

JUSTIFICATION FOR LOCATING THE PROJECT IN FOREST LAND AND DETAILS OF ALTERNATES EXAMINED

The project road falls in the jurisdiction of two forest divisions, the detail of alternative routes examined is detailed division wise here as under.

A Garhshankar Forest Division:

Banga – Garhshankar – Anandpur Sahib – Naina Devi road is an in-principally declared National Highway by Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, New Delhi. The existing road is proposed to be widened to 2-lane road with paved shoulders. For widening of the road section from Km 0.000 to Km 36.350 under Nawanshahr & Hoshiarpur Districts, 25.90 Hectare of forest land is proposed to be diverted. Justifications for locating the Project in forest land are as given below-

The project road provides connectivity to important religious places like Shri Anandpur Sahib, Mata Naina Devi etc. Besides it links few important highways like NH-344A (Nawanshahr – Phagwara Road), NH-103A (Nawanshahr – Hoshiarpur Road), SH-24 (Garhshankar – Balachaur Road) & NH-503 (Una – Kiratpur Sahib Road). Due to having important connectivity large volume of traffic ply on this road. At present the road has intermediate lane/ two lane carriageway which is insufficient to cater the present traffic volume. There are several stone crushers located on the Bank of Sutlej River and numerous heavily loaded trucks carrying aggregates/sand from these crushers ply on the road. Due to insufficient width of carriageway and several black spots on the road accidents occur frequently. Thus widening of the existing road is very much essential for efficient & safe movement of traffic. Besides in major built-ups like Garhshankar etc. bypasses are required to avoid traffic congestion & accidents.

It is observed that the available land along the project highway in access of the existing road formation is forest land. And thus if widening/up-gradation of the road done to solve the present circumstances, obviously diversion of forest land will be involved. And there is no other alternative available like alternate route etc. where forest diversion will not be involved.

B Rupnagar Forest Division:

Banga – Garhshankar – Anandpur Sahib – Naina Devi road is an in-principally declared National Highway by Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, New Delhi. The existing road is proposed to be widened to 2-lane road with paved shoulders. For widening of the road section from Km 36.350 to Km 58.840 under Rupnagar District, 10.90 Hectare of forest land is proposed to be diverted. Justifications for locating the Project in forest land are as given below-

The project road provides connectivity to important religious places like Shri Anandpur Sahib, Mata Naina Devi etc. Besides it links few important highways like NH-344A (Nawanshahr – Phagwara Road), NH-103A (Nawanshahr – Hoshiarpur Road), SH-24 (Garhshankar – Balachaur Road) & NH-503 (Una – Kiratpur Sahib Road). Due to having important connectivity, large number of vehicular traffic volume ply on this road. At present the road has intermediate lane/ two lane/ two lane paved shoulder (with substandard shoulder width) carriageway which is insufficient to cater the present traffic volume. There are several stone crushers located on the Bank of Sutlej River and numerous heavily loaded trucks carrying aggregates/sand from these crushers ply on the road. Due to insufficient width of carriageway and several black spots on the road accidents occur frequently. Thus widening of the existing road is very much essential for efficient & safe movement of traffic. Besides in major built-ups like Anandpur Sahib etc. bypasses are required to avoid traffic congestion & accidents.

It is observed that the available land along the project highway in access of the existing road formation is forest land. And thus if widening/ up-gradation of the road done to solve the present circumstances, obviously diversion of forest land will be involved. And there is no other alternative available like alternate route etc. where forest diversion will not be involved.