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Sent by email:

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CC:

a46newarkbypass@highwaysengland.co.uk

Date: 25/05/2022

Dear Michael,

RE: A46 NEWARK NORTHERN BYPASS PREFERRED ROUTE ANNOUNCEMENT

I write in response to National Highway's formal announcement of the preferred route of the A46 improvements to the north of Newark. Newark & Sherwood District Council (NSDC) has, alongside its partners, long campaigned for improvements to this route and we are pleased to see it progress to this stage. NSDC continues to give its full support to the principle of upgrading the A46 Newark Bypass and we welcome the opportunity to continue to engage with National Highways.

Throughout the initial concept stages of the A46 Improvement scheme NSDC has highlighted three imperatives, which are:

1. Grade separation of the Cattlemarket junction is essential to facilitate free flow of A46 traffic, delivering the improvements to journey times that lie amongst the headline objectives of the scheme.
2. The upgrading of the strategic road network should not be done in a manner that compromises future potential to enhance the strategic rail network (i.e. removing the flat crossing at the intersection of the East Coast Main Line and the Nottingham to Lincoln Line).

3. Recognition of other highways proposals in and around Newark and the need to ensure that traffic impacts are, as far as possible, minimised during construction.

In response to the announcement of the proposed scheme on 24th February 2022, NSDC would like to thank National Highways for taking on board the views of the Council and local residents in their choice of the final scheme. In particular we welcome confirmation of the following:

- Grade separation of the Cattlemarket roundabout will be implemented as requested
- Discussions between NSDC, NH, Network Rail, and NCC have concluded that the planned rail improvements will not be prejudiced
- Agreement to work with NSDC, NCC, and the developer at the Middlebeck Sustainable Urban Extension to ensure that the A46 works do not prejudice the delivery of the Newark Southern Link Road and acknowledgement that the timely completion of the NSLR will enable it to positively contribute to the complex and lengthy traffic management solutions that will be required for the construction phase(s) of the A46 Newark Northern Bypass
- Agreement to move the section of the A46 bypass at Winthorpe further away from the village which will go some way to address concerns regarding impact on residential amenity.

NSDC continues to impress upon National Highways the importance of carefully assessing modelling work underpinning the A46 proposals in order that traffic management approaches reflect the different scenarios that may arise from different combinations of works occurring at different times. We also continue to be clear on the importance of traffic management, network co-ordination (cognisant of ongoing strategic extensions and projects at Middlebeck, Fernwood, Newark Showground, Newark Gateway (the former Livestock Market and existing Lorry Park), and former NCC Depot), and sequencing throughout the construction phase of any approved Newark Bypass. Traffic management and congestion could be assisted through the completion of the Newark Southern Link Road (SLR), a matter explored in greater detail below.

NSDC welcomes National Highway's agreement to engage regular meetings to discuss the finer technical details of the scheme. This will assist in ensuring the scheme is designed to coordinate with other infrastructure schemes in and around Newark. It will also enable the Council to keep local residents informed of developments as the scheme progresses.

PLANNED GROWTH IN AND AROUND NEWARK

Implications for New Planning Proposals and Committed Developments

Thank you for your letter (dated 18th March 2022 - Your ref: HE551478/2021/NSDC) which gives formal notice that National Highways proposes to improve the A46 between Farndon and Winthorpe Roundabouts and which requests details of any planning commitments and

proposals which may prejudice the scheme. As requested, the District Council will forward details of all planning applications which are likely to prejudice the improvement of the A46 in this location to the Project Manager. The Council will continue to liaise with National Highways via the monthly technical meetings on these issues. The District Council will also continue to provide details of intentions to redevelop sites with the support of Newark Towns Fund, notably the Gateway site and Newark Showground.

Improvements to both the local and strategic road network in and around Newark are essential to achieve growth ambitions set out in Newark & Sherwood District Council's LDF Amended Core Strategy (Adopted March 2019), with interactions between all of the scheduled road improvements having implications for the modelled outcomes.

The proposals for the A46 are, in principle, compliant with the Amended Core Strategy (2019). Spatial Policy 6: Infrastructure for Growth (along with Appendix D) identifies the A46 amongst critical strategic highway network infrastructure and sets out the District Council's commitment to working with partners to secure delivery. Additionally, Policy NAP1: Newark Urban Area (Section B) provides explicit support for the implementation of strategic highway schemes at the A46 Link Capacity (Newark Bypass); A46 /A617 Cattlemarket Roundabout; A46 Roundabout at Farndon; A1/A17/A46 Roundabout; and A1/A46 Brownhills Roundabout. The objectives set out in the Council's Community Plan underline the importance of delivering these infrastructure upgrades.

