

Cambridgeshire County Council's response to Network Rail's consultation on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Scheme (Wider Ely Area Round 2 Consultation Part 2)

To: Highways and Transport Committee

Meeting Date: 7 December 2021

From: Steve Cox, Executive Director - Place and Economy

Electoral division(s): Burwell, Chesterton, Ely North, Ely South, Littleport, March North and Waldersey, March South and Rural, Soham North and Isleham, Soham South and Haddenham, Sutton, Waterbeach, Whittlesey North, Whittlesey South, Woodditton

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable

Outcome: The Committee is being asked to consider the response to Network Rail's Consultation on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Scheme (Ely North Round 2 Consultation Part 2) and provide comments and additions as required.

Recommendation: Committee is recommended to:

- a) Note and comment on Network Rail's Consultation on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Scheme Consultation; and
- b) Delegate the agreement of the final consultation response to the Executive Director, Place and Economy in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee.

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Member contacts:

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1. Background

- 1.1 Network Rail are currently consulting over plans to increase rail capacity in the Ely area. The scheme is known as Ely Area Capacity Enhancement (EACE).
- 1.2 The focus of this element of the consultation is on the area named the wider Ely Area by Network Rail and includes Ely North junction, Queen Adelaide level crossings options; upgrading or closing other level crossings between Ely and Peterborough, between Ely and King's Lynn, and between Ely and Cambridge.

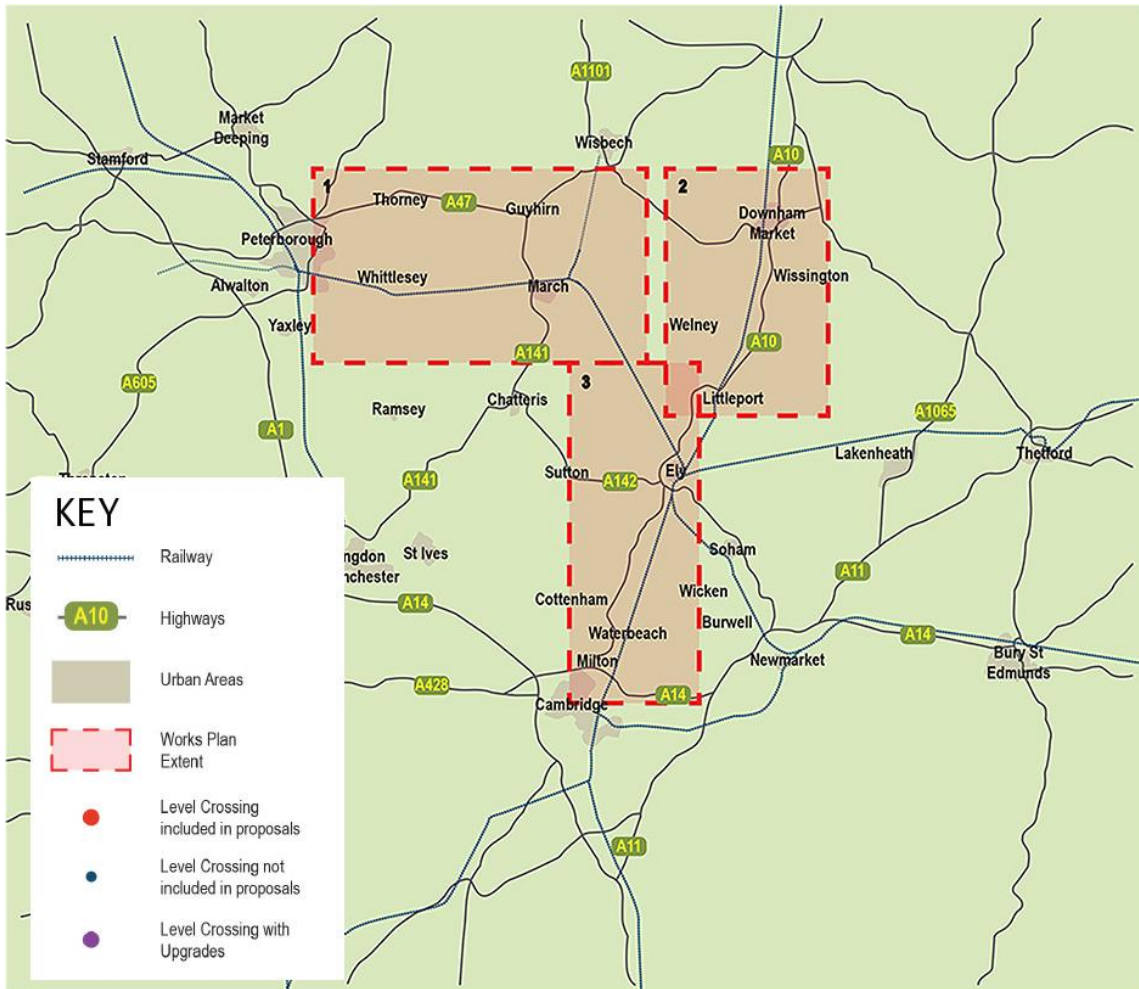


Figure 1: Wider Ely Area Source Network Rail: <https://phase2b.elyareacapacity.com/round-2-consultation-part2-the-wider-ely-area/>

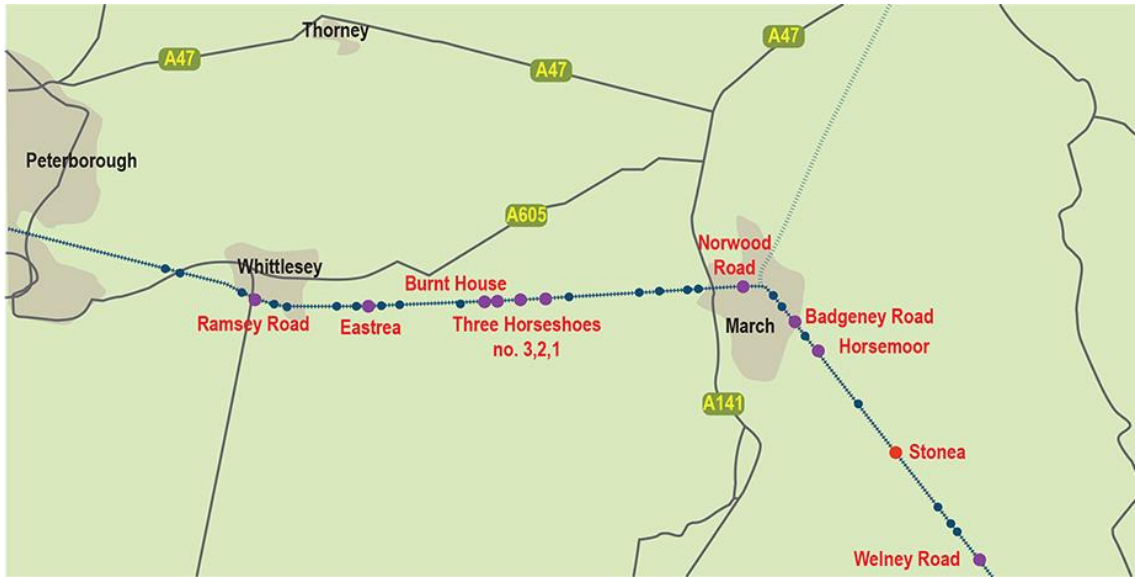


Figure 2: Works area 1 Source: <https://phase2b.elyareacapacity.com/level-crossing-locations/>

