

My ref: A14 Formal Consultation

Date: 13th June 2014

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**Economy, Transport and Environment  
Services  
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**Mike Evans**

**The A14 Team**

**Highways Agency**

**Woodlands, Manton Lane,**

**Bedford| MK41 7LW**

Dear Mr Evans,

**Re: A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme- County Council  
Response to the Formal Consultation on the Scheme Details**

I am pleased to confirm that the County Council's Economy and Environment Committee considered a report on the Formal Consultation of the Scheme on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2014 and this letter represents the County Council's response as Local Highway and Strategic Planning Authority.

The following detailed response follows the general sequence of questions within the Consultation's public questionnaire:

The Scheme and its Overall Impact

1. Confirmation of support for the need for the improvement scheme to achieve the five listed objectives of combating congestion, unlocking growth, connecting people, improving safety and creating a positive legacy. (The success of these objectives will need to be qualified by the outcome of ongoing discussions).
2. Support for the route option as offering the right solution to address current problems and to meet future needs. This includes the de-trunking of the A14 through Huntingdon and removal of the A14 Viaduct.
3. In respect of support and acceptance of the mitigation measures proposed for the potential to address adverse environmental impact of the scheme, this will depend on future detailed discussions with the Highways Agency (HA).
4. Detailed discussions will be necessary with the HA on minimisation and mitigation of the environmental impact during construction

The Main Elements of the Scheme

- 5a. Support is given for the widening of A1 between Brampton and Alconbury.
- 5b. The alternative layout now proposed for the A1 and A14 junction adjacent to Brampton is supported providing adequate noise mitigation is installed to minimise vehicular noise from the A14 over bridge.



- 5c. The County Council supports the demolition of the Huntingdon A14 Viaduct and the related changes to the local roads. This is subject to ongoing detailed discussions which include minimising the environmental impact on the commons, the Hinchingsbrooke Park Road junction and the potential for a separate cycle / footbridge adjacent to the Brampton Road railway bridge following removal of the viaduct
- 5d. The new Huntingdon Southern Bypass is supported, subject to further discussions on the River Great Ouse crossing, the potential of a “Green Bridge”, alignment details of the road over bridges and noise mitigation to protect nearby villages.
- 5e. The proposed widening of the existing A14 between Swavesey and Girton is supported subject to further discussions on the Bar Hill junction capacity and resilience, noise mitigation at Girton and the NMU routes through these junctions.
- 5f. The proposed widening of the existing Cambridge Northern Bypass is supported subject to detailed discussions on the noise mitigation along the whole Northern Bypass and the detailed changes suggested for the Histon and Milton Interchange roundabouts.
- 5g. The proposals for the Local Access Road are supported subject to localised detail at the Swavesey, Bar Hill and Girton junctions in respect to long term capacity and resilience.

#### Other Outstanding Issues

The Council provided Officers’ comments on the Highways Agency’s draft Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report (EIA) in a letter dated the 7th March and further comments to the Planning Inspectorate on the 16th April in respect of a revised EIA submitted to the PINS for a “scoping opinion”.

On the basis of the content of these letters, the County Council will need to further assess how the scheme and the proposals for construction comply with the advice given. Areas of concern are

- The need for the final traffic forecasts for the scheme, upon which a number of assessment and design metrics will depend.
- Detail of drainage in respect of flooding mitigation for water courses where the County Council is the responsible authority.
- Completion of the agreement between the Council and the HA to cover compensation for disruption to Guided Bus services from the operation to widen of the A14 over bridge on the Cambridge Northern Bypass
- The undertaking of extensive archaeological investigation and the making of provision for longer term public display of discoveries.
- The re-connection of severed NMU links and provision of new facilities, to enhance local connectivity eg the need for enhanced cycle/ walking facilities along the local access road and the extension of cycle/ footpath from Fen Drayton/ Swavesey to Fenstanton,
- The need for definitive details on the sources of materials and disposal of waste from the scheme. Some 7 million tonnes of materials are likely to be

needed and initial comments on the appraisal of prospective borrow pit sites were given and further information sought on other sources of materials, ie redundant airfields, imported hard rock. The conditions for restoration of borrow pits has also been given.

