



Developments Affecting Trunk Roads and Special Roads

Highways England Planning Response (HEPR 16-01)

Formal Recommendation to an Application for Planning Permission

From: Divisional Director,
Operations Division: South West Region
Highways England
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To: David Lowin, Stroud District Council

CC: transportplanning@dft.gsi.gov.uk
growthandplanning@highwaysengland.co.uk

Council's Reference: S.16/0043/OUT

Referring to the notification of the Outline Planning Application validated on 21 January 2016 regarding M5 J13: A 5,000 capacity football stadium and other ancillary uses (Use Class D2); two full-sized grass pitches and a goal practice area (Use Class D2); car parking for cars and coaches and highways improvements to the A419 including a signalised site junction and combined cycle/footway. All matters are reserved save for access on Land at M5 Junction 13, West of Stonehouse, Eastington, Gloucestershire, notice is hereby given that Highways England's formal recommendation is that we:

- ~~a) offer no objection;~~
- b) recommend that conditions should be attached to any planning permission that may be granted (see Annex A – Highways England recommended Planning Conditions);
- ~~c) recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period (see Annex A – further assessment required);~~
- ~~d) recommend that the application be refused (see Annex A – Reasons for recommending Refusal).~~

Highways Act Section 175B is not relevant to this application.¹

This represents Highways England formal recommendation and is copied to the Department for Transport as per the terms of our Licence.

Should you disagree with this recommendation you should consult the Secretary of State for Transport, as per the Town and Country Planning (Development Affecting Trunk Roads) Direction 2015, via transportplanning@dft.gsi.gov.uk.

Signature: *Rachel Sandy*

Date: 2nd May 2018

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¹ Where relevant, further information will be provided within Annex A.

Annex A **Highways England recommended Planning Conditions /**
~~Highways England recommended further assessment required /~~
~~Highways England recommended Refusal.~~

HIGHWAYS ENGLAND (“we”) has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such we work to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity.

This response represents our formal recommendations with regard to the planning application (App Ref - S.16/0043/OUT) and has been prepared by Rachel Sandy, the Highways Development Management Team Leader in Gloucestershire.

We have undertaken a review of the relevant documents supporting the planning application to ensure compliance with the current of the Secretary of State as set out in DfT Circular 02/2013 “The Strategic Road Network and the Delivery of Sustainable Development” and the DCLG National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), being advised on this matter by our consultants, Jacobs.

Statement of Reasons

Highways England has previously considered the Eco Park proposals, with an HEPR last issued to the Local Planning Authority on 05 February 2018 recommending that planning permission not be granted for a period of 3 months. This was to provide PFA Consulting (PFA), acting on behalf of the applicant, sufficient time to commission a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) for the M5 J13 and A419 corridor improvements and prepare a satisfactory designers response.

Highways England has continued discussions with PFA and a Stage 1 RSA and Designers Response has now been received and accepted. Highways England’s concerns relate to the operation and safety of the SRN i.e. M5 J13.

Our comments are set out below.

Development Proposals

The proposals include a 5,000-capacity stadium and ancillary uses positioned to the north of the A419. This stadium is to be use by Forest Green Rovers Football Club (FGRFC) which were promoted to the National League during the 2017-2018

season. The Club is relocating to a new facility from its current New Lawn Stadium in Nailsworth, south of Stroud.

The ancillary uses will include a small number of bars within the football ground, a club shop, changing rooms and private gym for team players. The proposals also include two full-sized grass pitches and goal practice area. These facilities will be solely used by the football club or open during a match. The gym, changing rooms and practice pitches will not be open to the general public.

The proposals include 1,700 car parking and 100 cycle spaces and a new access junction with the A419 carriageway. This comprises a three-arm signal controlled junction, with pedestrian crossings provided across two junction arms.

Trip Generation

Football club trip generation has previously been agreed with Highways England. This has been derived from existing football club travel surveys, with modal split assumptions included to reflect the sites proposed 'edge of town location'

The football club trip generation assumes:

- 6 coaches assumed for away supporters with a total occupancy of 300 people
- 10 local shuttle buses for home fans with a total occupancy of 500 people
- 4% of home ticket holders walk or cycle
- A car occupancy of 2.2 people per car
- 10% pick-up / drop off or taxi movements
- An inclusion of 50 car trips associated with hospitality and staff

Applying the above assumptions to a full capacity stadium (5000 spectators), car trips include:

- 4250 home supporters
- 750 away supporters (15% of the total crowd)
- 4080 home supporters after taking off walk/cycle trips (4%)
- 4830 home and away supporters combined
- 4030 supporters after taking off bus and coach trips (800 people)
- 1832 car trips based on car occupancy levels
- 50 additional car trips associated with hospitality / director / staff cars
- 188 taxi and pick-up/drop of trips (10% additional cars) and these include both arrivals and departures in each period
- 1882 car trips to the football club, of which 1,694 would require a parking space.

For a Saturday match starting at 15:00, 67% of spectators are anticipated to arrive in the hour leading up to match start time. Similarly, 76% of spectators are envisaged to depart the site in the hour following the end of the match between 17:00-18:00.