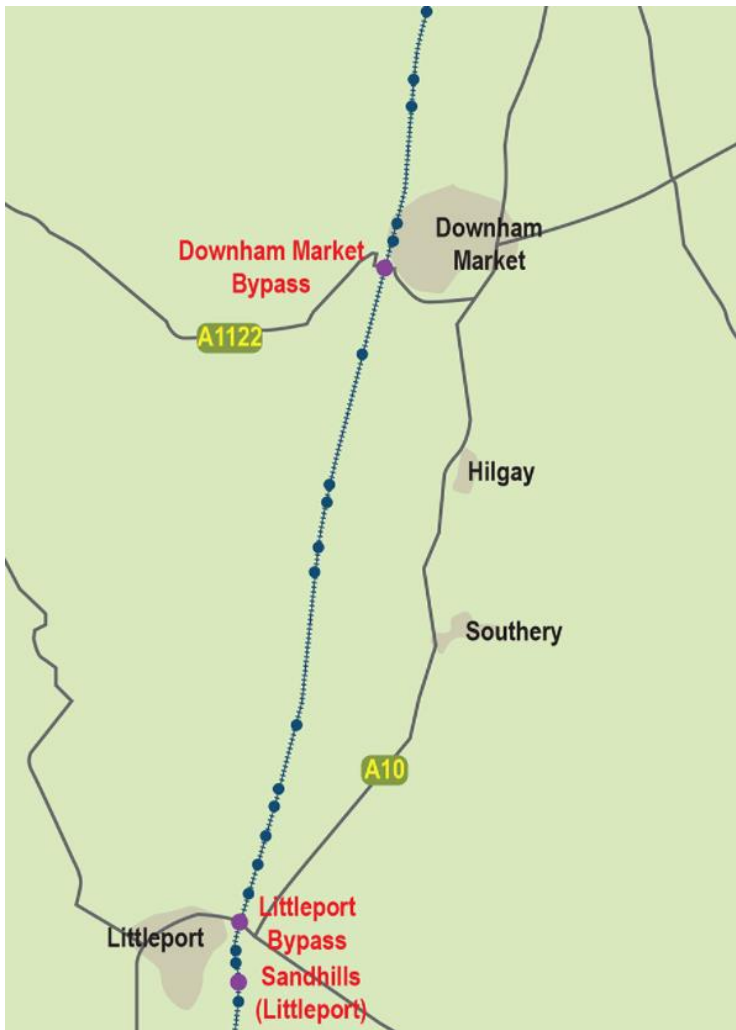


Figure 3: Works area 2 Source: <https://phase2b.elyareacapacity.com/level-crossing-locations/>

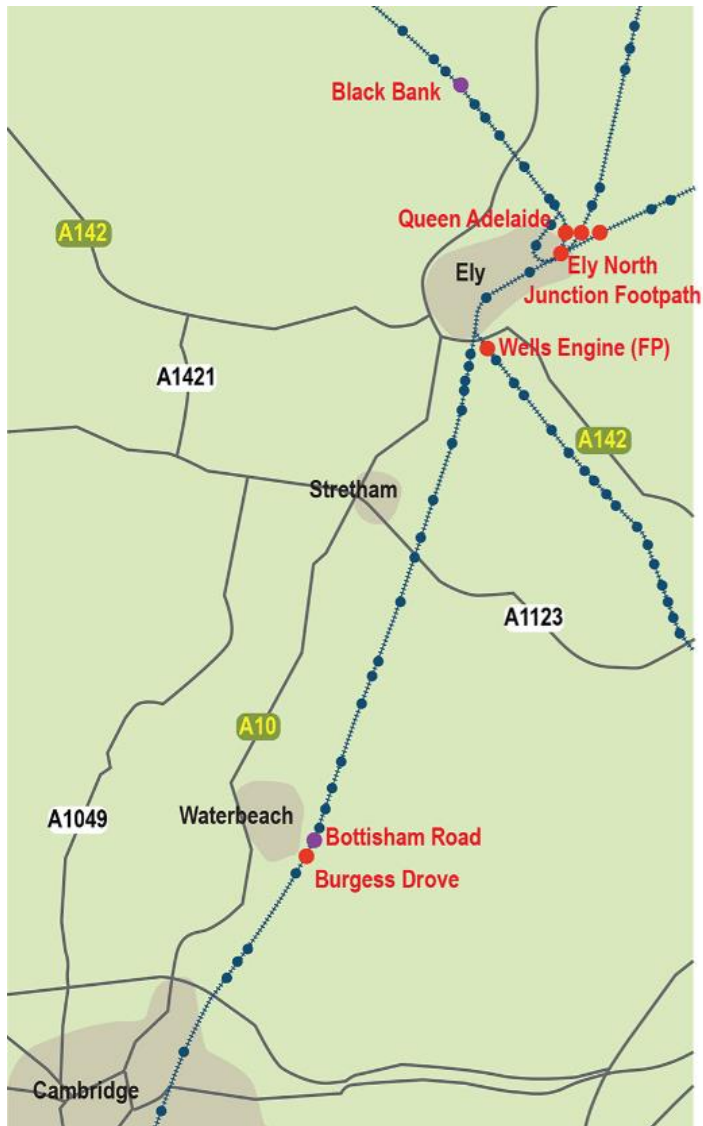


Figure 4: Works area 3 Source: <https://phase2b.elyareacapacity.com/level-crossing-locations/>

1.3 The consultation material is available online here: <https://phase2b.elyareacapacity.com/>

1.4 Network Rail are taking a phased approach to consultation. This current consultation is focused on Wider Ely Area as shown in Figures 1-4. Network Rail's timetable for consultation is shown in Figure 5 and detailed below:

- Autumn 2020 public engagement about the EACE programme. The County Council's response to this was agreed at Committee held on 10 November 2020
https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/cc_live/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1533/Committee/62/Default.aspx
- Early 2021 Public consultation on Ely south area. The County Council's response to this was agreed at Committee held on 27 July 2021
https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/cc_live/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1709/Committee/62/Default.aspx

