

Hauxton Level Crossing Upgrade

Planning, Design and Access Statement

November 2022

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For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in order to support a Full Planning Application in relation to the proposed upgrade works located at *Land to the north of Hauxton Level Crossing, Little Shelford, Cambridge, CB22 5HJ*. The proposal comprises the installation of a SMART IO (SMIO) Housing equipment building adjacent to the existing railway boundary. The proposal is located within the administrative area of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Cambridge Re-signalling, Re-lock and Re-control Project (C3R)

- 1.2 Network Rail are investing £194 million to renew the signalling system for the Cambridge area and improve efficiency and reliability for passengers and freight users. Signalling systems are essential to the safe and efficient operation of the railway. With the demands to run more trains, there is a need to modernise the existing signalling systems which are coming to the end of their operational life and replace them with a modern system that can unlock the ability to operate the railway more efficiently. The extent of the project locations is shown below in **Figure 1**.

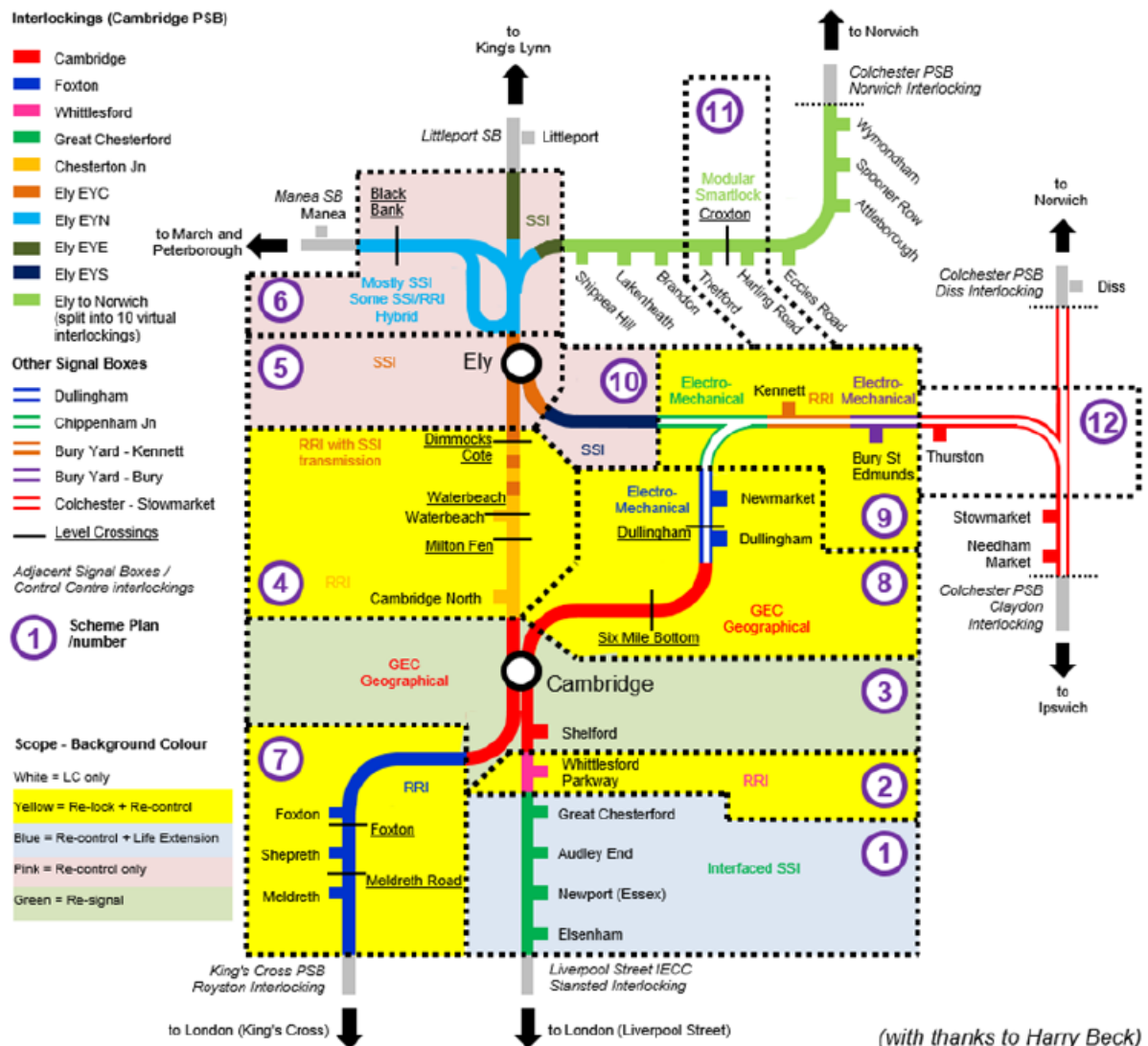


Figure 1 – C3R Project Location Diagram

- 1.3 Network Rail's Cambridge Re-signalling, Re-lock and Re-control project (C3R) aims to deliver state-of-the-art signalling technology for the railway which will mean better reliability and reduced maintenance, while providing a platform ready for digital technologies such as the European Train

Control System (ETCS). The CR3 project is an upgrade/renewal scheme covering an area which includes 125 miles of track, from Meldreth and Elsenham to the south, through Cambridge, up to Ely in the north and Thurston to the east. The project plans include the following proposals:

- Upgrade of the signalling control equipment at Cambridge power signal box;
- The upgrade of the signalling safety interlocking equipment with a modern signalling technology;