Newark Southern Link Road

As National Highways is aware, included as an allocation in the Amended Core Strategy, the Newark Southern Link Road (SLR) is a critical component in the delivery of the Middlebeck SUE (Land South of Newark). This will unlock the development of up to 3150 new homes and the creation of around 5000 jobs on the employment land component of the Middlebeck development. To date just under 600 homes have been consented.

The Council welcomes the ongoing positive joint work between National Highways and NSDC on the A46/SLR roundabout. This work is essential in moving the scheme forward to the final phase. Funding for this has now been secured through a combination of sources, including a successful Levelling Up Fund bid. The Council is currently working in partnership with Urban and Civic to deliver the final phase of the SLR scheme. This will unlock growth in the form of the remaining 2550 dwellings at Middlebeck.

Once completed, the SLR can provide network resilience during the pending construction of the A46 and its operation. The SLR is anticipated to be implemented in advance of the A46 improvements. This should offer a traffic management solution whilst the A46 Northern Bypass is constructed, aiding traffic flow and congestion and very considerable delays for a prolonged period.

Newark Town Investment Plan

Newark Gateway Development site (the site of the existing Lorry Park and now vacant former Cattlemarket site)

As detailed in the Newark Town Investment Plan (July 2022), pre-application discussions via the Local Planning Authority, and at the meeting on 24th April, progress to deliver the Newark Gateway site, on the former Cattlemarket site, continues at pace. The Air and Space Institute (ASI) received planning approval in February 2022. Work is expected to commence on-site in summer 2022. This forms part of nine priority projects outlined in Newark's Towns Investment Plan, which was awarded £25 million from central government following its submission by the Newark Towns Fund Board. It is expected the purpose built state-of-the-art facility will be built in time for welcoming students in September 2023.

As already discussed, careful consideration is required in terms of the impact the A46 improvements will have upon the existing lorry park site and its ability to successfully relocate elsewhere, currently to the Newark Showground site. The current preferred route announcement would result in land-take of the existing operational lorry park, reducing its overall capacity. Further, the proposed route will likely require the current lorry park access to be located further south. Retaining a vibrant and significant lorry park within the town is considered crucial in terms of meeting the needs of the logistics industry and enhancing and promoting this important trade route. The Council is currently exploring options for the location of the lorry park and welcomes the positive input from National Highways so far in terms of facilitating, and the redevelopment of the vacated site, alongside the A46 improvements. The Newark Showground remains the preferred site for the lorry park relocation.

As agreed at the meeting on 23rd April 2022, NSDC and National Highways will continue to meet on a monthly basis to ensure the design/technical aspects of all schemes are coordinated.

PROPOSED OPTION FOR THE A46

Cattlemarket Junction

The District Council welcomes National Highway's plan to include grade separation here. This is fundamental to achieving improved flow of route traffic and reducing journey times across the surrounding road network. Separating A46 vehicle movements from local traffic, in conjunction with the delivery of the Newark SLR will make significant improvements to local traffic and the strategic aim of increasing journey times. This is a critical component of improving capacity for economic growth and future housebuilding.

There remains some concern about the impacts of on the historic environment in this location and we would request that the Council's Conservation Team is consulted regarding the design of the scheme in this respect.

Winthorpe village

National Highway's proposed amendments to the A46 Improvement scheme in relation to its impact on Winthorpe village are welcomed by the Council. Moving the A46 route of the new A1 crossing approximately 75m further from Winthorpe than Option 2 will go some way to address the concerns of the Council and local residents. National Highways has confirmed that this would reduce the overall environmental impact of the scheme by:

- Reducing the view of the scheme from the Winthorpe area;
- Reducing noise and vibration impacts for local residents by moving the road further away, whilst keeping it close to ground level;
- Minimising the impact on Winthorpe Conservation Area;
- Reducing the impact on biodiversity by minimising the overall area covered by the scheme.