- Summer/Autumn 2021 Public consultation on the options in the rest of the Ely area. This will include the Queen Adelaide level crossings This is the stage that is currently being consulted on and the draft response is provided in Appendix A.
- Spring 2022 Round 2 (Part 3) Consultation on level crossing options between Ely and Ipswich
- Autumn/Winter 2022 Round 3 preferred options with the EACE programme (currently unfunded)
- Winter/Spring 2023 Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) submitted (currently unfunded)
- Autumn Winter 2024 TWAO decision (currently unfunded)

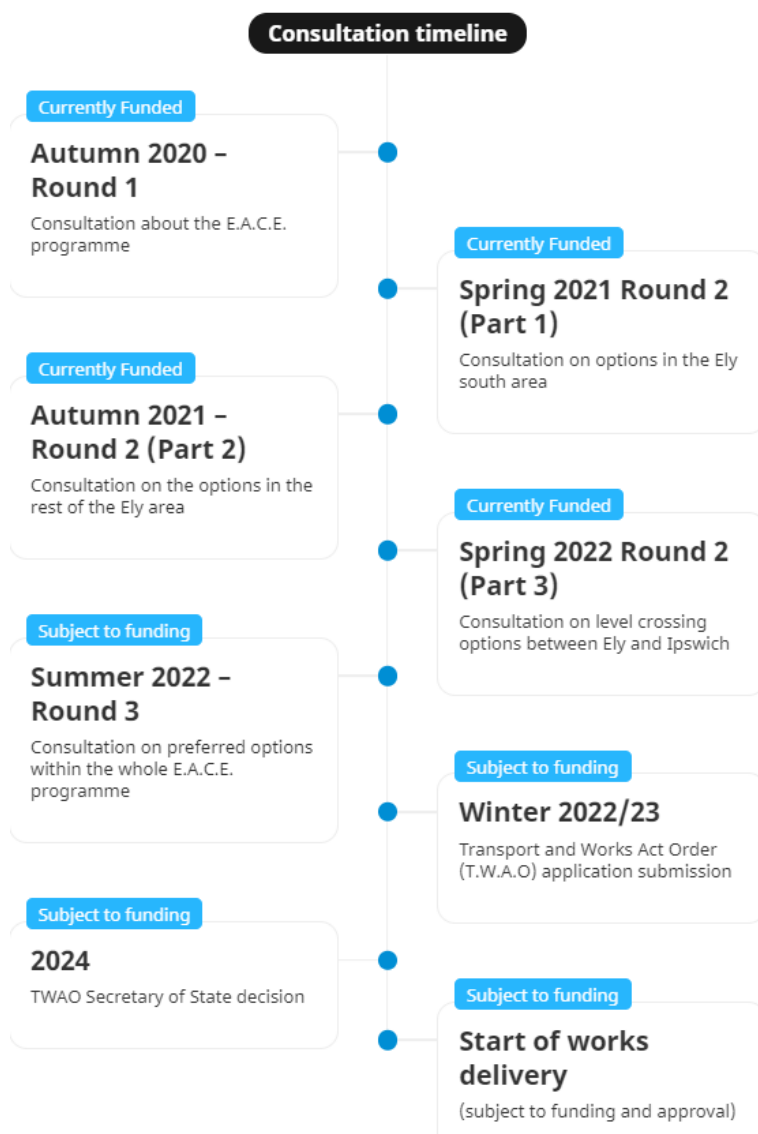


Figure 5: Network Rail Consultation timeline: <https://phase2b.elyareacapacity.com/consultation-timeline/>

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 Detail of the report. Include information here from the consultation. This phase of the consultation covers the Wider Ely area as shown in Figure 1-4.

As a result of the increasing train frequency, created by the EACE, Network Rail are considering upgrading 15 level crossings in 12 locations from half barrier to full barrier to maintain safety for train passengers, road users and pedestrians at the following sites:

- Badgeney Road (Badgeney Road, March)
- Black Bank (Black Bank Road, Little Downham)
- Bottisham Road (Bannolds Road, Waterbeach)
- Burnt House (Burnt House Road, Turves)
- Downham Market Bypass (A1122, Downham Market)
- Eastrea (Wype Road, Eastrea)
- Horsemoor (Upwell Road, March)
- Littleport Bypass (A10, Littleport)
- Norwood Road (Norwood Road, March)
- Ramsey Road (Ramsey Road, Whittlesey)
- Sandhills Littleport (Victoria Street, Littleport)
- Three Horseshoes No.1, No.2 and No.3 (Whittlesey Road / March Road, Turves)
- Welney Road (Wisbech Road, Manea)

Upgrading these crossings to full barriers will also mean that the barriers will be down for longer periods which is likely to increase the waiting time for road users. Network Rail will need to undertake assessments to determine how this could impact the local road network.

Proposals to change the Queen Adelaide level crossings are also considered with four options presented.

Proposals are presented for the Ely North junction with changes to rail infrastructure presented.

Two options are presented for Ely North junction footpath.

- 2.2 On the 8 February 2018 the Economy and Environment Committee at the County Council considered a report on a traffic study carried out in Queen Adelaide.
<https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccclive/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/678/Committee/5/Default.aspx>

The committee resolved to:

- a) Note the proposals for wider regional and national benefits, of increased rail capacity through Ely North Junction;
- b) Note the potential impact on the whole community, residents and local businesses of increased frequency and duration of level crossing closures;
- c) Agree to oppose any measures that restrict traffic flow across the level crossings to the detriment of residents and local businesses until alternative solutions are put in place;
- d) Note the intention to explore opportunities with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to fund the options development for a road and / or rail solution and;

- e) Agree to continue to work with the Combined Authority, Network Rail and the Ely Area Task Force to develop a comprehensive solution that meets the needs of all Cambridgeshire residents and in particular the communities of Queen Adelaide, Prickwillow and Ely.

- 2.3 These resolutions will form the basis of the consultation response, and were highlighted to Network Rail when the County Council responded to the first phase of the consultation in November 2020
<https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccclive/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1533/Committee/62/Default.aspx>

They were also highlighted when the Council responded to another stage of the consultation in July 2021

<https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccclive/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1709/Committee/62/Default.aspx>

Another key element of the consultation response is the requirement for a greater number of additional train paths to be created by the EACE improvement scheme. Currently the proposals for increased passenger service appear to only cater for current outstanding franchise commitments. It is vital that the number of paths created by EACE fully caters for future demand.

- 2.4 A draft response is provided in Appendix A

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

- 3.1 Communities at the heart of everything we do

There are no significant implications for this priority.

