



Dear

Our Ref: qA1420023
Date: 9 August 2021

THE CHESTER TO BANGOR TRUNK ROAD (A55) (JUNCTIONS 16 AND 16A IMPROVEMENT REALIGNMENT AND SLIP ROADS) ORDER 202-

THE CHESTER TO BANGOR TRUNK ROAD (A55) (JUNCTIONS 16 AND 16A IMPROVEMENT REALIGNMENT AND SLIP ROADS) (SIDE ROADS) ORDER 202-

(Ref J16-R012-A55J15J16-2021-0038C-R)

I refer to your correspondence relating to the publication of the above draft Orders received by the Orders Branch Cardiff on the 5 May 2021. Please note that your correspondence has been registered as an Objection to the above draft Orders and you should have received a Welsh Government letter dated 25 May 2021 confirming that a Public Local Inquiry (PLI) is to be held.

I note that you have no issues with the general concept and principles of the Scheme but that you object on a number of points. I would also like to thank you for meeting Rob Griffiths and Mike Gilbert of my project team on 22 July 2021 to discuss your concerns further. I have set out below my response to your points of objection.

1) The Review fails to assess the opportunities and needs of horse riders and lack of consultation with the British Horse Society

Whilst the scheme footprint does not directly impact on the Bridleways identified in the local area, the scheme sought to avoid precluding use by equestrians.

Prior to the WeITAG Stage 2 Public Consultation and Exhibitions, the British Horse Society (BHS) was invited to give comments/views concerning the proposals. Letters were sent to both (based in the Caerphilly office) and (based in Kenilworth office) in June 2018. A further letter was sent out to yourself, dated 11 June 2019, providing an update with respect to the preferred options and inviting your organisation to give comments/views concerning the proposals. No response was received, or representation made to any of these letters. It was therefore decided to initiate direct contact with yourself on 3 June 2020. I understand that the discussion centred on both the legality of equestrian access to cycleways and on practical issues that could be incorporated to allow and therefore encourage equestrian access to the coastline, which you feel had been curtailed by the 1980s A55 dualling. These points are discussed in more detail in the paragraphs below.

1) (cont'd) Competence of the Assessor

The Lead Assessor is considered to have the appropriate skills, resources and support to undertake the Walking, Cycling and Horse-riding Assessment and Review (WCHAR) taking into consideration the requirements of all users.

The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) requirements are set out in document GG142 Section 3 sets out the requirements for the Lead Assessor role. I attach a document outlining how the Lead Assessor fulfils the expected competences outlined in Table 3.1.1.

2) Order information insufficient to identify whether crossings are controlled and whether equestrians are legally entitled to use segregated footway/bridleway

I can confirm that the four crossings on the scheme will be controlled and that equestrians will be accommodated by including additional control buttons mounted at a suitable height in accordance with guidance. For avoidance of the doubt, the four crossings include the Junction 16A eastbound off and westbound on slips and the link road at both Glan Yr Afon Road and adjacent to the Orme Services.

All of the roads in the scheme containing shared use paths are all-purpose roads which are open to all users, including equestrians. It is not proposed to designate any of the shared use paths as bridleways.

3) Insufficient information to determine whether parapets will be appropriate for equestrian use

The parapet to the new overbridge at Junction 16A will be a 1.8m high equestrian parapet in accordance with DMRB standards.

4) Puffin Footbridge should be designed and made available for equestrian use

As you have indicated, the new footbridge and ramps will be fully disability compliant. Use of the footbridge by equestrians will not be excluded, though no specific measures for equestrians will be included.

5) It would be beneficial if the railway underpass were surfaced to enable safe access to the beach

The Welsh Government support your desire to improve access to the coastline for equestrians. Further to a site meeting held between yourself and Rob Griffiths and Mike Gilbert of my project team on 22 July, I can confirm that should the scheme receive ministerial approval to proceed, then two alternative routes to enable beach access will be investigated during the detailed design stage. The two routes identified include:

- a. Improvement of the approaches to the railway underpass east of Junction 16A. Works identified include removing sections of wall to improve visibility at the junction with NCNR5 and improvement of the transition onto the beach with incorporation of improved ramp and guardrail features
- b. Improvement of an existing unmaintained path linking the north side of the Sewage Treatment Works access bridge (Darbyshires Bridge) with the beach

As you indicate, these works would require the agreement of the relevant landowners.