However, we understand from direct contact with individuals in the village and the 'Think Again' Winthorpe residents group, that there remains concern about the cumulative effects of noise and air pollution from both the A1 and the A46, particularly while the scheme is being developed. As National Highways are aware, the 'Think again' group has submitted an alternative plan for this section of the A46. The Council has met with the group and the owners of Newark Showground (which would be required for part of the scheme) to discuss their proposals. The Council would request that National Highways continues to consider opportunities to incorporate elements of the group's proposal where possible. Continued dialogue between National Highways, NSDC, and local residents will be essential as the scheme progresses to explore the finer details of the scheme.

A1 Overbridge

The new A1 overbridge is a structure that continues to give grounds for some concern due to its proximity to the built-up area of Winthorpe, namely Lowwood. As well as any impact on residential amenity, it is also important to remind National Highways of the impact it will have on heritage assets when moving forward to the detailed design stage of this project. Again, the District Council requests that the Council's Conservation team are consulted throughout the design stages of the A46 scheme in this respect.

Alongside concerns about impact on the character of Winthorpe Conservation Area and other heritage assets, the overbridge structure will affect the openness of the landscape that currently forms the Winthorpe Open Break. Opportunities to positively address any adverse impact must be explored and where possible mitigated. However, it is acknowledged that the A46 Northern Bypass is identified as a priority for the Council and likely to impact on the Open Break. For the avoidance of doubt the Council is seeking mitigation of impacts rather than avoidance of them altogether.

Whilst the Council considers that the creation of a new stretch of underpass represents the most feasible and viable option to facilitate pedestrians, cyclists, the mobility-aided and horse

riders negotiating the new road, it gives rise to a number of safety concerns. A number of sources within the Winthorpe community refer to the secluded nature of the current route; it currently attracts anti-social behaviour. As such, in expanding the underpass to include the new road, careful consideration should be given to designing-out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour alongside measures to improve user safety.

The Council would like to ensure that these issues are carefully considered and addressed by National Highways and this should form part of the discussions between NSDC and National Highways moving forward.

Rail infrastructure

Discussions between NSDC, National Highways, Network Rail, and Nottinghamshire County Council have led to the conclusion that the proposed approach in the vicinity of the Newark Flat crossing will not prejudice future rail improvements. However, it remains important to continue dialogue between all parties at key stages of the scheme's development, feeding into and shaping the priorities for addressing the flat crossing as a matter of national and regional importance.

Farndon Roundabout

The proposal to include traffic lights on this roundabout is welcomed as it should offer mitigation to improve the flow of traffic in this location.

Road safety

Non-vehicular movements

Cycling is popular in Newark and as part of the development of its Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Nottinghamshire County Council is developing a strategic cycle network in the area. As such, it is important to ensure that the proposed A46 scheme does not worsen connections across the A46 and, ideally, offers enhancement. NSDC would suggest that National Highways liaises with Nottinghamshire County Council on the LCWIP to ensure both schemes are coordinated as much as possible.

Crime and the fear of crime

In response to previous consultations, Nottinghamshire Police highlighted opportunities to address crime through the design of the scheme. The District Council concurs with the views of the Police and in the ongoing development of this scheme encourage National Highways to explore opportunities to design-out crime including:

- Enhanced provision of secure HGV parking. Given the continued investigation in to the feasibility of relocating the existing Newark lorry park, this would appear to be a timely

suggestion. NSDC and no doubt the Police would welcome opportunity to discuss this matter further; and

- Investment in Automated Number Plate Recognition could be explored. Any additional equipment needs to be coordinated with Nottinghamshire Police to ensure that the systems are compatible.

Journey times during construction

The District Council acknowledges that the construction phases of development will exacerbate existing congestion problems on all routes around and through Newark. There is also potential for these impacts to be exacerbated in conjunction with planned highways works around the wider urban area and beyond. NSDC and NCC Council Officers are already working with National Highways colleagues to manage the sequencing of these works. Accordingly, it will be necessary to effectively manage publicity to communicate progress on these schemes, to keep local residents and other road users up to date. The Council is therefore keen to maintain this dialogue and explore all feasible options, including appropriate use of technology to provide real-time updates.

As has already been highlighted, the District Council would again stress the importance of timely delivery of other highways works, including the Newark SLR and the new A1 overbridge connecting the Newark Urban Area to Fernwood to the southeast. These pieces of infrastructure both have potential to cause delays on the network during their construction, but once operational will help spread the flow of traffic around the local network. The SLR is of particular significance insofar as it will provide a southern link between the A46 and the A1, enabling vehicles destined for either route to exit Newark from the south instead of using the existing routes through the centre and accessing the roundabouts at Farndon/Cattlemarket/Brownhills.

