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Provision of Replacement LDP Strategic Transport Assessment

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We have provided the following update on the delivery of the above project in order to provide reassurance to the Welsh Government Planning Department that the unexpected programme delays on the reporting of the Replacement LDP Strategic Transport Assessment (STA) have been addressed. The agreed revised project programme will be met through a series of updated Technical Notes which are scheduled for the Week beginning 19th April 2021.

These technical notes will demonstrate that the proposed level of development detailed within the revised LDP can be accommodated within the BCBC Highway Network with suitable mitigation.

The Strategic Transport Assessment Technical Notes programme has been significantly delayed by the ongoing COVID lockdowns which have impacted data collection, availability of supporting evidence and incorporating commentary from third party reports from a number of associated projects close to the boundaries of Bridgend County Borough Council. In addition, resourcing and technology issues have been a challenge for the Client Team whilst adapting to new ways of working.

The timeline below highlights the significant delays to delivering on the original STA Programme as set out in the tender documents as detailed below:-

1. The onset of the COVID pandemic meant that Neutral Month surveys in March 2020 were required to be cancelled due to the WG requirement to work from home and not travel unless necessary.
2. The STA work was paused in March 2020 and restarted in earnest in November 2020, just as the second lockdown began to take effect (client request).
3. Mott MacDonald continued to search for meaningful data from alternative data sources during this programme pause, such as Transport Assessments, Planning Portals, WG and TfW databases, Data Collection Companies, and other Consultants through personal contacts – unfortunately none were found (activity additional to original scope).
4. The supporting traffic surveys were rescheduled and were finally completed in October 2020, despite some local lockdowns, with data supplied in November.
5. Additional research was required to establish a defensible COVID uplift factor. Reviewing additional Transport Assessments, Planning Portals, WG and TfW databases, Data Collection Companies, and other Consultants through personal contacts (activity additional to original scope).
6. Sourcing of third party data, both historic and current, has been an issue throughout the project as home working has impacted some companies more than others and archived documents from previous studies (locked in offices) have been difficult to locate in a timely manner.

7. A number of ongoing studies by other Highway Authorities that it was hoped could be reported within the Technical Notes are now confirmed to be reporting outside of the STA programme.

The revised timetable for the STA reporting to BCBC is for the initial 6 Technical Notes to be updated and issued with the three remaining Technical Notes in the week commencing 19th April 2021. These will highlight the assumptions made and the evidence used to justify the commentary included in the Technical Notes.

Following the issuing of the Technical Notes to the Bridgend Officers there will be a further opportunity to update sections of the Technical Notes, which rely on third party reports, to occur.

Regards



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