

A509 Isham Bypass Application No's KE/05/790 and WP/05/584 Regulation 3

Supplementary Planning Support Statement

1.0 Summary of Current Situation

Prior to the Development Control Committee on 13th March 2012, as applicant we made a request that the committee considered a 10 year Extension of Time for Implementation for the A509 Isham Bypass.

The committee debated this proposal, but given the consultation had been based on a 5 year extension, the committee decided to defer any decision until a consultation on the possibility of a 10 year extension had been undertaken.

The Applicant therefore wishes to formally amend the application and request that up to a 10 year Extension of Time for Implementation period is permitted

1.1 The Development Plan

The North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (June 2008) sets out the vision for future growth up to 2021 and seeks to secure road and infrastructure improvements to support the development in the north of the county.

Policy 2 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy relates to connecting that part of the county to the surrounding areas, and the network improvements for the A509 between the A14 and A45 including the A509 Isham Bypass as a priority for further work and investment within North Northamptonshire in the period to 2021.

Therefore the A509 Isham Bypass is an integral part of the future growth in North Northamptonshire.

1.2 Previous Funding

By March 2010, the A509 Isham Bypass scheme had been tendered and a preferred bidder identified and the County Council were due to make a Full Approval submission to the Department for Transport (DfT). However, the DfT advised that No Major Schemes Business Cases would be accepted prior to the Governments Comprehensive Spending Review, (CSR) and this delay ultimately led to the Authority abandoning the procurement process.

In October 2010, the post CSR announcement required the Authority to submit an Expression of Interest. Following a review by the Department it was confirmed that the A509 Isham Bypass is not intended to receive funding in the current spending period up to 2014/15, and unless additional funding was to come forward the delivery of this piece of infrastructure would be delayed until post 2015 at the earliest.

1.3 Future funding

At present this is unclear, although on 31st January 2012 the Department for Transport published a consultation on the devolution of funding for local authority major schemes. This could lead to the Government putting in place a new funding system for the next spending review period. Levels of funding post April 2015 will no doubt be subject to further announcements by the Department for Transport.

Any application for future funding would require the environmental impacts of traffic flows, noise etc to be re-evaluated to the latest highways or DfT guidance. Therefore this would be undertaken to support the scheme funding applications once it is clear when the funding stream becomes available. This will ensure the business case that supports the funding application is current at the time of submission, and reduce the burden on public finances until the funding criteria and timescales are known.

1.4 Compulsory Purchase Orders

The orders previously confirmed have now lapsed, as they have a 3 year validation period and that cannot be extended, therefore the Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) to acquire the land will need to be re-published and a further Public Inquiry would be required. A consultation on the content of the CPO has to be undertaken and unless there are no objections whatsoever the Secretary of State will need to appoint a Planning Inspector to undertake the Public Inquiry and produce a report, this is a lengthy process that will typically take a minimum of 18 months possibly up to 2 years to complete.

1.5 Environmental and Amenity Considerations

The planning statement which accompanied the Planning Application in May 2011 is in effect unchanged by the request for a 10 year Extension for Time. The scope of the works at this time is unlikely to change other than to conform to any compelling Governmental or technical guidance. Environmental surveys will continue to monitor the environmental and biodiversity status of the route throughout the life of the planning approval whether that is for a 5 or 10 year extension. The results of these surveys will be recorded and the Planning Authority will be kept up to date on the findings, and information will be used to produce an up to date pre-construction ecological report as and when required.

1.6 Conclusions

The previous planning application for a 5 year extension of time was made on the basis that the Government would make an announcement during 2011 about funding arrangements going forward either pre or post 2015. The application was and continues to be a positive response to the disappointment of not receiving the funding in 2010.

Further consultations on our request for the consideration of a 10 year extension are welcomed as the 5 year Extension of Time for Implementation is always going to be very difficult to achieve. The 5 years is a minimum period in which there could be the possibility of a commencement of the scheme. However, due to the uncertainty regarding funding a longer implementation period would significantly increase the likelihood of the scheme being delivered and therefore the application is now requesting a 10 year period for implementation.

The A509 Isham Bypass remains a high priority scheme within the County Council and is also identified as part of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy. A valid planning permission will give the A509 Isham Bypass a better chance and greater certainty of successfully competing for funding from whatever source. It would allow the Compulsory Purchase Order process to be progressed without the need to wait for a further Planning Application and the time involved in that process, which would considerably reduce any future timescale to commence the works on site.