Environmental Constraints: Contaminated Land, Air Quality, Noise

The District Council welcomes confirmation that the proposed design would widen the A46 away from Newark in order to retain as much of the existing vegetation as practical to lessen the potential impact on views from Newark. The proposed installation of low noise road surfacing, where practical, and other identified noise mitigation methods are also welcomed (noise fencing or landscaping). National Highways planned future consultations on the design/mitigation details of the scheme should be widely publicised to enable full dialogue with local residents and the Council.

Air Quality

NSDC would expect a detailed Air Quality Assessment as part of any detailed proposal, with particular reference to where the route passes closer to living accommodation or places of work.

Noise (inc. vibration) from construction phase

Option 2 Modified will create a new section of road closer to Winthorpe and therefore an increased risk of noise impact in that area during the construction phase. Specific construction

methodologies, plant, schedules, proposed hours of operation, and estimated traffic and vehicle movements, are not known at this stage. We understand that an assessment of likely construction noise impacts will be carried once the relevant information is available to inform that assessment at the preliminary design stage. We expect this assessment and proposed mitigation measures will be consistent with the relevant requirements for noise assessments from major road projects.

Noise from operational phase

Information previously provided relating to Option 2 identified that significant noise impacts were predicted at a number of noise sensitive receptors (though details of noise assessments were not provided). This indicated the potential for significant changes in noise levels at “Noise Important Areas” (NIAs) (Special hotspots that may be most affected by road noise are listed by National Highways as “Noise Important Areas”). A relatively small number of additional properties were also predicted to be affected by Option 2, though it was not apparent which locations were specifically involved. Detailed noise assessment and proposed mitigation measures for Option 2 Modified will be required at the design stage, consistent with the relevant requirements for noise assessments from major road projects.

Heritage

NSDC’s overall view is that impact on Winthorpe is better, but extensive mitigation is required to address noise and landscaping (their preference is to use tree screening/planting as much as is possible). The flyover will have significant adverse impact on the setting of Newark CA/significant landmarks such as St Marys, Castle, Kelham Hall etc. It will also have a negative impact on Smeaton’s arches (in the context of Great North Rd) and SAMs comprising civil war remains. Archaeological evaluation, opportunities to better understand significance are all relevant.

Landscape

As previously highlighted, the area of open countryside that lies between the built-up area of Newark and the village of Winthorpe is identified in local planning policy (Allocations & Development Management Policies DPD: NUA/OB/1) as the Winthorpe Open Break. Both of the A46 development options under consultation, on either side of the new A1 overbridge, will impact significantly upon this open break. This should continue to be regarded as a relevant matter in National Highways more detailed design of the scheme. However, it is important to emphasise that there are no statutory landscape designations here and indeed the Winthorpe Open Break is not protected for landscape value reasons. The purpose of the Open Break designation is to retain the identity and characteristics of individual settlements.

Ecology

Where any adverse ecological impacts may occur, in accordance with the NPPF, the District Council would seek net gains for biodiversity through this development.

Flood risk and drainage

As National Highways is aware, there is a high level of flood risk associated with large swathes of the land surrounding the A46 corridor between Farndon and the A1. It will be important to continue dialogue with the Environment Agency, LLFA and NSDC as the scheme progresses to ensure flood risk is fully considered and appropriately mitigated.

One of the main areas of flood risk and concern along the A46 Newark Bypass is the travelling community situated on Tolney Lane. The District Council considers the design and development stages of the A46 upgrade to offer significant potential to collaboratively explore the feasibility of different options to improve conditions on Tolney Lane, specifically during times of heightened flood risk. NSDC are continuing to work with the Environment Agency to explore solutions and will need to liaise with National Highways in this process.

Further to the north of the project area, flood risk mapping indicates a much lower level of risk. This matter is regarded as significant in the process of considering potential alternative design solutions that might mitigate against or lessen the impacts of development on the village of Winthorpe.

These issues should continue to form part of the ongoing discussions with National Highways and other relevant stakeholders as the scheme progresses.

