

Justification for Locating the Project in Forest Land

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has decided to take up for upgradation to Two Lane with Paved Shoulder of Belekeri to Hattikeri (766EE) and Kumta to Sirsi (NH766E) (excluding stretch of NH66) in the State of Karnataka under Bharathmala Pariyojana Phase – I through National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). As mentioned above project road considered in two section, starts at Belekeri port (0+000) connects NH 66 at Hattikeri village (4+242) and again starts at Kumta at km 4+242 and ends at Sirsi at km 59+410. Total length of project road is 59.410 km. The project road located in Uttara Kannada district traverses through Ankola, Kumta and Sirsi taluks. Geographically it runs West to East between Latitude of 14°42'40.16"N & 14°36'34.81"N and Longitude of 74°15'50.36"E & 74°49'46.81"E.

Major portion (80%) of the project road is passing through Hilly/rolling terrain while the remaining part (20%) is passing through rolling terrain. As per state PWD, existing RoW in forest section lies between road side drains which vary from 14m to 60m. Existing project road is intermediate/two lane bituminous carriageway with earthen shoulder on either side. At hair-pin curve section, concrete road has been constructed. The pavement condition has been found to be fair to good in condition. The limited RoW and poor road geometry coupled with heavy traffic leads to frequent mishaps and makes this stretch highly unsafe to travel. The region receives heavy downpour during monsoon seasons causes landslides results in road accidents. Improvement of existing road to concrete road with better road infrastructure will provide better, fast, safe and smooth connectivity for the commuters between the districts as well as in the region.

As per traffic assessment, existing road warrants two lane with paved shoulder configuration (as per IRC standards) to cater to the traffic for the up-coming years. Moreover, considering the project viability, two lane with paved shoulder shall be implemented with additional land acquisition up to 18m to attain the traffic speed of 40 - 60 kmph. The project road entirely traverses through thick western ghat forest. At certain locations for small length, residential hamlets and agriculture land are present. At forest location, 18m RoW is proposed considering the road safety issues and embankment and retaining wall construction to support the concrete carriageway. There are about 217 culverts will be reconstructed/widened, 11 bridges will be reconstructed/widened. Bus shelters will be provided on both side at 20 villages present adjacent to project road. There are no defense land and ASI monument are located along the project road. No wildlife sanctuaries and National Parks are located within 5km from the project alignment. However, project road is located at 622m from the Aghanashini LTM conservation reserve boundary.

As mentioned above, the existing project road continuously passes through forest land and requires diversion of 39.847 Ha (Honnava Division – 19.199 Ha & Sirsi Division – 20.648Ha) of forest land. The forest area required for project estimated considering exiting RoW present in Revenue Village Map. Alternative options for bypassing the existing road is not a viable option as project road located in ghat section. Alternative option towards southern side is not feasible as Aghanashini LTM conservation reserve is extended for 35Km and forest extends continuously towards northern side. Hence, upgradation of existing alignment is found to be socio-economically, financially and environmentally feasible option.



J H Eligar
GM (Tech) & PD