

ITEM NO:	<u>Location:</u>	Land north and east of Cadwell Lane and Wilbury Way and west of Stotfold Road, Hitchin (Hitchin Railway Curve)
	<u>Applicant:</u>	Network Rail (Infrastructures)
	<u>Proposal:</u>	Condition 11 (i) and (ii) pursuant to Order reference TWA/09/APP/05 - Details of design and external appearance of (i) the accommodation underbridge to be located chainage 11+900 and (ii) the viaducts and intersection bridge, including the materials to be used.
	<u>Ref.No:</u>	12/00332/ 1DOC
	<u>Officer:</u>	Tom Rea

Date of expiry of statutory period : 29 March 2012

Reason for Delay (if applicable)

N/A

Reason for Referral to Committee (if applicable)

The Committee have requested that all applications for discharge of conditions relating to the Hitchin Rail Curve project are determined by the Planning Control Committee.

1.0 Relevant History

- 1.1 The Committee are aware of the decision of the Secretary of State for Transport on 28th March 2011 to make the Hitchin (Cambridge Junction) Order 2011 and grant deemed planning permission provided for in the Order (TWA/09/APP/05).

2.0 Documents

- 2.1 The following documents have been submitted by Network Rail in order to discharge condition 11 (i) and (ii) of the deemed planning permission (details of the accommodation underbridge and the viaducts and intersection bridge, including materials):

- Covering letter dated 2nd February 2012
- Plan Nos:
- 214164-00-ST-101 Viaduct DCF/2 General Arrangement Sheet 1
- 214164-00-ST-102 Viaduct DCF/2 General Arrangement Sheet 2
- 214164-00-ST-103 Viaduct DCF/2 Span over East Coast Mainline
- 214164-00-ST-104 Viaduct DCF/2 Typical Part Plan on Viaduct
- 214164-00-ST-105 Viaduct DCF/2 South Abutment (London End) Layout
- 214164-00-ST-106 Viaduct DCF/2 North Abutment Layout
- 214164-00-ST-107 Viaduct DCF/2 Foundation Layout
- 214164-00-ST-108 Viaduct DCF/2 Miscellaneous Drainage Details
- 214164-00-ST-112 Viaduct DCF/2 Anglian Water Sewage Access Road
- 214164-00-ST-113 Bridge DCF/1 - Cadwell Lane Retaining Wall General
- Materials schedule and concrete finishes specification

2.0 Policies

- 2.1 **National Planning Policy:**
PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG 13: Transport

- 2.2 Green Belt
North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No.2 with Alterations

Policy 2 - Green Belt

In the Green Belt, as shown on the Proposals Map, the Council will aim to keep the uses of land open in character. Except for proposals within settlements which accord with Policy 3, or in very special circumstances, planning permission will only be granted for new buildings, extensions, and changes of use of buildings and of land which are appropriate in the Green Belt, and which would not result in significant visual impact.

(Structure Plan Policy 1)

3.0 Representations

- 3.1 **Urban design and landscape architect:** Does not raise any objections to the detailed viaduct bridge/accommodation bridge designs.

4.0 Planning Considerations

4.1 Discussion

- 4.1.1 The Secretary of State imposed condition 11 on the deemed planning permission to require further details of the design and external appearance of the accommodation underbridge (i) and viaducts and intersection bridge details and materials to be used (ii). The condition also requires details of the attenuation basins at Cadwell Lane and Stofold Road however these matters (iii) and (iv) are to be submitted at a later date. The Secretary of State considered the condition was required 'in the interests of the visual amenity of the area'.

- 4.1.2 The accommodation underbridge details are shown on drawing no. ST-201 and show the provision of a 8 metre high bridge with a 4.5m high ground to underside of bridge clearance and 4.2 metre wide underpass constructed in concrete with steel parapet. The bridge is an important part of the embankment structure for the following reasons:

- i) To enable essential utilities diversions to be made;
- ii) To enable the re-routeing of public footpath FP089
- iii) To enable the farmer who owns the land over which the railway is being built to access the remainder of his land.

The underbridge has been appropriately design to accommodate its use by agricultural vehicles and footpath users.

- 4.1.3 The viaduct structure is approximately 450 metres in overall length running from the existing embankment south of the Cadwell Lane bridge to the new embankment and consists of cast steel beam structure supported on 30 concrete piers. Each pier is constructed on pile foundations with the main east and west piers carrying the track over the East Coast Main Line (ECML) some 13.7m each in overall width. The viaduct span over the ECML is 60 metres. The single track is laid onto ballast over a concrete base with maintenance walkways either side. The concrete deck incorporates a drainage system. The structure incorporates service bays on the western edge of the curve to accommodate the Overline electric (OLE) masts. The walkways will include 2 metre high steel handrail (GRP material for the handrail is used next to OLE). All steelwork to be used in the structure including walkways

and bracing will be painted green. The ground to underside of viaduct clearance varies, depending on ground levels, between 4 and 10 metres. The total height of the viaduct structure above each pier is 4 metres.

- 4.1.4 The new viaduct and embankment would have a visual impact on the landscape however both the Appeal Inspector and the Secretary of State considered that there would be no conflict between the scheme and the key characteristics of the Landscape Character Areas within which it is set. In granting consent for the Order and deemed planning permission the Secretary of State considered that the scheme would have the effect of screening long distance views of the industrial buildings of the Hitchin Industrial estate and therefore there would be an improvement to the visual quality of the landscape. In addition to this I consider that the viaduct section would be seen both against the backdrop of the industrial estate but also against the existing rail infrastructure of the ECML and Cambridge line. In conclusion it is considered that the details of the viaduct are within the limits set down and agreed in the Transport and Works Order.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 In making decisions on applications submitted under the Town and Country Planning legislation, the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of the development plan and to any other material considerations. The decision must be in accordance with the plan unless the material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the decision is to refuse or restrictive conditions are attached, the applicant has a right of appeal against the decision.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 That Condition 11 (i) and (ii) of deemed planning permission ref:TWA/09/APP/05 is discharged.