

Gerard O'Brien, SEO
Kerry County Council
County Buildings,
Tralee,
Co. Kerry.

7th November 2012

Re: N86 Dingle To Annascaul And Gortbreagoge To Camp Road Improvement Scheme.

Dear Sir,

I have been asked by An Bord Pleanála to refer to the above-mentioned proposed road development which is before the Board for approval. The Board hereby gives notice as follows:

It is accepted that there is a demonstrated need to upgrade the N86 route, which connects Tralee to Dingle, as identified in the National Secondary Roads Needs Study 2011 (NRA). The 'online' approach to improvement of the existing route is considered generally acceptable. It is also accepted that the development of a long distance cycling route linking these towns accords with national policy on tourism and transport and would complement the development of Dingle as a 'Category 1 Cycling Hub Town' as set out in "A Strategy for the development of Irish Cycle Tourism, 2007 - Report for the Cork Kerry Region" (Bord Fáilte).

Landscape and Visual Amenity Considerations:

Notwithstanding the above, and taking into account the following:

- The existing N86 national secondary road being a route of tourism value with an attractive landscape setting.
- The proposed width of the road development corridor, which would result in a typical overall finished road width of 16 metres, and a significantly wider construction corridor width (typically 28m in width and wider in some locations).
- The excessive loss of established tree lines, hedgerows, natural stone walls, woodland and semi-natural habitats over the 28 kilometre length of the scheme.

It is considered that the road improvement scheme, as proposed, would represent an excessive intervention into the landscape not commensurate with the single-carriageway route being delivered, and would have an unacceptable detrimental impact on the visual amenities and landscape character of the area, with consequential negative impacts on the tourism value and general amenities of the area.

Cycleway Considerations:

Furthermore, the Board has serious concerns in relation to the long-distance cycleway proposed alongside the national secondary route over the entire length of the scheme from Dingle to Camp. It is considered that the proposed cycleway:

- Would not form part of any national cycle network devised by Fáilte Ireland or the National Roads Authority.

- Might not offer an attractive recreational or amenity route, by virtue of the proximity of cyclists to the carriageway of a busy national secondary road, and might therefore remain under-utilised.
- Would contribute to the excessive width of the overall road corridor and the detrimental landscape impacts as referred to above.

It is considered that alternatives to provision of the cycleway alongside the national route, such as the development of a cycleway along quieter non-national roads - possibly in conjunction with the Dingle Way walking route, as identified in the Bord Fáilte strategy - would likely deliver a more desirable and successful cycleway that would serve a wider cross-section of the cycling population and would deliver better long-distance connectivity between population centres.

Request for revisions to the scheme:

Taking into account the considerations set out above, the Board is not minded to approve the development as applied for. Nevertheless, it may be possible for the proposed road scheme to be re-designed to address the aforementioned concerns. Accordingly, and having regard to section 217B(4)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, the Board is provisionally of the view that it might be appropriate to approve the proposed road development subject to certain alterations to the scheme design being carried out. You are thereby invited to make to the terms of the proposed road development alterations which would address the above-mentioned considerations. The following should be taken into consideration in developing your response:

- A narrower overall road cross section should be adopted, omitting the cycleway and reducing the total width of the alignment in so far as possible, including minimising the working strips required on a temporary basis alongside the edge of the final carriageway and the overall land-take.
- Re-examine the alignment to minimise interference with natural landscape features, hedgerows and tree-lines, and minimising other interventions including embankments and excavation that would create scarring of the landscape. The total length of tree-line and hedgerow to be lost should be minimised.
- Submit more detailed proposals in relation to the re-instatement and landscaping of the completed scheme, with a view to minimising the extent and duration of visual impacts.

Your response should be accompanied by revised drawings at an appropriate scale (A1 drawing sheets) and should highlight where alterations have been made.

The attention of the Road Authority is drawn to subsections (6), (7) and (8) of section 217B of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, which sets out the procedures which will apply to any altered proposals that may be submitted in response to the foregoing notice and, in this regard, a revised EIS (including non-technical summary) and NIS should be submitted with your response.

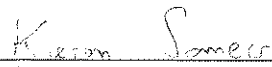
The Compulsory Purchase Order application submitted in conjunction with the application (case reference number KA0023) will also require amendment.

Your response to this letter should be received within six months of the date of this letter (i.e. no later than **5.30p.m. on the 7th May, 2013**).

If you have any queries in relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Board.

Please quote the above-mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

Yours faithfully,


 Kieran Somers
 Executive Officer
 Direct Line: 01-8737107

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