- Renewal of the telecommunications and power supplies to support the new systems;
- Decommissioning of three mechanical signal boxes and relocating control of signalling to the Cambridge power signal box; and
- Upgrade of seven level crossings from half barrier to full barriers to improve safety for all crossing users.

1.4 Following public consultation in 2021, an application for a Transport and Works Act order (TWAO) to authorise Network Rail to compulsorily acquire land, rights in land and take temporary possession of same to facilitate the works required for the re-signalling of the Cambridge station interlocking area and the upgrade of relevant level crossings, was submitted on 5 August 2022 to the Secretary of State for Transport. Further detail on the TWAO process and all documentation can be found at <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/our-routes/anglia/improving-the-railway-in-anglia/cambridge-resignalling/>

1.5 The C3R project includes upgrade works at the site of the Hauxton level crossing. As such, the following information and supporting material have been submitted as part of this application for full planning permission to South Cambridgeshire District Council ('the Council'):

- Site Location Plan
 - *'Site Location Plan - 7951370 – 8_Rev H'*
- Existing and Proposed Drawings:
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (RSK Biocensus)
- Ecological Impact Assessment (RSK Biocensus)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (RSK Biocensus)
- Flood Risk Assessment (Mott Macdonald)
- Surface Water Strategy Statement at LX Sites (Alstom)
- Construction Management Plan (Alstom)
- Utilities Assessment (Alstom)
- Sustainability Statement (Alstom)
- Carbon Assessment Report (Alstom)

2. Site Context & Planning History

Site Context

- 2.1 The site, which is located at *Land to the north of Hauxton Level Crossing, Little Shelford, Cambridge, CB22 5HJ*, is located between the villages of Hauxton and Little Shelford and approx. 5km south of the city of Cambridge. Hauxton Road crosses the railway at Hauxton Level Crossing in a south-easterly direction. The Site Location is shown below in **Figure 2**.

