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Your Ref:

Our Ref: NATTRAN/WM/HAO/328
Date: 17 November 2026

Dear [redacted]

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980
ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT 1981

THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF SANDWELL (THE A457 GROVE LANE/B4135 CRANFORD STREET MULTI-MODAL IMPROVEMENTS HIGHWAY SCHEME) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2026

1. We refer to your application received on 16 June 2026 on behalf of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council ("the Council") submitting the above-named Compulsory Purchase Order ("the CPO") for confirmation. The CPO was made under section 239 of the Highways Act 1980 and section 2 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981.

2. If confirmed, the CPO will authorise the Council to purchase compulsorily the land required for the purposes of the A457 Grove Lane and B4135 Cranford Street Highways Improvement Scheme ("the Scheme"), comprising the following:

- Junction improvement at A457 Grove Lane / B4135 Cranford Street / A457 Soho Way / B4136 Windmill Lane junction – comprising the conversion of the existing four-arm roundabout to a four-arm signal-controlled crossroads with integrated active travel crossing facilities;
- A bi-directional segregated cycle track extending along the A457 Soho Way and the A457 Grove Lane, comprising priority side-arm crossings for pedestrians and cyclists at the A457 Grove Lane junctions with French Walls Way, Woodlands Street and Unett Street;
- Modifications to the existing A457 Grove Lane / Midland Metropolitan University Hospital (MMUH) main access junction to incorporate the bi-directional segregated cycle track and integrated active travel crossing facilities;
- Modifications to the existing A457 Grove Lane / A457 Dudley Road / A4092 Cape Hill / Barrett Street roundabout junction to incorporate upgraded active travel crossing facilities;
- Traffic calming measures on Grove Street, Abberley Street, Winson Street, Tudor Street, Chiswell Road and Cuthbert Road; and

- A new signal-controlled pedestrian crossing on B4135 Cranford Street (to the south of London Street).

3. The Scheme is intended to improve the operation, safety and accessibility of the A457 Grove Lane and B4135 Cranford Street corridor by reducing congestion, improving journey reliability, upgrading junctions and crossings, and providing better walking and cycling infrastructure. The Scheme also supports wider regeneration, access to key facilities, including Midland Metropolitan University Hospital, and strategic connectivity across Sandwell, Birmingham and the wider West Midlands.

SUMMARY OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S DECISION

4. The Secretary of State has decided to confirm the CPO, with modifications as set out in Annex A to this letter.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

5. Notice of the making of the CPO was published and served in accordance with the statutory requirements, and the CPO documents were made available for inspection.

6. One objection was received in response to the notice of the CPO. The objector confirmed that the objection related solely to compensation matters, and it was therefore disregarded. The arrangements for dealing with compensation are set out in paragraph 12 below. Accordingly, there were no remaining objections requiring a public local inquiry before the CPO was determined.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR DECISION

7. The Secretary of State has considered the CPO, the statement of reasons, the supporting documents submitted by the acquiring authority and the correspondence received in response to the application. The CPO includes land comprising a building at 49 Cranford Street, which will need to be demolished to enable delivery of the Scheme. However, no special category land, including common land, town or village green, open space, or land owned by the National Trust or statutory undertakers for their statutory purposes, will be compulsorily purchased.

8. The Secretary of State has also given careful consideration to the following relevant tests for justifying compulsory purchase powers as set out in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's 'Guidance on the Compulsory Purchase Process[1]':

i. whether there is a compelling case in the public interest to justify conferring on the acquiring authority powers to compulsorily acquire and use land for the purposes of the scheme, including whether reasonable efforts have been made by the acquiring authority to negotiate the purchase of land by agreement;
ii. whether the purposes for which the compulsory purchase powers are sought are sufficient to justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected (having regard to the Human Rights Act 1998);
iii. whether the acquiring authority has a clear idea of how it intends to use the land that it wishes to acquire;
iv. whether sufficient resources are available to complete the compulsory acquisition within the statutory period following confirmation of the Order, and to implement the scheme; and
v. whether there is a reasonable prospect of the scheme going ahead and whether it is unlikely to be blocked by any impediment to implementation.

