

CONGLETON LINK ROAD – PROGRESS UPDATE

Progress December 2016 to August 2017

Following the publication of the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) and Side Roads Order (SRO) in October 2016, 23 objections were received during the objection period; a Public Inquiry was subsequently held at Congleton Town Hall in May 2017. Of the six remaining objections at the end of the inquiry, there was one substantive objection for consideration by the Inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate. The Inspector has submitted his recommendations to the Department for Transport who are currently considering it.

A minor non-material amendment to the approved planning application was submitted and approved in April 2017. This concerned an increase in the length of bund near Chelford Road and a minor change in the alignment of Back Lane.

Our designer, Jacobs, has prepared drawings and tender documents necessary for a contractor to be able to design and construct the scheme. A Contract Notice inviting expressions of interest in designing and building the scheme was published in Official Journal of the European Union in July 2017. Submissions were received in August 2017 and the Council is currently considering these.

Environmental surveys have continued. These are necessary in order to obtain the necessary information to obtain European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) and have included extensive surveys of Great Crested Newts, Bats and Ancient Woodland.

We have continued to meet with landowners; in some cases, this has included discussions on minor design changes to meet individual needs and whether the Council could obtain land by agreement.

Work has continued on developing the business case for the scheme which has now been submitted in outline form to the Department for Transport (DfT) which is the main funder of the scheme.

We have held discussions with stakeholders such as the Environment Agency and utility companies concerning the building of the scheme.

Planned work for September 2017 to March 2018.

We will continue to meet landowners who are affected by the link road with a view to address their particular requirements and to reach agreement for purchasing land by agreement.

Work will continue to hold discussions with the Department for Transport regarding the business case.

Following changes agreed at the Public Inquiry it will be necessary to submit a revised planning application for a minor material amendment to the scheme; additionally, a separate application will be submitted in connection with Eaton Hall Quarry.

Environmental work will continue and European Protected Species Licences will be prepared.

A further ground investigation is planned for Autumn 2017. The purpose of this is to be able to provide tenderers with more information about the groundwater in the vicinity of Chelford Road.

Following the Inspector's recommendation, we expect the CPO and SRO to be confirmed by the DfT in Autumn 2017.

Tenders for the design and construction of the link road will be issued to prospective design and build contractors in September 2017 and should be returned in December 2017. These will be evaluated after which the final business case will be submitted around March 2018.

Confirmation of the CPO and SRO along with approval of the business case will allow the scheme to proceed. We expect a contract to be awarded in July 2018 with work commencing in September 2018 and the road opening in Summer 2020.