- 3.2 A good quality of life for everyone

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- An increase in freight on rail would lead to a better quality of life due to a reduction in road noise and transport related emissions
- An increase in passenger rail service would have the benefits of improving access to key services and reduce road transport related emissions.
- It is likely that the scheme could impact on residents and business in the Queen Adelaide and the Kiln Lane areas. The proposed response highlights the County Council's position to oppose any measures that restrict traffic flow across level crossings to the detriment of residents and local businesses until alternative solutions are put in place.
- It is noted that other level crossings may be impacted on by the Ely Area Capacity Scheme including public rights of way (PROW). Good health is part of a good quality of life and exercise using local PROW is one way of achieving this. It is therefore

important that suitable solutions are found for all level crossings where changes are required by the scheme.

- The scheme will necessitate changes to the local public rights of way network, which provides the opportunity to improve access to the countryside for the benefit of residents' physical and mental health and wellbeing in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The proposed response sets out that CCC is desirous of working with Network Rail to ensure that appropriate improvements are achieved.

3.3 Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.4 Cambridgeshire: a well-connected, safe, clean, green environment

The report above sets out the implications for this priority in paragraph 3.2

3.5 Protecting and caring for those who need us

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

Cambridgeshire County Council are currently seeking an agreement with Network Rail for Network Rail to cover County Council staff costs while being engaged on this project.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There is potential that the County Council might have to procure specialist resource to assist with this project. All procurement rules would be followed and existing frameworks and contracts used if suitable.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

No significant implication within this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

No significant implication within this category has been identified at this stage. An Equality and Diversity impact assessment has been requested from Network Rail

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

No significant implication within this category.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

Network Rail held a briefing for local and key Councillors on 11 October 2021.

4.7 Public Health Implications

There is a requirement that the Public Health Team are involved in the scoping of the Environmental Impact Assessment to ensure the health impacts are adequately addressed and mitigated.

4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas (See further guidance in Appendix 2):

4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Status: neutral

Explanation: the project does not impact on buildings. The impacts on this area will be considered in our consultation response.

4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.

Status: positive

Explanation: It is expected that this project would lead in increases in both passenger rail and freight which would be a carbon decrease when compared with road transport. The impacts on this area will be considered in our consultation response.

4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.

Status: Potentially negative

Explanation: All options will have an impact on the local environment to varying degrees (including Ely Pits and Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest SSSI and River Great Ouse County Wildlife Site). The level of impact will be very much dependant on the scheme that Network Rail bring forward. It is thought that Network Rail would manage this process to minimise potential impacts. The impacts on this area will be considered in our consultation response.

4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

Status: unsure

Explanation: It is not known how Network Rail will manage Waste. The impacts on this area will be considered in our consultation response.

4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:

Status: unsure

Explanation: It is not known how Network Rail will manage water. The impacts on this area will be considered in our consultation response.

4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

Status: positive

Explanation: as the scheme is expected to reduce fossil fuel road based transport this should lead to an increase in air quality. The impacts on this area will be considered in our consultation response.

4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure, and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

Status: neutral

Explanation: The proposals focus on Network Rail's infrastructure. The impacts on this area will be considered in our consultation response.

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?

Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement? Yes

Name of Officer: Henry Swan

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law? Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?

Yes

Name of Officer: Elsa Evans

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?

Yes

Name of Officer: Sarah Silk

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: Jeremy Smith

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health?

Yes

Name of Officer: Iain Green

If a Key decision, have any Environment and Climate Change implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer?

Yes

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

5. Source documents

5.1 Source documents

Network Rail's consultation documents: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/our-routes/anglia/improving-the-railway-in-anglia/ely-area-capacity-enhancement/>

Minutes of Economy and Environment Committee held on 8 February 2018:

https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/CCC_live/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=eZJtmaZaQGE%2bt9YmDhmJLiyvD6Ldq7OeKi9s3ys4btJcqBz7BHmhbW%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7lkn8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNIh225F5QMaQWCtPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnlG%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJff55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlotS%2bYGoBi5oIA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJff55vVA%3d

Queen Adelaide Traffic Study Report presented to Economy and Environment Committee held on 8 February 2018

https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/CCC_live/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=%2fNXM3pn1khRyHWq41BTZngmdKcr7ikJxxeHha6U3P4uDLAKpHc%2fNiA%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7lkn8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNIh225F5QMaQWCtPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnlG%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJff55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlotS%2bYGoBi5oIA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJff55vVA%3d

Minutes of Highways and Transport Committee held on 10 November 2020

https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/CCC_live/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=AVSprFeJTtkiRO7Ci2mQP1%2fEzV%2b7pMfde8q%2bXdAJu2xe6RgyzAUykg%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7lkn8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNIh225F5QMaQWCtPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnlG%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJff55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlotS%2bYGoBi5oIA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJff55vVA%3d

Report presented with proposed consultation response to Highways and Transport Committee held on 10 November 2020

https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/CCC_live/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=mW6FrBq%2fLkgUIHPUIUba9BWKjmak%2fgSeeHLuc7V78Xla0PjzBI6bsQ%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7lkn8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNIh225F5QMaQWCtPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnlG%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJff55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlotS%2bYGoBi5oIA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJff55vVA%3d&WGewmo

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https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/CCC_live/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=8S%2b%2fkIM1lkaFowYxjcmeeOOJ6wY7qgs1O6%2bgD%2fFljJ72epvBT6wzww%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7lkn8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNlh225F5QMaQWCtPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnlg%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlotS%2bYGoBi5olA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&WGe wmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCpMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJFf55vVA%3d

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5.2 Location

Reports are available online weblinks provided in section 5.1

Appendix A Draft Consultation Response.

Q#	Questions and responses
9	What is your name?
	This response is submitted from Cambridgeshire County Council and reviewed and approved by Highways and Transport Committee held on 7 December 2021
11	What is your email address?
	Gareth.Blackett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
1	In general, I support the proposals to upgrade the railway in the Ely area.
	Strongly support , support, undecided, Do not support, Strongly do not support
	Please provide reasons for your answer
	<p>Please note that this strong support is caveated on the basis that the County Council will oppose any measures that restrict traffic flow (including but not limited to motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians) across all level crossings to the detriment of residents and local businesses in Queen Adelaide, Prickwillow and surrounding areas until alternative solutions are put in place.</p> <p>Cambridgeshire County Council is strongly committed to increases in both passenger and freight rail service and improvement in the Ely area will allow for these services to come forwards. Increasing both freight and passenger services is in line with many of the County Councils objectives such as reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality, creating better access to services and delivery of housing growth. It should be noted that the County Council's Economy and Environment Committee resolved on the 8 February 2018: to Note the proposals for wider regional and national benefits, of increased rail capacity through Ely North Junction.</p> <p>However, it should be noted that the protection of the communities of Queen Adelaide and Prickwillow MUST be at the forefront of any considerations.</p> <p>We understand the scope of works of the EACE is much wider than Ely and the surrounding area and involves many level crossings. The County Council will need to be fully involved as proposals for improvements at all level crossings are developed. To ensure that the needs of residents, business and other crossing users are fully considered and addressed in any new proposals.</p> <p>Capacity provided by EACE</p> <p>It is vital however that the additional capacity proposed through the EACE scheme is enough to cater for future demand. The detail shown in the consultation around train paths EACE will create is welcomed. In terms of passenger services these seems to be outstanding franchise commitments which should have been delivered some years ago apart from 1 x New service (additional service to be confirmed).</p>

In terms of freight services there seems to be one additional freight path, Felixstowe to the West Midland and the North proposed.