Climate

The potential impacts of the A46 upgrade on climate change are largely covered under air quality, flood risk and ecology. During the construction period efforts should be made to maximise re-use of materials excavated within the scheme and to use locally sourced materials and contractors so as to reduce travel-related emissions.

Concluding comments

The Council welcomes the continued progress on the A46 Newark Northern Bypass scheme. Subject to consideration of matters addressed in this latter, and further technical detail that will necessarily follow the Council remains of the opinion that the successful delivery of the Bypass is essential nationally, regionally, and locally in order to maintain and enhance growth aspirations for the majority of residents and businesses. As the District Council continues to pursue its planned growth agenda, other significant highways developments (and their associated traffic) will be progressing on the road network over the coming years. We are keen to ensure that traffic impacts are, as far as possible, minimised during construction and therefore continue to urge National Highways to carefully assess modelling work underpinning the A46 proposals in order that traffic management approaches reflect the different scenarios that may arise from different combinations of works occurring at different times.

Prior to and during the construction stage, traffic management engagement and communication will need to be extensive and in consultation with local organisations and communities. Additionally, there remains the potential to utilise new infrastructure, such as a completed SLR, to be part of this solution. Failure to deliver the SLR allowing a connection between the A46 and the A1 poses a significant risk to greater congestion in the area. On this basis, NSDC welcome the opportunity for more specific and detailed discussions with National Highways at the ongoing monthly meetings.

It is hoped that you find these comments helpful. Newark and Sherwood District Council look forward to working collaboratively with the community and National Highways and Nottinghamshire County Council as the Local Transport Authorities in determining the final detailed design and delivery of the A46.

Yours sincerely

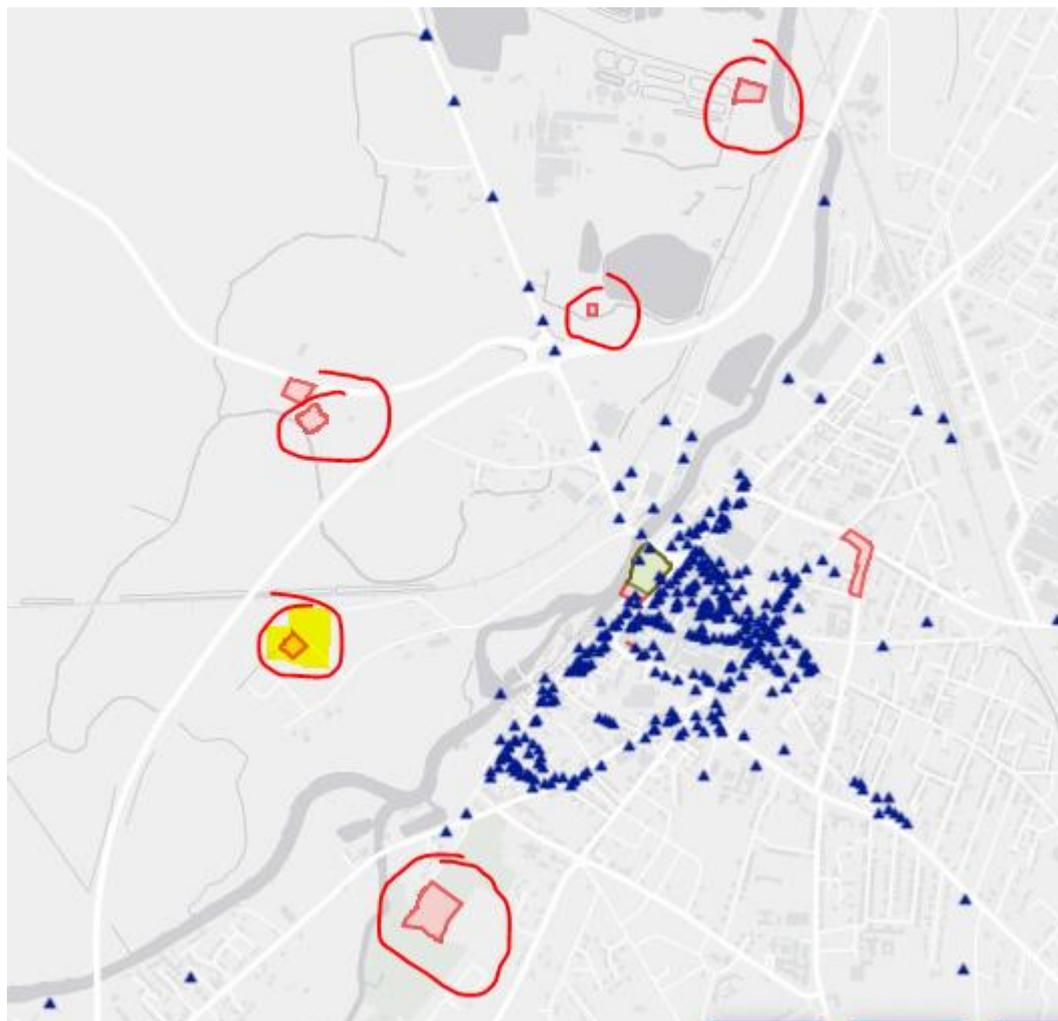
Cllr David Lloyd
Leader
Newark & Sherwood
District Council

