HIGHWAYS AGENCY

Our ref: HA/3/2/512
Your ref:

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Dear Miss Brigginshaw

WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL – SOUTH WEALDEN AND EASTBOURNE TRANSPORT STUDY

Thank you for your email dated 12 December 2011 providing further information and responding to our comments dated 11 November 2011 on the South Wealden and Eastbourne Transport Study (SWETS) LDF assessment.

The Highways Agency, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport, is responsible for managing and operating a safe and efficient Strategic Road Network (SRN) i.e. the Trunk Road and Motorway network, in England as laid down in Department for Transport (DfT) Circular 02/2007 (*Planning and The Strategic Road Network.*)

Our letter of 11 November sought clarification on how the different SRN transport interventions had been modelled within SATURN together with TRICS outputs to justify the trip generation rates used within the modelling. As stated in your email, the transport interventions relating to the SRN include;

1. Revised signal green splits for the A27/A2270 signal junction;
2. Signalisation of the A27/A22 Cophall roundabout; and
3. Signalisation of the A27/A22 roundabout.

We have the following comments on the modelling and TRICS outputs:

A27/A2270 Junction

In the 'Do Something' scenario traffic on the Eastbourne Road arm receives a longer green time compared to the 'Do Minimum' scenario to support the proposed quality bus corridor from Eastbourne. We note that the A27 Polegate Bypass arm receives less green time in the 'Do Something' scenario.

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For the purposes of this high level assessment we are broadly content with the modelling of the intervention. However, given that SATURN cannot effectively model blocking back past nodes a further assessment will need to be undertaken using junction modelling software to assess the impact of the proposed intervention on the A27 particularly due to the green time reduction.

A27/A22 Cophall Roundabout

We note that the Polegate Services arm of the roundabout has not been modelled in SATURN. Whilst we acknowledge that the arm is not heavily utilised, it will be necessary to consider the operation of the junction with the Polegate Services arm included, in order for us to fully understand the operation of the junction.

In the 'Do Something' scenario Link 2004 to 201 has been modelled as a three lane exit as opposed to one. We request confirmation as to whether this represents a physical widening of the arm as it is not clear from the modelling and your email states that the intervention only includes signalisation of the junction. If the intervention includes widening we will require confirmation as to whether this can take place within the highway boundary.

SATURN does not have the ability to effectively coordinate signals and, as such, each entry has been modelled as a separate set of signals with half the green time assigned to entering traffic and half to circulating flow. Whilst this is broadly acceptable for this high level assessment it will be necessary for the final design of the improvement to be produced in consultation with the HA and modelled using a dedicated junction modelling package that is capable of assessing signalised roundabouts.

A27/A22 Roundabout

In the 'Do Something' scenario the A27/A22 roundabout has been converted in to a signalised 'hamburger' style junction. This is significantly different from the signalised roundabout intervention noted in your email. Given that we have not seen plans for this intervention option we are not in a position to comment on the feasibility or deliverability of the scheme particularly as land take requirements are unknown.

With respect to the modelling of the junction, we note that the link capacities increase between the 'Do Minimum' and 'Do Something' scenarios. It is unclear from the modelling as to whether the capacity increase is the result of widening or another method of increasing capacity. We will need clarification on this.

As noted above, SATURN does not have the capability of modelling this type of junction effectively. Whilst the modelling is considered broadly acceptable for this strategic level of assessment we will not be in a position to assess the feasibility or properly assess the impact of the intervention until such time that a full design has been produced and modelled using industry standard junction modelling software.

TRICS Outputs

We have reviewed the TRICS outputs and are broadly content that the selection is suitable for the purposes of this assessment.

Summary

Having reviewed how the transport interventions have been modelled in SATURN together with the TRICS outputs we are broadly content that the SWETS modelling is acceptable for the purposes of this strategic assessment. Further work will however be required in the form of detailed designs and individual junction models in order to demonstrate that they are deliverable and for us to be able to make a final decision on the acceptability of the proposals.

I hope the above information is useful, please feel free to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

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