Should you require clarification, or wish to discuss matters further, please contact Rob Griffiths of Ramboll for technical queries as follows: Tel: 07918 720458 / Email: Robert.Griffiths@ramboll.co.uk.

Yours faithfully

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Project Engineer – A55 Junctions 15/16 Improvement Scheme

Trafnidiaeth -Transport
Seilwaith yr Economi - Economic Infrastructure
Llywodraeth Cymru - Welsh Government
Sarn Mynach
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LL31 9RZ

A55 Junctions 15 & 16 Improvements

WCHAR Lead Assessor – Competency Assessment to GG142 Table 3.1.1

Background	Evidence
Knowledge of walking, cycling and horse-riding policies within the UK.	Understanding of relevant policy within UK, and awareness where to find additional information/support. Active Travel, Design Standards, Gear Change etc.
Knowledge of the needs of each user group: pedestrians; cyclists; equestrians; and the various sub-groups of these.	Understanding of the need of user groups including those disabled and visually impaired. Undertaken consultation with stakeholders including local access forum groups to understand specific requirements from all users groups in relation to scheme proposals as appropriate.
Knowledge of current best practice in infrastructure design for all user groups.	Awareness of relevant policy/design standards including WG Active Travel Design Guidance, Sustrans Traffic-free routes and greenway design guide, Healthy streets toolkit (TfL), etc.
Knowledge of the planning and operation of walking, cycling and horse-riding networks.	Awareness of Integrated Network Maps etc. Engage with local authority and planning specialists through development of the scheme.
Knowledge of potential issues created by facilities that provide for a combination of users.	Understanding and awareness of potential issues and conflict that facilities for all users may create. Pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians have very different needs. Engage and consult with local users and local authority to identify local issues.
Experience of managing stakeholder consultation events.	Have assisted with managing and attending public consultation/stakeholder consultation events including Parkside, A55, BGS, Mersey Gateway.
Experience of managing conflicting stakeholder views and expectations.	Experience in managing conflicting views and expectations on numerous schemes with stakeholders including local Highway Authority, Highways England.
Experience of working on the all-purpose trunk road and motorway network.	Worked on major highways schemes including Mersey Gateway, A55, Dunkettle, A477.
Experience of designing facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.	Co-ordinated with Highway Engineers on the design of pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian facilities in accordance with required standards/best practice.
Experience of completing feasibility studies and assessment of walking, cycling and horse-riding infrastructure design.	Undertaken feasibility studies including the consideration of walking, cycling and horse-riding facilities for schemes including Homes England schemes, Rushden Marshes etc.
Assessment competencies	
Experience of identifying key trip generators and subsequent desire lines for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.	Experienced in identifying key trip generators and potential desire lines for WCHAR assessments, Travel Plans, Active Travel routes etc.
Experience of the analysis and subsequent interpretation of survey data such as pedestrian count data and automatic cycle count data.	Undertaken analysis and interpretation of data analysis to inform WCHAR, Transport Assessments, Transport Statements, Travel Plans and Environment Statements etc including pedestrian and cycle count data.
Experience of assessing existing routes and facilities used by	Undertaken route audits for Halton Leisure Centre, A55, Abraham Moss. Review of routes and facilities for all user

pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians including condition surveys performed during site visits.	groups including identification of issues within routes etc poor transitions, steps, poor surfacing, lighting, accessibility, signage etc.
Experience of collision data analysis in the context of providing facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.	Analysis of accident data to inform WCHAR, TA, TS etc including focus on vulnerable users ie pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. Use of British Horse Society accident data base.
Experience of identifying viable and proportionate opportunities for the improvement of facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.	Experience in identifying opportunities in consultation with key stakeholders and review of opportunities to ensure they are viable and proportionate in relation to the proposed scheme.
Knowledge of transport networks and their operation, including the opportunities and issues arising from potential multi-modal transport options for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.	Over 15 years' experience as a Transport Planner, understanding of transport networks and opportunities and issues arising from multi-modal transport options for all users.
Review competencies	
Experience of presenting options to key stakeholders and promoting the various benefits and dis-benefits of options.	Undertaken stakeholder workshops including presentation of options and discussion of advantages/disadvantages of options.
Experience of working as part of a wider design team(s) in order to present and discuss options for enhancing the design for all user groups.	Integral part of the Highways team and involved in the development of the scheme design to ensure opportunities for all user groups are included.