

**DD18**

# **A453 Widening M1 Junction 24 to A52 Nottingham**

## **SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE GOVERNMENT POLICY AND SCHEME OVERVIEW**

**BY**

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**Inquiry commencing 10/11/09**

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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 My name is Jonathan Pizzey. I am a Project Manager within the Highways Agency Major Projects (Midlands and Southwest) Division, based in the Birmingham office. I hold a Bachelor of Engineering Honours Degree in Civil Engineering and I am a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. I have seventeen years of experience within the Civil Engineering industry in the design, promotion, construction and operation of highways.
- 1.2 I have been the Project Leader for the A453 Widening Scheme since February 2009.
- 1.3 The Secretary of State for Transport has published proposals for a scheme to widen the A453 between the M1 Junction 24 and the A52 Nottingham, by building an approximately 9km rural section of dual carriageway between the M1 motorway and Mill Hill on the edge of Clifton, and approximately 2.5km of Single 4 Lane carriageway through Clifton from Mill Hill to the Farnborough Road Junction. These proposals are defined by the draft Orders (deposit documents DD01 to DD04 which were published on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2009. An Environmental Statement (ES) (deposit document DD05) detailing the environmental assessment and effects the Scheme is likely to have on the area was published at the same time.
- 1.4 Between the M1 Junction 24 and Mill Hill on the edge of Clifton, the proposed scheme would create a rural two lane dual carriageway all-purpose road subject to the National Speed Limit. This section would have no permanent central reserve crossings and a safety barrier would separate the two carriageways. There would be 2 all movement grade separated junctions at Parkway and West Leake, an at-grade left in / left out connection for Cedar Isle and an at grade left in/ left out abnormal load access to Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station.
- 1.5 Between the new Mill Hill roundabout and the Farnborough Road junction the scheme would create a four lane single carriageway road with a speed limit of 40mph. This style of road has successfully been used in a number of urban environments in Nottingham and other parts of the country.
- 1.6 This section would be built on the existing alignment, and would include fully signalised roundabout junctions at the existing Crusader roundabout, Green Lane and Farnborough Road junctions. A further traffic light protected ‘T’ junction would be provided at Nottingham Trent University (NTU) northern access, allowing left in - left out and right turn in manoeuvres.

- 1.7 A section of the A453 between Manor Farm and Mill Hill Roundabout would be de-trunked, and passed to the local highway authority as a local road. The facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians would be improved throughout the length of the scheme, making it possible to walk or cycle from Farnborough road to Kegworth in relative safety.

## **2 Trunk Roads, Government Policies and Objectives**

- 2.1 A section of my Proof of Evidence concerns the Government's transport policy and how it interrelates to local transport policies and plans. It explains how some trunk road schemes have been promoted into the Department for Transport's Targeted Program of Improvements (TPI) through Multi-Modal Studies (MMS) and gives a précis of the Secretary of State's response to those studies.
- 2.2 The proof also contains a description of how trunk road schemes are assessed against set criteria, so that they can be compared and prioritised. The Scheme Assessment Summary Table summarising the results of this assessment is available as Deposit Document DD09.

## **3 The Need for the Scheme**

- 3.1 The need for the Scheme was first identified over 20 years ago, At this time the Highways Agency (or its predecessor) was promoting two separate schemes; a 6.9km long widening scheme between the M1 Junction 24 and Manor Road, which went through a Public Inquiry in 1992; and a 5.7km widening scheme between Manor Road to a point 400m north of Farnborough Road, which went through a Public Inquiry in 1996.
- 3.2 Following the Governments Strategic review of the Trunk Road Network in 1998, these schemes were dropped from the roads programme, in favour of a multi modal study of the A453 to determine the best overall strategy to relieve the problems on the road.
- 3.3 In 1999, the A453 Nottingham to M1 Junction 24 Multi modal study commenced. This considered not only road construction options, but also rail, bus and pedestrian/cyclist options in order to define the most appropriate solution to take forward. The study reported that there should be a package of initiatives taken forward, based in 4 main areas; Public Transport Investments, Demand Management, Highway Improvements and Complementary Measures. These proposals represent the Highways Improvements part of this package of work.

- 3.4 The A453 is an important regional trunk road and is a major route between Nottingham, the M1 and East Midlands Airport. It carries between 23,000 and 30,000 vehicles per day and a high proportion of heavy goods vehicles (up to 19% in the rural section). The road is one of the most heavily congested routes in the region at peak times, and the number of vehicles using the A453 is predicted to increase making congestion even worse. The proposed scheme would have the capacity to safely handle this increase in traffic and attract traffic back to the A453 reducing the traffic on a number of unsuitable local roads.
- 3.5 The Scheme is seen as a high priority both in DfT and within the East Midland Region as the congestion and safety problems identified in 1998, have intensified due to the increase in traffic using the road.
- 3.6 The Scheme is the result of considerable amount of design and development and has been designed to minimise the effects to both the rural and urban environment, whilst maximising the economic and traffic benefits.

#### **4 Objectors' Alternative Alignments**

- 4.1 13 statutory objections and 21 non statutory objections to the draft Orders were received prior to the Public Inquiry. A further 47 representations and 33 letters of support for the scheme have also been received.
- 4.2 These include 12 proposals for alternative alignments. The Highways Agency supports alternative number 7 – which promotes an alternative access to Ratcliffe Power Station, and does not support any of the other objector's alternatives presented.
- 4.3 It should be noted that all of the Objectors agree that something needs to done to improve the A453, and their objections are to the detail of the draft Orders.

#### **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 The A453 east of the M1 forms a major route between Nottingham, the M1 and the A1/ A46 via the A52. It is a very important regional road, which serves as the southern entrance to Nottingham, and would provide Nottingham with a better connection to the Nottingham East Midlands Airport.
- 5.2 The need for these improvements to the A453 was first identified during the 1980's, and continued traffic growth has made the situation worse, especially in the peak hour. The widening scheme would benefit everyone using the route between the M1

and Nottingham. It would improve safety, reduce congestion and make Journey Times more reliable for travellers and businesses in the region.

- 5.3 These proposals to widen the A453, form part of the Highways Agency's response to the Highway recommendations of the A453 Nottingham to M1 Junction 24 Multi Modal Study.
- 5.4 It would be necessary to acquire land for the scheme by compulsory purchase. No more land than is necessary would be acquired, and the Highways Agency has a clear understanding of how it would use the land which would be compulsorily purchased if the CPO were made.
- 5.5 The Highways Agency's case demonstrates that the improvements to the A453 provide a compelling case in the public interest for the acquisition of land in the CPO.
- 5.6 This is a High priority scheme, and subject to the successful completion of the statutory process the East Midlands Regional Assembly has agreed to provide the funding to build the Scheme.
- 5.7 Following the consultations with all the statutory bodies, the Highways Agency understands that the Scheme is unlikely to be blocked by any unforeseen impediment to its construction.
- 5.8 The Highways Agency is satisfied that the case for the scheme fully justifies the interference with the Human Rights of those with an interest in the land affected, and is proportionate.