Given the large 'once in a lifetime' nature of the scheme it is vital that it provides adequate future capacity for both passenger and freight services.

A large range of stakeholders including but not limited to the County Council and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority are involved in these discussions. It appears that there has been no work carried out to investigate what future train paths may be required. This piece of work is required urgently.

Moreover it is important to note that the County Council is strongly supportive of the CPCA led project of Wisbech Rail reconnection and it is vital that train paths through Ely are provided for this service.

Local funders have provided significant funding to this project, £9.3m funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Strategic Freight Network. Network Rail has secured £13.1m funding from the Department for Transport. This total level of funding £22.4m is close to the original total capital cost for the scheme¹. It is vitally important that EACE caters for the full future demand of rail capacity in the Ely area and not just the existing outstanding franchise commitments. Given the likely disruption and the 'once in a lifetime' nature of EACE it really does need to capture for the long-term needs of rail capacity through the Ely area.

Increases in passenger services relevant to the EACE that the County Council wishes to see and are required to ensure future sustainable development are outlined below:

- Increases in frequency of Kings Cross-Cambridge-Ely-King Lynn service to half hourly (current undelivered franchise commitment)
- Increase in frequency of Ipswich to Peterborough Service current undelivered (franchise commitment)
- Increases in frequency of Norwich to Cambridge service to half hourly- currently hourly
- Increase in frequency of Birmingham New Street to Stansted Airport service (Cross Country) to half hourly. (Possibly only between Birmingham and Cambridge for additional trains).
- Half hourly service between Cambridge and Stansted Airport. Outputs sought:
 - Either by improving frequency of Birmingham New Street to Stansted Airport service to half hourly, or
 - Extension of Norwich to Cambridge service to Stansted Airport hourly.
- Improved reliability / frequency of direct services between Cambridge and Peterborough. Outputs sought:
 - Ideally by improving the frequency of the Birmingham New Street to Stansted Airport service to half hourly, and improving the reliability of that service.
 - Alternatively, by provision of a new hourly service.
- Additional services to stop at Whittlesea and Manea. Outputs sought:

¹ <https://www.newcivilengineer.com/latest/ely-rail-upgrade-could-cost-20-times-more-than-original-proposal-network-rail-confirms-22-09-2020/>

- At least hourly stopping pattern in each direction throughout the day at Whittlesea
- At least two hourly stopping pattern in each direction throughout the day at Manea.
- Increase capacity for a Wisbech to Cambridge service.

The benefits that would be created by delivering the above train services are numerous and are detailed by a number of studies and reports that are available. A report produced by Mott MacDonald² highlights the wider economic benefits of EACE. It is vital that this is considered as Network Rail develop the business case. The report estimates “show that increased connectivity in the station settlements may lead to a range of primary benefits which in total amounts to £119,700,000 over the 60 year appraisals period”. These are summarised in more detail as:

WITA-Wider Agglomeration impacts results for Core 60-year appraisal 2016 prices

Element	Amount
Manufacturing	£2.5m
Construction	£2.4m
Consumer services	£8.9m
Producer services	£32.9m
Labour supply impact	£11.3m
Move to more productive jobs	£39.5m
Reducing spatial inequality	£22.2m
Total Primary Benefits	£119.7m

There are further secondary indirect benefits which are less direct, and attribution is less tangible such as potential for 1,080 new dwellings, £104m property value uplift, 557 jobs around stations settlements, £44m GVA p.a. It should be noted that this work was based on the following rail service improvements: Ipswich to Peterborough becoming hourly and both the Kings Lynn to London and Norwich to Cambridge services becoming half hourly. If more train paths were enabled by the EACE these benefits would increase.

It is therefore vital that Network Rail urgently confirm the number of train paths that will be created by EACE scheme and secondly ensure that all future demand is catered for by the scheme. Currently the County Council does not believe this is the case and therefore demands an urgent conversation with both Network Rail and the Department for Transport.

It is key that funding for the construction of the scheme is gained and confirmed as soon as possible so that the scheme can be constructed and the benefits of it gained as soon as possible. The timescales laid out in the consultation materials are not ambitious enough and need to be reconsidered. It should be noted that the scheme was previously confirmed for delivery before the Hendy review in 2016.

² Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Wider Economic Benefits January 2017 Mott MacDonald all prices 2016.

Impact on Local Community

Given the likely changes needed to level crossings in the Queen Adelaide Area it is vital to take account Cambridgeshire County Council's position as resolved at the Economy and Environment Committee 8 February 2018.

b) Note the potential impact on the whole community, residents and local businesses of increased frequency and duration of level crossing closures; c) Agree to oppose any measures that restrict traffic flow across the level crossings to the detriment of residents and local businesses until alternative solutions are put in place.

It is vital that the communities and businesses affected by the EACE are fully engaged and consulted as the proposals move forwards. In particular the areas of Queen Adelaide and Prickwillow, but all areas affected will need to be fully involved, given the wider reach of the level crossing works.

The County Council's position is that it will oppose any measures that restrict traffic flow across the level crossings to the detriment of residents and local business until a suitable alternative solution is put in place. As noted below there is also a need to consider accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians as well as those with reduce mobility in the Queen Adelaide area and other areas affected by these proposals and their needs have to be catered for.

It is noted that other level crossings may be impacted on by the Ely Area Capacity Scheme including public rights of way (PROW). Good health is part of a good quality of life and exercise using local PROW is one way of achieving this. It is therefore important that suitable solutions are found for all level crossings where changes are required by the scheme.

The scheme will necessitate changes to the local public rights of way network, which provides the opportunity to improve access to the countryside for the benefit of residents' physical and mental health and wellbeing in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The proposed response sets out that CCC is desirous of working with Network Rail to ensure that appropriate improvements are achieved.

Highways Authority Role

As the Highways Authority the County Council will also have to be fully engaged. As it is proposals will affect highways, various teams at the County Council will have to be involved and there will be a requirement for Network Rail to cover costs through this process.