Cllr Rhona Holloway
Portfolio Holder for
Economic Development
and Visitors

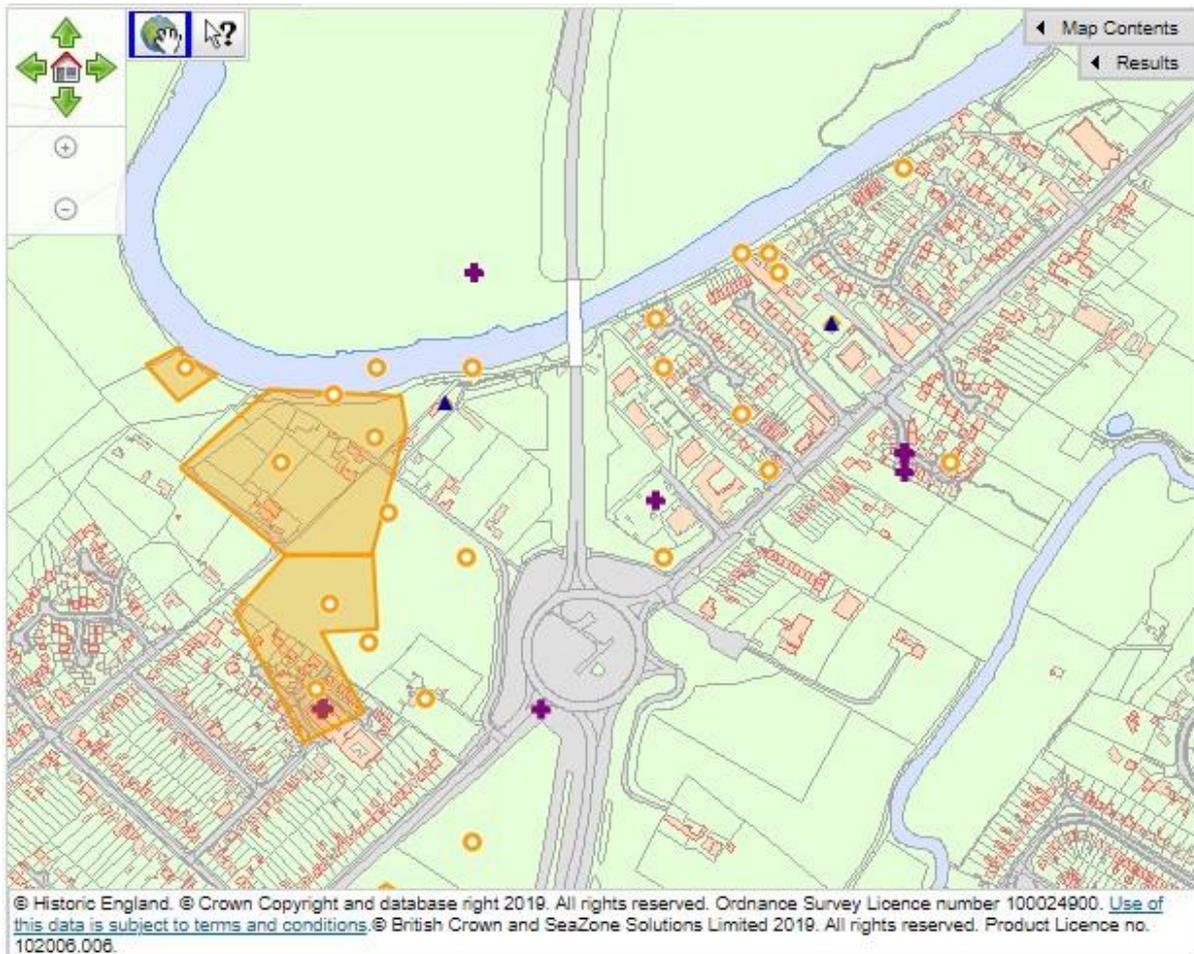
Cllr Roger Blaney
Chairman
Planning Committee

