

A417 MISSING LINK STEERING GROUP

Summary: To review the progress of the A417 Missing Link Steering Group

Recommendation: That the Executive Committee notes the report

Report by: Andy Parsons, Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERS REPRESENTED ON THE GROUP

- Graham Hopkins
- Sue Crawford

MEETINGS SINCE THE LAST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Steering Group met on 28 March to discuss the most recent version of the Statement of Common Ground document.
2. Other meetings in the period:
 - 31 Jan, 5 Apr – Statement of Common Ground meeting
 - 10 Feb – Ullenwood lighting workshop
 - 14 Feb, 4 Apr, 9 May – Strategic Stakeholder Panel meeting
 - 17 Feb, 17 Mar – Designated Funds Partnership Panel meeting
 - 6 Apr – Designated Funds processes workshop

In addition, throughout the DCO Examination period we met with environmental partners on a weekly basis to share thoughts, concerns and ideas. Attendees included: Gloucestershire County Council, National Trust, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Historic England.

OTHER ACTIVITY

3. The DCO Examination ended on 16 May 2022. The Planning Inspectorate now have three months to submit their recommendation to the Department for Transport, with a final decision being made around November 2022.
4. The Statement of Common Ground between National Highways and Cotswolds Conservation Board has been completed and the CEO has signed the document (see *Appendix A*).
5. National Highways has awarded Kier a £430m contract to design and deliver the A417 Missing Link road scheme. It is anticipated that work will start in spring 2023.
6. The potential Designated Fund projects that we are currently involved in include:
 - *Dry stone wall grant scheme* (through Caring for the Cotswolds)
 - Funded £1,500 to write a Feasibility report and currently applying for the full Implementation funding (£550,000)
 - *Landscapes for Everyone* (three new disability trails at Coopers Hill, Stinchcombe and Lansdown)
 - Awaiting decision from the assessment panel
 - *Dark Skies* (to support the conservation and enhancement of dark skies)
 - Awarded £24,800 Feasibility funding

- *Ash Tree Dieback* (mitigation in areas outside of woodlands)
 - Unsuccessful
- *Biodiversity Net Gain* (Glorious Cotswolds Grasslands)
 - Awaiting decision from the assessment panel (NB – this is an England-wide National Highways Designated Fund, not specific to the A417 scheme)

DECISIONS REQUIRED

7. None

NEXT STEPS

8. To continue being involved in the Designated Funds programme and proposals.
9. To understand how the relationships will work between National Highways, Kier and the environmental stakeholders to ensure we are fully involved in the detailed design elements of the scheme that are relevant to our organisation.

SUPPORTING PAPERS

- Appendix A – Statement of Common Ground

MAY 2022