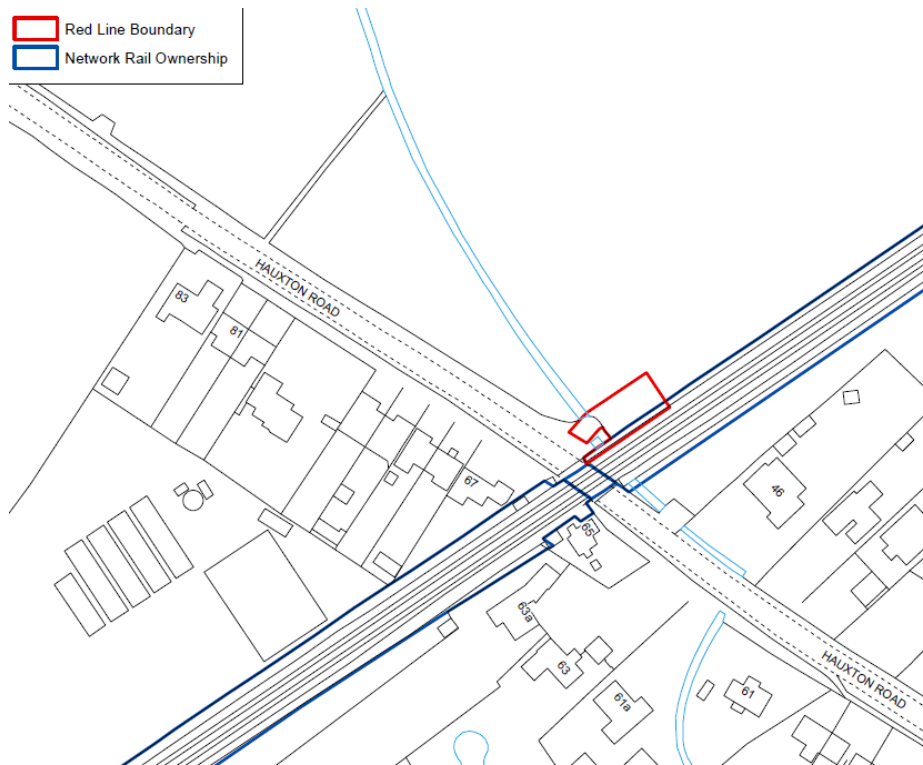


Figure 2 - Site Location of Proposed Development

- 2.2 The Site is bound to the north and east by open countryside (and designated Green Belt), to the south by the railway line, and to the west by Hauxton Road. Pedestrian and vehicular access to the Site is from Hauxton Road to the west. A series of site context photos are provided below in **Figure 3**:





Figure 3 - Existing Site Photos

- 2.3 Shelford Station is located approximately 1.2 miles to the north-east of the Site and provides Greater Anglia railway services to Cambridge North and London Liverpool Street.
- 2.4 The application site area is mainly located within Flood Zone 1, with the western part situated within Flood Zone 3. The site is not in a Conservation Area, no buildings within the curtilage of the site are statutorily or locally listed. The level crossing is located approx. 250m southwest and south of two designated sites which make up the Settlement NW of Little Shelford Scheduled Monument. There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on site, however a TPO area is located to the west of the site.
- 2.5 From a technical perspective, the existing Automatic Half Barrier (AHB) level crossing is to remain at this location. The level crossing has 2 barriers which close over the approach side of the carriageway only, leaving the offside of the carriageway open. Automatic half barrier crossings are initiated by approaching trains and are not interlocked with signals, although they are monitored by a signaller for correct operation. Hauxton will remain as an AHB but will be re-controlled within the new signalling system.

Planning History

- 2.6 The following section provides a review of the site's recent planning history and has been compiled using the South Cambridgeshire's online planning register:
- On 7th July 2021, Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Requests were submitted to the Council for 'EIA screening opinion for Cambridge Re-Signalling, Re-Lock and Re-Control Project (CR3) (ref: 21/03253/SCRE & 21/03205/SCRE). On 27th July 2021, the Council confirmed that the proposal did not fall within the scope of the EIA Regulations and an Environment Statement was not required.

3. Proposed Development

3.1 The proposed Description of Development is stated as:

"Change of use to Operational Railway Land, plus installation of Smart IO Housing Equipment and associated landscaping and fencing."