Matt Lamb
Director
Planning & Growth

Appendix

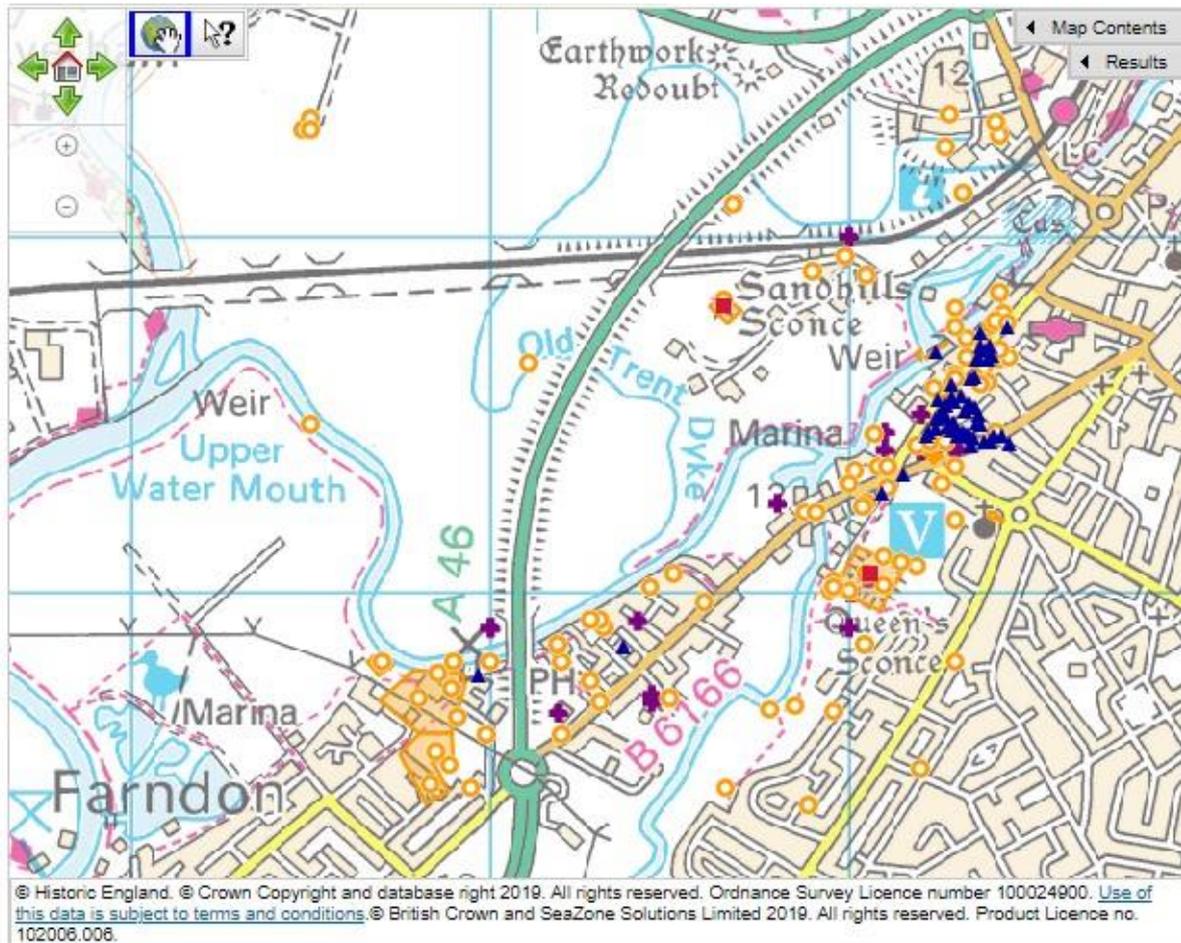


Scheduled monuments and listed buildings.