Team included but are not limited to are:

- Asset Management
- Transport Management
- Transport Strategy
- Transport Assessment
- Rights of Way
- Bridges
- Historic Environment Archaeology

- Street lighting
- Floods and Water
- Traffic signals (if applicable)

There is also a need to consider accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians as well as those with reduced mobility and their needs have to be catered for. Through negotiation and in accordance with its Rights of Way Improvement Plan, the County Council will seek to protect and, where possible, achieve enhancements to the public right of way and non-motorised user network in the affected area. The County Council will be pleased to enter discussions with Network Rail to secure positive outcomes for local residents and rights of way user groups affected by the scheme.

As Highway Authority, the County Council will require that it is consulted upon any changes to the existing highway network. If there are any resultant increased highways maintenance liabilities imposed upon the Council as a result of changes to the existing highway network or the adoption of new highways infrastructure, the Council will require appropriate compensations, via the provision of commuted sums and/or other means.

It should be noted that this response is our initial considerations and for all options there would need to be further discussions with Network Rail to understand the details of the proposals and the subsequent impacts on the Authority for liabilities and costs.

As a point of principle, all proposals that seek to downgrade road crossings should retain all-inclusive NMU access, that is pedestrian, cycle and equestrian. There is no reason why most proposals cannot include equestrian provision, and every reason why it should in order to comply with relevant policies including the County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Health & Wellbeing Strategy and NPPS para 5.216 *Where development would worsen accessibility such impacts should be mitigated so far as reasonably possible. There is a very strong expectation that impacts on accessibility for non-motorised users should be mitigated.*

Whilst the County Council can provide in-principle comment on the impact of the proposals on pedestrian, equestrian, cycle, carriage drivers and leisure motorised vehicle users in the context of relevant national and local policies and strategic implications, local user groups will be able to advise Network Rail on the actual impact on them. They should be viewed as statutory consultees and Network Rail should consult them directly on the proposals. The County Council can provide contact details. Early engagement is important to mitigate against objections resulting in avoidable late changes to design.

All proposed downgrades should also consider the needs of motorcyclists including trail riders who may use the roads as part of their rides. With the Anglian Level Crossing Reduction Strategy TWAO some crossings were downgraded to byway status (which we understand enables Network Rail to apply easier asset management standards), retaining vehicular access but with a Traffic Regulation Order prohibiting four-wheeled vehicles whilst allowing motorcyclists through a 1.5m bridlegate. This may be a more appropriate solution for some of the proposals in the scheme, such as Burgess Drove. Network Rail should consult the Trail Riders Fellowship user group for their views.

	<p>To date the County Council is concerned about a lack of engagement. Other than limited engagement with the crossings in the Queen Adelaide area that has been no engagement regarding other level crossing affected. Given the role the County Council has as the LHA it is imperative this engagement starts, and Network Rail will need to enter an agreement to cover the County Councils costs for this. Early engagement with the LHA has main benefits included the potential for abortive design work and reducing timescales.</p> <p>To provide meaningful responses to the consultation the County Council requires more detailed information. For example including the Risk Assessment scores and user census details would help inform the Council's response.</p> <p>It should be noted that any proposals should be designed to the correct relevant highest standard. This includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Manual for Roads and Bridges • Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design • Any relevant County Council guidance <p>Public Health Implications</p> <p>There is a requirement that the Public Health Team are involved in the scoping of the Environmental Impact Assessment to ensure the health impacts are adequately addressed and mitigated.</p>
2	<p>Do you have any comments on the proposals to potentially upgrade the following level crossings to full barrier crossings: Badgeney Road, Black Bank, Bottisham Road, Burnt House, Downham Market Bypass, Eastrea, Horsemoor, Littleport Bypass, Norwood Road, Ramsey Road, Sandhills Littleport, Three Horseshoes No.1, No.2 and No.3 and Welney Road level crossings?</p>
	<p>Network Rail need to engage fully with the County Council on changes to all level crossing. More information is required on the impact on all level crossing users.</p> <p>Before surveys and traffic modelling work is carried out, please get in touch with the County Council Transport Model Manger to ensure these are carried out to the correct specification.</p> <p>Given the limited information it is hard for the County Council to respond to this element of the consultation. As we are not sure what the impacts of greater barrier downtime will be at the level crossings. There is also a need to ensure that greater barrier downtime does not increase risk for example causing them to divert on to less safe routes, take risks at level crossing to avoid increased waiting times. There is a need to ensure there is adequate space for vehicles to wait either side of the level crossing and space for them to pass safely once opened.</p>
3.	<p>For Burgess Drove is your preference</p> <p>Option 1 – Remove vehicle crossing rights from Burgess Drove level crossing. It would remain open for pedestrians and cyclists to use. Upgrade the surface of Burgess Drove Road for vehicle access.</p>

	<p>Option 2 - Close Burgess Drove Level crossing. Upgrade the surface of Burgess Drove Road for vehicle access. Upgrade the Public Footpath to Waterbeach for alternative pedestrian access.</p>
	<p>Our initial viewpoint is that Option 1 is preferable since it will keep both crossings open to pedestrians and cyclists. The retained route over the crossing at Burgess Drove should be open for all NMU users: that is equestrians, as well as pedestrians and cyclists. Some key points to note are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burgess Drove is an unclassified soft road. It carries heavy agricultural and other traffic, is low-lying and has large ditches on either side. There are concerns around the impact of the proposal on the drainage, which could significantly affect the design of road improvements. The drainage network is vitally important to manage flooding in the area. CCC’s Flood Management and Asset Management teams and the relevant Internal Drainage Board must be consulted once more detail is available. • Access for household refuse collection needs to be considered – Network Rail should consult South Cambridgeshire District Council. • Access to allotments – there are 85 allotments just to the east of Burgess Drove crossing. This is an important community resource. Holders regularly use the crossing by vehicle as well as on foot and cycle, so consideration needs to be given to this in discussion with Waterbeach Parish Council. A turning head may be required on the western side of the crossing. <p>NMU Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The retained route over the crossing at Burgess Drove should be open for all NMU users: that is equestrians, as well as pedestrians and cyclists • CCC understands that there is significant usage of the crossing by equestrians who use Burgess Drove as part of a circular route with nearby Public Bridleway 10 Waterbeach and other local roads. There is a riding establishment just west of the crossing, and a second one elsewhere in Waterbeach. Design would need to ensure a sufficient refuge area for safe access over the crossing. Network Rail should consult the British Horse Society and local user groups. • Burgess Drove is well-used by pedestrians accessing the significant PROW network to the east of the railway, and particularly the paths alongside the River Cam and Bottisham Lock. • It may be appropriate to retain access for motorcycles over this crossing (see in-principle comments set out in response to question 1). Network Rail should consult the Trail Riders Fellowship user group for their views.
4	<p>Stonea Level Crossing: Do you have any comments on our proposals to upgrade the barriers at the level crossing and close the underpass to vehicular traffic?</p> <p>Option 1 Upgrade the existing gates (which are manually operated by the signaller at Stonea signal box) to full barrier.</p>