3.2 To facilitate the C3R signalling upgrades, new signalling equipment will be housed within a Relocatable Equipment Building (REB) (also known as a SMART IO Housing (SMIO)). The SMIO Housing will be installed on the edge of the railway embankment to north of Hauxton Road. The indicative location of the SMIO is shown below in **Figure 4**:



Figure 4 - Bird's Eye View of Site Location

- 3.3 The new SMIO equipment buildings are a standard width of 2.5m with varying lengths, dependent upon the railway signalling, telecom and electrical assets to be installed within. At this site, the housing equipment will be 'Type 4' and will be 6.1m long (comprising 15.25sqm GEA).
- 3.4 To facilitate construction, a small number of a group of Ash trees will be required to be felled (please refer to Figure 4 above and the associated Arboricultural Impact Assessment, prepared by RSK Biocensus which shows the location of the proposed tree removals).
- 3.5 The SMIO will be painted olive green in colour to reduce visual impact. Examples of SMIO Housing built by Tyrone Fabrications are shown below in **Figure 5**:



Figure 5 - Examples of SMIO Housing Buildings

- 3.6 New hardstanding, comprising of 100mm thick compacted Type 1 granular fill, is proposed for the new walkway between Hauxton Road and the SMIO, as well as around the proposed SMIO. The new walkway would be timber staked on its boundaries and have a 1.1m high guardrail located along its northern edge and around the farm side of the SMIO. The SMIO itself will be placed on a slab concrete foundation with in-ground cable routing located around the edges of the slab concrete base.
- 3.7 The site will be bounded by proposed post and wire fencing that is in keeping with the existing boundary fencing along Network Rail operational land. On the farm side of the site (north west boundary) the land will be slightly regraded between the post and wire boundary fence and the guardrail around the SMIO unit.
- 3.8 Examples of SMIO Housing base slabs recently installed on other areas of the C3R project have been included below in **Figure 6**:



Figure 6 - Examples of SMIO Housing Bases plus surrounding landscape features and cable troughing

- 3.9 The location of the SMIO will be located partially within Network Rail operational land, and partially within land that is being purchased from the neighbouring landowner to provide temporary access and enable construction.

Access

- 3.10 Temporary vehicular access to the site for construction will be provided via the existing agricultural farm gate that is located directly to the west of the Hauxton Level Crossing as shown below in **Figure 7**. No permanent vehicular access is proposed, but intermittent access will be provided as needed for maintenance related purposes (estimated at once/year). Following construction, the agricultural farm gate access will be retained for agricultural use.



Figure 7 - Existing and Retained Access to the Site

- 3.11 Pedestrian access to the site will be provided from Hauxton Road via a new 1.0m wide pedestrian access that will be timber staked on its edges and filled with 100mm granular fill.

4. Policy Framework

- 4.1 This section of the planning statement summarises the relevant planning policy context within which the planning application will be determined.
- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals are determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- 4.3 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 20th July 2021 which sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies. The NPPF outlines a presumption in favour of sustainable development as being at the heart of the planning system.
- 4.4 The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource that was last updated in June 2021 and provides information and guidance on planning. The NPPF and NPPG form material considerations in the determination of a planning application.

Development Plan

- 4.5 The relevant Development Plan for South Cambridgeshire District Council currently comprises the following:
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Plan (adopted September 2018);
 - The Northstowe Area Action Plan (adopted 2007) (excluding Policy NS/3 (1g);
 - Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan (adopted 2008); and
 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021).

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 4.6 In addition, South Cambridgeshire has published a range of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The SPDs of particular relevance to this application include:
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (November 2016);
 - Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (January 2020); and
 - Greater Cambridge Biodiversity SPD (February 2022).

Site Designations

- 4.7 The Site is not allocated for development in the adopted Local Plan but is covered by the following designations on SCDC's adopted Policies Map:
- Green Belt; and
 - MSA – Mineral Safeguarding Area (Sand and Gravel).

Emerging Policy Context

- 4.8 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are working together to prepare a new Local Plan – Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The Local Development Scheme (August 2022) indicates that the Draft Plan consultation (Regulation 18) will take place in Autumn 2023, the Proposed Submission Local Plan consultation (Reg 19) is expected in Autumn 2024 and submission to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination is scheduled for Summer/Autumn 2025.