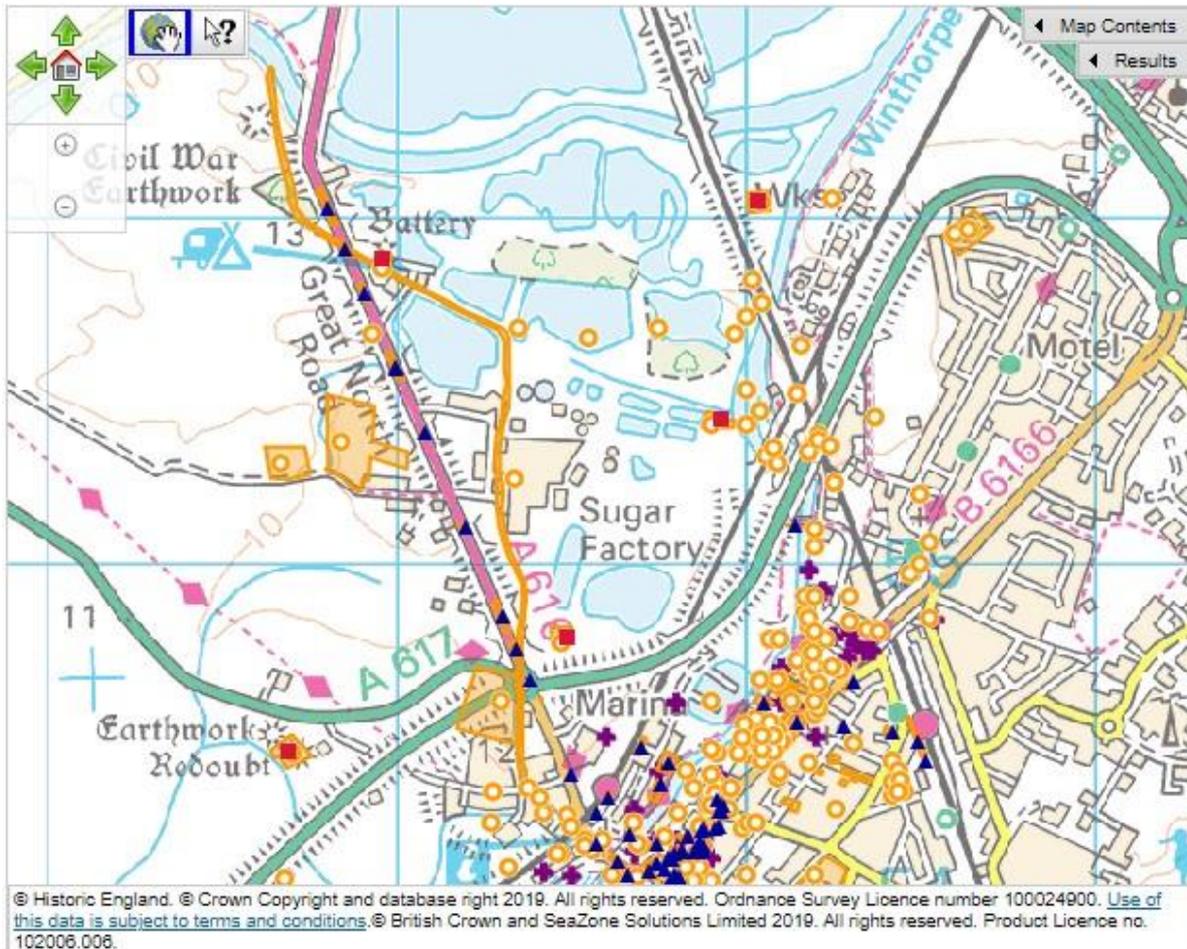
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| ▲ Listed Building (NHLE) | ■ Scheduled Monument (centre point) |
| ■ EH PastScape | ■ Registered Park/Garden (centre point) |
| ○ Local HER record points | ■ Registered Battlefield (centre point) |
| ▲ Local HER record polygons | ■ Protected Wreck Site (centre point) |
| ○ National Trust HBSMR | ■ World Heritage Site |
| ■ Building Preservation Notice | ■ Certificate of Immunity |
| ◆ Designation Decision Records De-listed | ✱ Designation Decision Records Non-designated |
| ● Parks and Gardens (Non Statutory Data) | ✚ NMR Excavation Index |
| ✚ Church Heritage Record (Non Statutory Data) | |



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