- In relation to advice on ecology, the theme has been to seek enhanced biodiversity in a relatively low quality corridor. Thus, wildlife corridors should be focused on, thereby creating a resilient ecological network across the landscape.
- Landscape, Noise and Vibration, Public and Environmental Health and Air Quality need to be taken forward in conjunction with District Council partners and the general public.

#### The Need for Agreement on Areas of Joint / Overlapping Responsibility

There will be areas of common interest particularly where the re-aligned A14 and the local access road run in parallel. Thus, there will be the need to formally agree responsibility on:

- Highway boundaries
- Highway lighting
- Joint drainage, including balancing ponds and drains
- Highway signing and telematics
- Responsibility for fencing

#### Maintenance Costs for New County Roads and De-trunking Dowry Costs

Finally, there will also be the need for discussions with the Department for Transport and the HA over ongoing funding issues for the new local roads and de-trunked roads. This will need to include the classification of de-trunked lengths of A14 and the new local roads.

A thorough examination of the state and sufficiency of the de-trunked lengths of A14 will be needed on completion of the improvement scheme before any ongoing maintenance funding can be determined and agreed. Also, consideration and advertisement of local traffic regulation orders (TROs) to support the scheme's operation will be needed. Such draft Orders were previously advertised for objections to supplement the case in support of the withdrawn A14 E-FD scheme and these could be amended for the new scheme.

There is the need to re-commence discussions on the formation of a framework for the assessment of the condition and restoration costs of the highways to be de-trunked in about 2020. This will include the investigation of the residual life of carriageways, the structural condition of the bridge and culverts, and the adequacy of drains and balancing ponds.

#### Specific Elected Member Concerns

At its Committee meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> May, Members raised a series of concerns and comments in respect to the scheme proposals and these are listed in the Appendix to this letter which is an extract from the formal minutes to the meeting.

It would be appropriate if we could discuss with you these concerns as part of on-going negotiations .

Finally, I also include immediately below a "Tiny URL link" to a copy of the Economy and Environment A14 DCO Committee Report of the 27th May for completion of your records:

<http://tinyurl.com/ccc-A14dco>

Yours sincerely,



Graham Hughes,

Executive Director, Economy, Transport and Environment

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## **ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES**

**Date:** Tuesday 27<sup>TH</sup> May 2014

**Time:** 10.00 a.m. to 12.55 p.m.

**Present:** Councillors I Bates (Chairman) R Butcher, B. Chapman, J Clark, E Cearns, (Vice-Chairman), D Divine, D Harty, R Henson, J Hipkin, D Jenkins, N Kavanagh, A Lay, J Reynolds, J Schumann, M Shuter, A Walsh and J Williams

**Also present:** Councillors P Downes, I Manning and M Mason

### **EXTRACT:**

#### **4. A14 DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER (DCO) FORMAL CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

Members were asked to consider the draft proposals of the Highways Agency (HA) for the A14 from Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme which was to be the subject of formal consultation until 15<sup>th</sup> June and to also agree the County Council's response. Attention was drawn to the key issues set out in the report including:

- the governance roles and responsibilities and the simplified procedure being adopted under the Planning Act 2008,
- the Implementation Plan and timetable,
- the impacts on Cambridgeshire's residents and the environment,
- the Council liability in relation to de-trunked and new county roads, with the latter amounting to 12 kilometres of new road.

It was highlighted that there was also the need to rescind previous objections made by Cabinet which were still in place, relating to the now withdrawn 'A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton Improvement Scheme'. In relation to recommendation b) the officers highlighted that for clarity it should include the following additional wording added "as set out in Appendix 2". This change was supported by the Committee.