5. Planning Assessment

5.1 This section assesses the Proposed Development against relevant national, strategic, and local policies. It considers the following key planning considerations in turn:

- Principle of Development;
- Design;
- Transport, Access and Servicing; and
- Environmental/Technical Considerations.

Principle of Development

5.2 Chapter 13 of the NPPF provides the overall policy framework related to the protection of the Green Belt. Paragraph 137 details that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and that the essential characteristic of the Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Paragraph 138 further sets out that the Green Belt serves five purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

5.3 Paragraph 147 states 'inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

5.4 Paragraph 148 further states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt and that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

5.5 Paragraph 150 contains various forms of development which are considered not to be inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. One of these exceptions (part c) include "*local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location*".

5.6 From a strategic perspective, Adopted, Policy S/2 (Objectives of the Local Plan) outlines the broad vision for which the Local Plan seeks to deliver, Part f. stating that one of the key objectives of the Local Plan is to "*maximised potential for journeys, to be undertaken by sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling, bus and train.*"

5.7 In terms of spatial policy, adopted Local Plan Policy S/4 (Cambridge Green Belt) highlights how the Green Belt will be maintained around Cambridge and that this will define the extent of the urban

boundary. The policy confirms that new development in the Green Belt will only be approved in accordance with Green Belt policy as set out within the NPPF.

- 5.8 Policy NH/8 (Mitigating the Impact of Development In and Adjoining the Green Belt) seeks to protect the Green Belt from the impacts of development. The policy states that: *“Any development proposals within the Green Belt must be located and designed so that they do not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt”*.
- 5.9 The proposed upgrade works provide vital improvements to the safety, reliability and efficiency of the railway infrastructure in the region, ensuring sustainable transport options remain well maintained and managed. SMIO Housing’s are required to be located within close proximity to the rail infrastructure and level crossings which they serve and therefore in the context of the subject site, given the Hauxton Road level crossing is located within the Green Belt, the proposed infrastructure updates is similarly required to be located adjacent the level crossing and within the Green Belt.
- 5.10 The location and layout of the proposed works will not affect the openness or the character of the Green Belt. The SMIO Housing is set back from Hauxton Road and vegetation both to the front and rear of the SMIO Housing will be retained. The design of the structure and its olive green colour, will allow it to integrate with its surroundings. View of the SMIO Housing unit will be limited from the roadside given the retained vegetation, and the existing vegetation on the eastern side of the rail corridor will ensure views of the SMIO Housing will be limited from neighbouring residential properties. It is likely that the SMIO Housing will be viewed from the level crossing, but this will be read in the context of infrastructure associated with the rail line and therefore not impact openness.
- 5.11 These works are necessary and are therefore an acceptable use within the Green Belt and align with Paragraph 150 (c) within the NPPF. The proposed building is small in scale and has limited impact on the openness of the Greenbelt, nor conflict with the five purposes of the Green Belt. As such, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable for the proposed upgrade works at Hauxton Level Crossing.

Design

- 5.12 Policy HQ/1 requires all new development to be of high-quality design, with a clear vision as to the positive contribution the development will make to its local and wider context. The policy also provides a list of 15 design principles which includes preserving or enhancing the character of the local urban and rural area and responding to its context in the wider landscape, being compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, density, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, materials, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area and include high quality landscaping and public spaces that integrate the development with its surroundings.
- 5.13 The proposed location is set back from Hauxton Road and is not readily visible from public vantage points except for views down the rail corridor from the adjacent level crossing.
- 5.14 The proposed upgrades to the level crossing are of a contextually appropriate high-quality design that utilises the Network Rail standard olive green colour to assist in ensuring the SMIO Housing seamlessly integrates with the surrounding rural context of the development and ensure that there will be minimal impact on the openness and character of the Greenbelt.
- 5.15 The surrounding hard and soft landscaping is non-intrusive in visual terms comprising gravel substrate and concrete pads which are required for the housing units installation and long-term access and maintenance requirements.