	<p>Option 2 Same as Option 1 and close the underpass to all vehicles. The existing underpass has a headroom of only two metres, it is regularly struck by vehicles that are too high, causing significant disruption to train services. Closure of the underpass will prevent bridge strikes, reduce disruption of the railway and reduce the burden of having to regularly inspect and repair the bridge following a vehicle strike. The underpass would remain open to pedestrians and cyclists.</p>
	<p>Our initial position is that Option 2 is preferable. It will provide a section of traffic free NMU route and enable NMU users to avoid using the level crossing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would request mounting bocks to be provided at the underpass so that the NMU route is available to equestrians as well as pedestrians and cyclists in accordance with relevant NMU accessibility policies. • We welcome any options that reduce the risk of future bridge strikes that cause disruption on the road and rail network. Therefore we welcome the option to close the underpass to motorised traffic and upgrade the level crossing to full barrier- (Option 2)
5	<p>Wells Engine footpath crossing: Do you have any comments on our proposals to divert the footpath and close the footpath level crossing?</p>
	<p>Our initial position is that we continue to object until we are provided with information that satisfies the Authority that the flood risk is suitably low. We note the statement that NR provides regarding the flood assessments of the proposed diversion route but cannot accept it without having seen the Flood Risk Assessment ourselves. This needs to be provided. Further, as raised at the Anglia Level Crossings TWAO inquiry, the Authority is concerned about potential anti-social behaviour around hidden corners of the proposed diversion and need to see how the promotor will address these concerns before being able to make a decision on its position.</p> <p>Biodiversity - Wells Engine foot crossing</p> <p>The proposed diversion of the footpath is located within River Great Ouse County Wildlife Site (CWS). Any adverse impacts to the CWS should be designed-out at the early stage of the scheme design. Any residual impacts should be mitigated, and where this is not possible, compensation would be required. Early discussions should be undertaken with the Wildlife Trust and Local Authorities on this matter.</p>
6	<p>Queen Adelaide / Ely North Junction: For the Queen Adelaide options 1 – 5 is your preference:</p> <p>Option 1 – south east highway diversion and full barrier level crossings Option 2 – northern bypass and footbridge over the Peterborough line. Option 3 – long southern bypass and footbridge over the Peterborough line Option 4 – short southern bypass and footbridge over the Peterborough line Option 5 – Alternative option (explanation of your proposed alternative option) Please explain why, including any comments on other option</p>

It should be noted that the protection of the communities of Queen Adelaide and Prickwillow MUST be at the forefront of any considerations.

Our Initial position is that Option 1 – South East Highway, is preferable.

It is the most cost effective solution and would allow all level three crossings to be kept open, maintaining maximum accessibility for local residents and all NMUs. The Authority has concerns over the increased volume of traffic that would be diverted onto Queen Adelaide Way which is currently an unclassified road already subject to slippage, and major works would be needed to bring it up to an appropriate standard. There is also heavy NMU usage alongside and across Queen Adelaide Road, which with an increased level of traffic would require suitable roadside provision and either a signalised crossing or bridge.

The map below shows approximate line of South Eastern Bypass (marked in yellow) and the public rights of way (marked in purple), with the main areas (circled in red) where appropriate provision would be required to ensure that NMU users are not adversely impacted by the increase in traffic. This path runs along the top of the flood bank and has fine views of Ely and the surrounding landscape. The NR diagram is not clear but having looked at the picture, it looks as if the bypass will also cross Ely FP51. This path links to FP74 Ely and also a potential bridleway (marked in blue) that is the subject of a legal process to add it to the Definitive Map & Statement. This runs along the old road from Ely to Prickwillow and is likely to become an important NMU access route between Ely and the Prickwillow.

The second image below shows the location of a crash barrier in the verge that causes a problem for access to the footpath, highlighted in yellow. The Authority requests that this be resolved as part of the improvement works. It is vital that NMU connectivity is improved as part of the scheme.