Speaking as the Local Member for Brampton, Councillor Downes welcomed the new element of the current proposed scheme relating to widening the A1 between Brampton and Alconbury, but highlighted the need to consult with Alconbury residents. He also raised local residents concerns regarding soundproofing along the alternative layout now proposed for the A1 and A14 junction adjacent to Brampton. In

highlighting the text set out in 5b on page 11 of the Council's proposed submission, he supported the need to ensure adequate noise mitigation measures were installed.

In relation to the text in 5c on the same page referring to the demolition of the Huntingdon A14 Viaduct and the related changes to the local roads, he highlighted the need to ensure any new road layout would not have a detrimental impact on traffic flow, as he was concerned that otherwise this could lead to local gridlock, and asked that the officers be vigilant on points of detail. He tabled for information a map of the alternative route that residents had suggested to the Highways Agency which would have moved the road further away from Brampton, but which had been deemed to be too expensive. He also highlighted concerns regarding the safety of non-motorised traffic crossing the main route and suggested that this should be added to the Council's response as a concern, requiring appropriate mitigation.

During the debate the following issues were raised:

- Concerns regarding the potential noise and pollution which would be generated in Girton, Hilton and other areas, and the need for appropriate noise mitigation measures to be in place from the outset, to reflect the concerns of local residents over those of road users. This should include low noise road surfacing.
- That the standard on noise mitigation on the pinch-point' scheme for Girton should be the standard that would be provided for that location under the main Cambridge to Huntingdon Scheme.
- The need for 24 hour traffic flow data to be made available. *(Note the officer in response suggested the final traffic forecasts for the scheme would include these flow data and should be available after 20<sup>th</sup> June)*
- The need to future proof the Bar Hill junction to ensure it could handle the increased traffic that would be generated in the next 20 years from the Northstowe development.
- The need to ensure enhanced cycle / walking facilities were separated from the carriageway to ensure the safety of pedestrians / cyclists.
- The need in developing noise mitigation measures to include appropriate landscaping works / tree screening, and to work in partnership with district councils and local residents.
- The need to consider lower speed limits where there were complex road layouts which could also help reduce noise and air pollution.



- The need to ensure that side roads (local access roads) worked effectively and did not lead to blockages that might promote 'rat running'. *(In reply the lead officer indicated all side roads would be the subject of a safety scrutiny and would not be adopted unless they were considered safe and adequate)*
- In relation to undertaking maintenance works overnight, to ensure that long diversion routes were kept to a minimum as these could encourage rat running.
- The need to ensure the responsibility for appropriate refurbishment / de-trunking roads to be adopted, should be a cost to the Highways Agency and not the County Council.
- The need to ensure proper drainage was provided in the new layout on both the roads and on cycle-paths.
- In paragraph 7.2 'Helping people live healthy and independent lives' it was suggested that this should have made reference to reducing noise and pollution, as a way of improving healthy living conditions. Another Member made the point that the improvements the scheme was designed to provide (reducing congestion and ensuring free-flowing traffic) would in itself reduce air pollution.
- One Member suggested a future report provide more detail on the potential cost of the additional Council liabilities and the funding of these.
- Future reports to include a map to help illustrate the Scheme.
- Supporting sourcing materials for the construction works locally, where-ever possible.
- To receive a report back in the Autumn (September) to be able to comment on the Draft Highways Agency response before its submission by the 31<sup>st</sup> October deadline.

As there was a need to ensure that Members views had been taken into account in the final submission by the officers, it was agreed that recommendation b) should be amended to also include the Vice Chairman's involvement.

It was resolved to agree:

- a) To rescind eighteen listed objections agreed by the former Council Cabinet to the now withdrawn A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton Improvement Scheme at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

- b) The Director , Economy, Transport and Environment in consultation with the Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman responding to the Highway's Agency current Formal Consultation for the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme, confirming the overall support for the Scheme, but reserving the position on matters of detail to be discussed and negotiated with the Highways Agency prior to its submission of the draft Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) as set out in Appendix 2, and raised by Councillors in the debate, and
- c) To receive a further report in the autumn on the draft Development Consent Order (DCO) following its preparation by the Highways Agency.