- 5.16 The proposed SMIO Housing equipment will be designed in accordance with similar SMIO Housing structures built by Tyrone Fabrications across Network Rail's infrastructure.
- 5.17 Given the small-scale nature of the proposed SMIO Housing and surrounding landscape details, the proposed development is considered acceptable in policy terms.

Operational Transport, Access and Servicing

- 5.18 Policy TI/2 (Planning for Sustainable Travel) states that development must be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car, and promote sustainable travel appropriate to its location.
- 5.19 The proposed development is for operational rail infrastructure and will not result in generating any vehicular movements, beyond operatives visiting the site for routine or intermittent maintenance as required (which is expected to be required c. once per annum).
- 5.20 There are no proposed changes to the existing access, nor is any permanent parking required for the proposed development. Temporary vehicular access for construction will be provided via the existing agricultural farm gate access from Hauxton Road. Vehicular access to the Site will only be necessary and required during construction (over a 2-week period) and for scheduled and/or intermittent maintenance as required, where operatives would park within the adjacent layby on Hauxton Road and access the site via the proposed pedestrian access route.

Construction Management and Traffic Movements

- 5.21 In accordance with good practice, a *Construction Management Plan*, prepared by Alstom has been submitted with this application.
- 5.22 Full details are set out within the document but details that construction will require a 3-week programme of works, including the requirement to deliver and install the SMIO during a single night shift to avoid any disruptions to the operational rail network service and to ensure safe operating conditions for operatives. The proposed programme and levels of construction traffic generation is set out below in **Table 1**:

Table 1 - Proposed Construction Programme

Week	Shift type	Description of works	Traffic movement
1	6x day shift	Material load out Excavation of base	1 x Grab lorry, 1 shift 1 x transit van/ 1 x welfare van, 6 shifts
2	6x day shift	Pour base Site clean-up	1 x grab lorry, 1 shift 1 x concrete delivery, 1 shift 1 x transit van/ 1 x welfare van, 6 shifts
3	1x night shift	Delivery of equipment housing	1 x 7.5ton lorry/ 1 x Hiab, 1 shift

- 5.23 Overall, the proposed upgrades will seek to improve the reliability and accuracy of the level crossing and provide safe access for all users of the site. The proposals will ensure the safe and efficient operation of the railway and will not result in any changes to the function of the highway network and are therefore acceptable in highway terms.

Environmental/Technical Considerations

- 5.24 This application is supported by a suite of environmental and technical reports which confirm that the proposed equipment building is acceptable and will not result in any significant negative impacts and

complies with local planning policy. We summarise the conclusions of these reports below. Please refer to supporting reports for further details.

Trees

- 5.25 Policy NH/6 (Green Infrastructure) states that the Council will aim to conserve and enhance green infrastructure within the district. Proposals that cause loss or harm to this network will not be permitted unless the need for and benefits of the development demonstrably and substantially outweigh any adverse impacts on the district's green infrastructure network.
- 5.26 Policy NH/7 (Ancient Woodlands and Veteran Trees) also outlines that planning permission will be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.
- 5.27 Policy NH/8 (Mitigating the Impact of Development in and Adjoining the Green Belt) states that where development is permitted in and adjoining the Green Belt, landscaping conditions, together with a requirement that any planting is adequately maintained, will be attached to any planning permission in order to ensure that the impact on the Green Belt is mitigated.
- 5.28 It is noted that due to Network Rail's land ownership boundaries and operational requirements, there is no capacity for replacement planting within the site. However, Network Rail will seek to find appropriate mitigation across the C3R project in discussion with the Council where appropriate.
- 5.29 This application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, prepared by RSK which describes the results of a survey of trees at Hauxton Level Crossing in August 2022. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment confirms that the proposed layout will require the removal of 1 x Crab Apple Category C tree (ref. T1), and part of a Category C group of Ash (ref. G1). The report concludes that the tree removals required to enable works will not be of detriment to the surroundings, and it is likely, due to the presence of ash dieback, that many trees within group G1 would decline over the coming years regardless of the proposed works.
- 5.30 The Arboricultural Impact Assessment also confirms there will not be any adverse impacts to the adjacent TPO area as the trees to the northwest of the site within the wooded area will not be directly affected. However, as a precaution mitigation including a series of ground protection mats are recommended to be installed over the entrance to avoid further compaction above and beyond its existing state. The required track mat will provide at least 90 ton load bearing weight and this is shown with an orange cross hatch on the tree removal plan at Appendix 3 of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
- 5.31 The upgrades to the transport infrastructure at Hauxton Level Crossing are essential to improve the signalling technology for the railway and will lead to better reliability and reduced maintenance on the wider network. As such, the proposals, including the removal of a small number Category C trees, is considered acceptable in policy terms.

