeds 1 hectare and is likely to have significant environmental effects. The works would not exceed 1 hectare, however the site is located in, or partly in, sensitive areas, therefore requires assessment.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

The sensitive areas relating to the proposed development in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City are:

- L-Moor SSSI, Shepreth
- Cam Washes SSSI, Upware

It is necessary to judge whether the likely effects on the environment of that particular development will be significant in that particular location. Natural England has advised that the proposed development has potential likely significant effects on the above SSSIs.

The proposed development at Shepreth is to upgrade the level crossing, install relocatable equipment building (REB) with associated fence, REB compound, new

vehicular parking, and new road signs. The works would be located 200m to the north of the L-Moor SSSI.

The part of the Cam Washes SSSI within South Cambridgeshire is approximately 3.3km from the proposed works at Dimmock's Close which are outside the administrative boundary and within East Cambridgeshire.

Following the assessment above based on the nature of the works and the proximity to sensitive sites, it is considered that the effects on SSSIs can be assessed through the submission of an ecological impact assessment with the TWAO or full planning application. Proposals should be submitted to deliver a 10% biodiversity net gain.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)

There are a number of SAMs located in close proximity to the works. However limited intrusive below ground works are proposed. From your submission, it is noted:

- Milton Fen Level Crossing (Works Area No. 1) - The level crossing lies 190m south-west of the Hill Close 'Multi-phased settlement east of Milton' which is a Scheduled Monument (List Entry Number: 1457437);
- Waterbeach Level Crossing (Works Area No. 2) - The level crossing is located approx. 95m east of the Waterbeach Abbey Scheduled Monument and 620m east of the Car Dyke Scheduled Monument. The railway line passes through the Car Dyke Scheduled Monument approx. 840m to the south of the level crossing.
- Hauxton REB (Works Area No. 8) - The Hauxton REB will be located approx. 250m south-west and south of the two designated sites which make up the Settlement NW of Little Shelford Scheduled Monument.

As no works within the boundary of the designated sites are proposed, the works would not have a significant impact on SAMs. However you should consult Historic England prior to submitting any applications which could have an impact on SAMs to secure appropriate mitigation.

Other sensitive areas

In certain cases, local designations which are not included in the definition of "sensitive areas", but which are nonetheless environmentally sensitive, may also be relevant in determining whether an assessment is required.

I note the proximity to listed buildings, Air Quality Management Zones, works within Flood Zones 2 and 3, however the effect of the proposed development on these could be assessed through information submitted with the appropriate consent applications. This should include protected species surveys and mitigation.

Cumulative impact

The nature and scale of the proposed works and the localised impact is such that the cumulative impact across local authority boundaries and any other development within the vicinity is not considered to have a significant environmental effect.

Summary

In summary, the Councils have concluded that the proposed development would not require the submission of an ES. I enclose a copy of the Councils' full screening matrix for your information and records.

This screening opinion is based on the scheme described in the documents submitted with this screening request. However, should the scheme change significantly, then a further screening request must be submitted.

You are recommended to seek formal pre-application advice from the Councils to discuss the proposals and any necessary mitigation further before submitting your applications. More information on our pre-application process and charges can be found here: <https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/planning-applications/pre-application-advice/>.

If you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Charlotte Burton MRTPI

Principal Planner – Strategic Sites
Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service

Enclosure: Screening Matrix

Appendix 1- Consultation Responses

- 1.1 The local planning authority formally consulted the following and a summary of the consultation response is provided:

Natural England

Potential likely significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes and further assessment is required. The proposed development is located within/partly within or has the potential for adverse effects on the following designated nature conservation sites or designated landscapes (in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire):

- L-Moor, Shepreth SSSI
- Cam Washes SSSI

Recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the proposed development.

Should you determine that an EIA is not required in this case, you should ensure that the application is supported by sufficient biodiversity, landscape and other environmental information in order for you to assess the weight to give these material considerations when determining the planning application.

Environment Agency

No opinion provided.

Highways Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council)

No comment from Highway Engineer.

Health Development Officer – South Cambridgeshire District Council

The degree of works in South Cambridgeshire is relatively minor and the impacts to human health will not be significant or long term. Health Impact Assessment not required.

- 1.2 The local planning authority also consulted the following but received no reply at the time of issuing this decision:

- Environmental Health Team – South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Ecology Team – South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Planning Policy Team – Greater Cambridge Shared Planning
- Conservation Team – Greater Cambridge Shared Planning
- Historic England
- Archaeology Team – Cambridgeshire County Council
- Transport Assessment Team – Cambridgeshire County Council