[1] Guidance on the Compulsory Purchase Process

CONCLUSIONS

9. The Secretary of State is satisfied, on the basis of the information provided by the acquiring authority, that the acquiring authority has a clear idea of how it intends to use the land required for the scheme, that the land included in the Order is required to deliver the Scheme, and that there is a compelling case in the public interest for confirming the Order. She is also satisfied that any interference with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected, including rights under the Human Rights Act 1998, is necessary, justified and proportionate.

10. The Secretary of State is further satisfied that sufficient resources are available to complete the compulsory acquisition within the statutory period following confirmation of the Order and to implement the Scheme, and that there is a reasonable prospect of the Scheme proceeding without being blocked by any impediment to implementation.

11. Overall, the Secretary of State is satisfied that the relevant tests set out in the guidance referred to above are met.

COMPENSATION

12. Details of compensation arising as a consequence of confirmation of the CPO are a matter for negotiation with the acquiring authority and not the Secretary of State. Accordingly, qualifying persons in relation to the land included in the CPO will need to approach the acquiring authority about the amount of compensation payable to them in respect of their interests in the land. If the amount cannot be agreed, the matter may be referred for determination by the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).

AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

13. A copy of this letter and the confirmed CPO will be made available for inspection at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/highways-act-inspectors-reports-and-decision-letters#2026-applications-and-decisions.

14. I should be grateful if you would also arrange for a copy of this letter and the confirmed CPO to be made available for inspection on the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's website and at all other places used to deposit the CPO for public inspection at making stage.

CHALLENGE TO DECISION

15. The circumstances in which the Secretary of State's decision may be challenged are set out in Annex B to this letter.

Yours sincerely
Transport Infrastructure Planning Casework Unit

ANNEX A

THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF SANDWELL (THE A457 GROVE LANE/B4135 CRANFORD STREET MULTI-MODAL IMPROVEMENTS HIGHWAY SCHEME) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2026

Location of Entry	Nature of modification
Order – Title	The title of the Order is amended from 'The Borough Council of Sandwell the A457 Grove Lane/B4153 Multi Modal Improvement Scheme Compulsory Purchase Order 2026' to 'The Borough Council of Sandwell (The A457 Grove Lane/B4135 Cranford Street Multi-Modal Improvements Highway Scheme) Compulsory Purchase Order 2026'
Order – Article 2	The words 'or thereabouts' are deleted.
Order – Article 2	The wording 'delineated and shown edged' is deleted and replaced with 'Shown coloured pink and delineated in'.
Order – Article 2	The title of the Order is amended from 'Map referred to in the A457 Grove Lane/B4153 Multi Modal Improvement Scheme Compulsory Purchase Order 2026' to 'Map referred to in The Borough Council of Sandwell (the A457 Grove Lane/B4135 Cranford Street Multi-Modal Improvements Highway Scheme) Compulsory Purchase Order 2026'
Order – Article 2	The sentence 'Part ii of Schedule 2 to the Acquisition of Land Act 1981…', has been renumbered as Article 3.
Order	Article 4 has been added with the wording: 'The acquiring authority may not serve a notice to treat or execute a general vesting declaration in respect of this order after the end of the period of three years beginning with the day on which the compulsory purchase order becomes operative.'
The Schedule	Table 1, column 2, Plots 1, 2 and 3 the words 'or thereabouts' are deleted.

ANNEX B

RIGHT OF CHALLENGE

Notice is to be published of confirmation of the Order. Any person who wishes to question the validity of the confirmed Order, or any particular provision contained in it, on the grounds that the Secretary of State has exceeded her powers or has not complied with the relevant statutory requirements in confirming it may, under section 23 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981, do so by application to the High Court. Such an application must be made within six weeks of publication of the notice that the Order has been confirmed.

In confirming the Order, the Secretary of State has relied on the information that the acquiring authority and others have provided, as contained in the Order and any related plans, diagrams, statements or correspondence, as being factually correct. Confirmation is given on this basis.