Flood Risk

- 5.32 Policy CC/9 (Managing Flood Risk) seeks to minimise flood risk by only permitting development where it complies with the requirements as set out within the policy including the use of suitable flood protection and mitigation measures. The policy also requires the submission of site-specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRA).

- 5.33 A Flood Risk Assessment, prepared by Mott Macdonald has been submitted with the application and confirms that all permanent works including the position of the proposed SMIO compound are within Flood Zone 1. The existing culvert passing under the railway and culvert under the access road to the agricultural field are within Flood Zone 3 but this will be limited to construction access over the culvert. As all permanent proposed works are within Flood Zone 1 they are defined respectively as an area with an annual probability of flooding of less than 1 in 1000 years (0.1%). Furthermore, the site falls within an area of 'very low' surface water flood risk, the risk of increased surface water flooding is not anticipated.
- 5.34 Furthermore, a high-level Surface Water Strategy Statement, prepared by Alstom has been submitted in support of the application, which details how SMIO Housings will be constructed around a permeable gravel base, which ensures the proposed development will not lead to any localised or wider surface water flooding or impacts. This approach is considered to be in-line with the SuDS drainage hierarchy set out within the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD and is therefore a suitable and acceptable design approach.
- 5.35 The FRA identifies and assesses the risks of all forms of flooding taking climate change into account and concludes that the proposal is acceptable in policy terms.

Biodiversity and Ecology

- 5.36 Policy NH/4 (Biodiversity) states that new development must aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity. Opportunities should be taken to achieve positive gain through the form and design of development.
- 5.37 This application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA), prepared by RSK Biocensus. The accompanying reports, outline that the site currently comprises a grassy arable field margin with a narrow strip of scrub and rail infrastructure such as tracks and ballast.
- 5.38 The EcIA considers potential direct and indirect effects upon: the River Cam County Wildlife Site (CWS), the adjacent ditch and surrounding habitats and potential impact to the following protected species: great crested newt, reptile, nesting birds, foraging and commuting bats and notable mammals such as badger, otter and hedgehog.
- 5.39 The implementation of mitigation measures outlined within Section 5 of the EcIA should provide for no residual effects on great crested newts, reptiles, nesting birds, bats and notable mammals following the completion of the development. Mitigation measures include pollution prevention measures, appropriate site clearance methods with suitable timing, establishment of exclusion zones to safeguard protected species and/or habitats and sensitive lighting for bats.
- 5.40 A biodiversity net gain/loss (BNG) assessment was also made for the proposed works. The baseline biodiversity units (BU) for the site are 0.06 and post development are 0.03 indicating a loss in 0.03 BU. There is no ability to include on-site mitigation given the site context and limited amount of land within the ownership and control of Network Rail. On this basis, the C3R project will seek to agree an appropriate range of off-site biodiversity enhancements project-wide in consultation with South Cambridgeshire Council.
- 5.41 The recommended ecology mitigation measures have also been specified in the site-specific *Construction Management Plan (CMP)*, prepared by Alstom, which has been submitted in support of this application, which stipulates that in accordance with the PEA/EcIA recommendations, during the 3-week construction period, the following mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure any potential impacts to the local environment are avoided:

- Cautious approaches to vegetation clearance
- Avoiding aiming any temporary lighting towards trees
- Covering excavations at night/ capping pipework with a diameter greater than 120mm
- Keeping vegetation cut short throughout the duration of the works.
- Cautionary measures to be put in place to avoid potentially polluting nearby water course

5.42 Subject to the proposed mitigation measures being implemented as set out within the EclA and CMP, and suitable off-site biodiversity enhancement measures being implemented, it is considered the proposed works would have negligible impact on local ecology and the proposals are therefore acceptable in policy terms.