Weekday matches would be held infrequently, but typically include start times between 19:45 and 20:00. For a weekday match, 55% of spectators are predicted to arrive between 18:00-19:00 and the remainder in the hour following. No football development trips are assumed to occur during typical weekday peak hours between 08:00-09:00 and 17:00-18:00.

Trip Distribution / Assignment

Football club trip distribution has been informed by using the postcode locations of FGRFC season ticket holders. This includes a total of 33% football club trips travelling through M5 J13, which split 17 M5(N), 6% M5(S) and 10% to the A38. Highway England accepts these results.

Committed Developments / Infrastructure

A series of small committed developments have been accounted for in the TA through the use of TEMPro growth factors, with the traffic and infrastructure associated with the largest 'Land West of Stonehouse' (LWoS) proposals (Ref S.14/0810/OUT) being manually added. This traffic has been extrapolated from the agreed TA accompanying the full planning application submission. Now committed, this development includes a Grampian style condition which restricts the development to 201 dwellings (or other development generating equivalent traffic) being occupied in the absence of an agreed improvement to the A419 Chipmans Platt Roundabout.

A similar condition will apply to the Eco Park proposals.

Site Access & SRN Impact

The Eco Park proposals include a new three-arm signal controlled junction providing access to the football club along the A419 (dualled). This access incorporates a pedestrian crossing across two of the three junction arms, and shown to run with the proposed traffic signal stages.

Typical weekday, Saturday and football match peak times have been considered for development impact in a LinSig model created for the new access junction. A S-Paramics traffic model has been used to test queue interactions and wider traffic impacts along the A419 corridor, including M5 J13.

Traffic modelling results are presented in the PFA TA and in subsequent modelling notes available on the planning application website. These show that development trips do not generate a severe impact on the SRN, with the Chipmans Platt Roundabout improvement (LWoS proposals) and other mitigation measures in place.

Mitigation measures include the dualling of the A419 carriageway between M5 J13 and the Chipmans Platt Roundabout and changes to the white lining and signing at M5 J13, to allow greater capacity to be achieved from this junction. This allows for both lanes of the northbound and southbound off slips to be used to travel east, exiting via the A419 towards Stonehouse.

The proposed physical changes to the A419 and SRN have been subject to the Stage 1 RSA, and those risks / problems identified in the audit, have been picked up in the Designer's Response prepared by PFA. Issues concerning the SRN in terms of lining and signing are to be picked up at a detailed design stage, and we expect the full recommendations on the RSA to be implemented.

Event Management

The RSA also raises that details of an '*on site traffic control system*' have not been provided. It raises the point that with a large number of vehicles expected to access the site in a short period of time prior to a football match, there is potential for vehicles to queue out of the site and onto the A419, if internal layouts / parking is not suitably designed. Internal site layout has not been a consideration for the outline planning application, but Highways England would require consideration of the layout if there is potential for it to generate a blockage to the A419, which could result in queues back to M5 J13. Highways England requests consultation on internal layout proposals, when the applicant addresses this point as part of a Reserve Matters Application.

A football event management plan would also be required. Whilst the site will be designed to accommodate the volume of visitors predicted to the football match, the event plan will put in place procedures and measures that further seek to minimise disruption, maintain safety, and ensure that sufficient facilities and procedures are in place to manage the situation. For Highways England, the management of traffic in relation to SRN impact will be a priority. The provision of a football event management plan has been identified as a condition below.

Conclusion

Highways England is now content that the development proposals do not generate a severe impact on the SRN, subject to planning conditions. Our recommendation is set out below.

Recommendation:

Highways England recommends that the following planning conditions are attached to any planning permission granted for the development proposals (S.16/0043/OUT):

Highways England Condition 1

The development hereby approved, shall not be brought into use, unless or until an improvement scheme identified for the A419 Chipmans Platt Roundabout, generally in accordance with the PFA Consulting drawing H414/14 Rev B, have been completed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with Highways England) and open to traffic

Reason:

An improvement to the Chipmans Platt Roundabout is necessary to release a network constraint on the A419 eastbound, which would otherwise generate a queue that extends back to the SRN. To ensure the safe and efficient operation of the SRN i.e. M5 J13.

Highways England Condition 2

The development hereby approved, shall not be brought into use, unless or until an improvement scheme identified for M5 J13 and the A419 corridor, generally in accordance with the PFA Consulting drawings E191/01 Rev E, dated September 2017 and E191/6 REV A, dated January 2018, have been completed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with Highways England) and open to traffic

Reason:

To ensure the safe and efficient operation of the SRN i.e. M5 J13.

Highways England Condition 3

The development hereby approved, shall not be brought into use, unless or until an Event Management Strategy has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with Highways England). This strategy shall include, but not be limited to information on:

- A) the size of event and expected traffic attraction;
- B) traffic management to ensure the safe and efficient flow of vehicles in and out of the site and access junction;
- C) the management of coach, taxi and general drop-off / pick up movements at the site and A419 corridor;

Reason:

An Event Management Strategy related to a football match is required to ensure the site operates in accordance with the traffic modelling presented in the TA. To ensure the safe and efficient operation of the SRN i.e. M5 J13.

I trust the above is clear. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss any further issues.