Historic Environment

- 5.43 NPPF Paragraph 199 states when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Development which results in substantial harm (or total loss) of a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused (Para 201), and where the proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.
- 5.44 Policy NH/14 (Heritage Assets) states that development proposals will be supported when they sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets, including their settings, as appropriate to their significance and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly, amongst protected assets, scheduled monuments.
- 5.45 The level crossing is located approx. 250m southwest and south of two designated sites which make up the Settlement NW of Little Shelford Scheduled Monument (SM). Given the distance between the two locations, and the minor scale of the proposals, the proposed development would not result in any impacts or harm to the character or setting of the SM.
- 5.46 Given no harm would be generated on the character or setting of the SM, the proposed development is considered acceptable in policy terms.

Sustainability

- 5.47 Policy CC/1 states that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that demonstrate and embed the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation into the development. Applicants must submit a Sustainability Statement to demonstrate how these principles have been embedded into the development proposal. The level of information provided in the Sustainability Statement should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development.
- 5.48 A project wide *Sustainability Statement*, prepared by Alstom has been submitted alongside this application, outlining the various sustainability initiatives that have been integrated within the project across the various level crossing sites. This has been developed in accordance with the *Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2020)*.
- 5.49 In accordance with the Council's Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (adopted January 2020), a Sustainability checklist for applications in South Cambridgeshire

is provided at Section 6 of the Sustainability Statement. The Sustainability Checklist includes summaries of sustainable approaches where applicable.

- 5.50 Furthermore, a project wide *Carbon Assessment* has been prepared by Alstom to assess the carbon impact associated with the entire C3R project. The Carbon Assessment confirms that the overall capital carbon footprint of the design using *conventional* concrete products is estimated to be in the region of 153 tonnes of CO2 equivalent across the entire project. Based on the review of alternative and available low carbon products, the proposed methods of construction and materiality (across the entire C3R project) will allow for a further 45 tonnes of CO2 equivalent from the conventional baseline carbon footprint of the project.
- 5.51 The report confirms that carbon efficiency can be made through the provision Glass Granulated Blast Furnace Slag (nominal 65% used) into the concrete mix of substructure elements. It also notes that GRP or recycled plastic troughing also has a major role to play in reducing the carbon on the C3R project. Further savings around signal installation using screw piling over concrete and introducing innovation such as TechnoCrete and Macrebur are also being considered for other construction elements of the project and will be implemented where feasible allowing for further CO2 reductions.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed installation of a new SMIO Housing unit and associated works at *Land to the north of Hauxton Level Crossing, CB22 5HJ*, is an important component of the overall C3R project which will modernise rail infrastructure across Cambridgeshire.
- 6.2 The proposed works are necessary to allow Network Rail to fulfil its role and remit as infrastructure manager by upgrading this signalling equipment and ensuring its supporting infrastructure is fit for purpose. By installing the SMIO Housing equipment, this will create a safer and more efficient operation and there will be wider community benefits as a result of the proposal. These include the upgrading of necessary infrastructure for the rail network, introducing more appropriate and advanced modern technology and improvements to safety requirements and reliability of the railway.
- 6.3 Given the proposed development is related to transport infrastructure, as per the NPPF, the proposed development is not considered inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The location, siting and design of the building and retention of surrounding vegetation will ensure the proposals do not harm Green Belt openness or character. As such, the upgrade of signalling equipment and installation of a new SMIO Housing building has been demonstrated to be in accordance with both local and national planning policy and is therefore acceptable in policy terms.
- 6.4 To conclude, the development proposals represent a high-quality, well-designed scheme that accords with the principles of sustainable development and should be approved in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the approach to decision-making set out in paragraphs 10 - 11 of the NPPF.

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