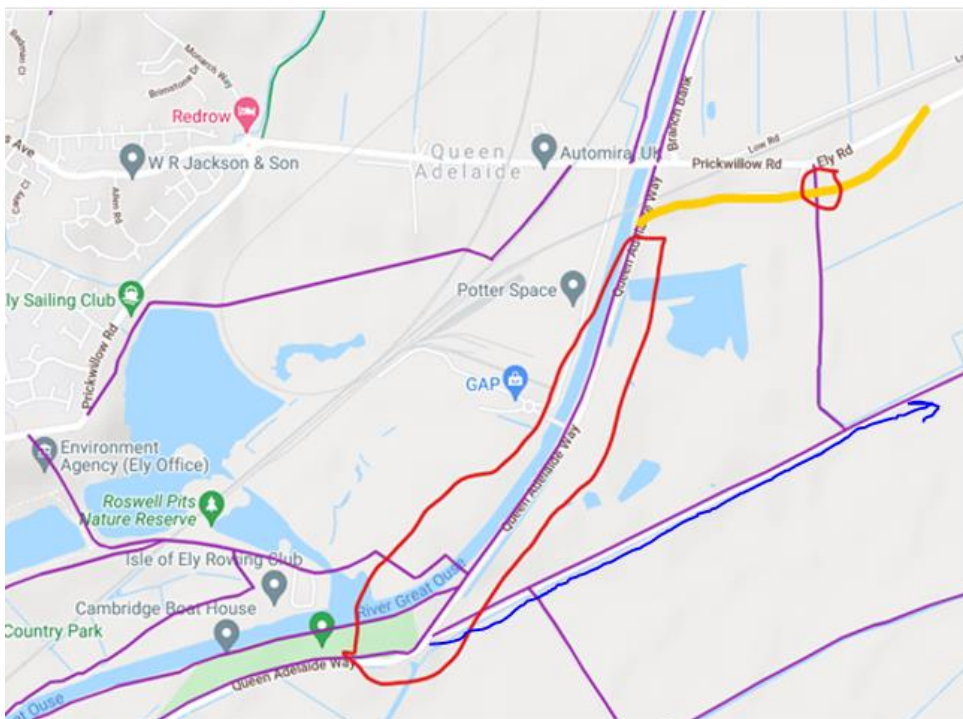


Image 1

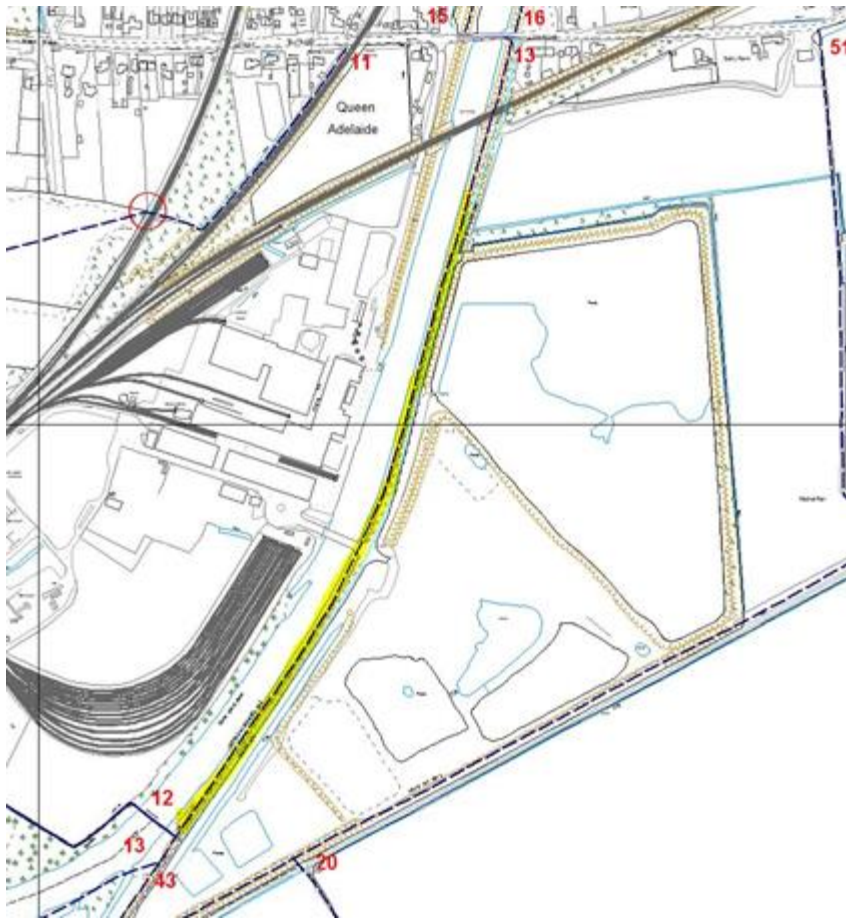


Image 2

Options 2-4.

It is noted that all of the other options require larger and more expensive infrastructure. If the authority is expected to take on the liability for the infrastructure of these assets then the burden to the Authority for maintenance would be very significant. In line with ADEPT guidance it would be expected that commuted sums for 120 years would need to be provided.

It is also noted that with options 2-4 that the proposals would close the Peterborough line crossing with a stepped and ramped bridge “for pedestrians and cyclists” to be provided. We require that any such bridge is open to all NMU users and makes provision for equestrians.

Biodiversity - Queen Adelaide Way bypass Southern bypass (Option 1)

Queen Adelaide Way is one of the worst known locations for otter mortality on the roads in Cambridgeshire. The otter black spot is located between the River Great Ouse and the gravel pits on the eastern side of Queen Adelaide Way, where otters commute to/from the gravel pits. The RTA location is almost at the location of the proposed new section of road joining

	<p>the Queen Adelaide Way. Consideration must be given to the increased traffic utilising this road and the potential for increased otter fatalities.</p> <p>Any proposed road scheme should embed mitigation measures for otters within the early scheme design. This should include a safe otter crossing (e.g. underpass / mammal tunnel with guide fencing) to help mitigate this impact.</p> <p>Northern bypass (Option 2)</p> <p>The proposed bypass will cross the River Great Ouse County Wildlife Site. Any adverse impacts to the CWS should be designed-out at the early stage of the scheme design. Any residual impacts should be mitigated, and where this is not possible, compensation would be required. Early discussions should be undertaken with the Wildlife Trust and Local Authorities on this matter.</p> <p>Long southern bypass (Option 3)</p> <p>The proposed bypass will cross the River Great Ouse County Wildlife Site. Any adverse impacts to the CWS should be designed-out at the early stage of the scheme design. Any residual impacts should be mitigated, and where this is not possible, compensation would be required. Early discussions should be undertaken with the Wildlife Trust and Local Authorities on this matter.</p> <p>As discussed for option (1) Queen Adelaide Way is a known otter RTA black spot due to otter's commuting across the road between the River Great Ouse and the gravel pits. It would be beneficial for this scheme to enhancement of Queen Adelaide Way through the provision of a safe otter crossing, to provide a positive impact on biodiversity.</p>
7	Do you have any comments on our proposals to divert the Ely North Junction Footpath Crossing?
	<p>We welcome the recognition that the diverted route should have a minimum width of 2 metres. Having given it consideration we are minded that the route to the East of the railway line serves little purpose if a suitable alternative is provided and can be extinguished, subject to due public consultation.</p>
8	Do you have any other feedback you wish to provide on the consultation document?
	<p>General comments</p> <p>The County Council general approach is that it prefers options that have minimise the environmental impact, minimise disruption to both the rail and road network during construction and use, and provide the greatest level of future proofing and provision for future improvements.</p> <p>During the construction of the Ely Area Capacity Scheme there could be considerable disruption to both road and rail users. It is important that these are minimised. The County Council would require future conversation regarding traffic management during construction. It should also be noted that elements of this project have the potential to impact on river navigation and Ely as a tourist destination. The County Council's likely preference is going to be the option that causes least disruption to all users during construction.</p>

Flood Risk and Ecology Team comments

Flood Zone Compensation

It is noted that there are parts of the scheme which will require additional infrastructure. Where this infrastructure is within a floodplain, the applicant must ensure that there is flood zone compensation. This means that for every cubic meter of flood zone taken up by infrastructure, like for like compensation must be provided to ensure that no functional floodplain is lost to the development. It should be noted, this is related to main rivers and therefore is a consideration for the EA to provide formal comment on formally.

Additional Impermeable Areas

The proposals may result in additional infrastructure, resulting in an increase in impermeable area and potential changes to landform (embankments or viaducts). Any development or additional infrastructure must consider the impacts on surface water drainage from the land. This will require management of surface water in line with national and local guidance. The proposals should not increase the risk of flooding to any adjacent land or property and look to better any situations where possible.

It should be noted that most the water management information will be covered in the formal submissions and likely discussed more in detail during the EIA. We do not necessarily have a preference on routes or designs; however, we expect that surface water is managed suitably and sustainably from the chosen design option.

Ecology comments

All options will have an impact on the local environment to varying degrees (including Ely Pits and Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest SSSI and River Great Ouse County Wildlife Site). The level of impact will very much be dependent on the scheme that Network Rail bring forward. It is thought that Network Rail would manage this process to minimise potential impacts. Network Rail are only proposing to 'minimise' not completely avoid / compensate for impact to SSSI and there's no consideration of impact on the River Great Ouse County Wildlife Site.

Historic Environment Team comments

Our records indicate that the proposed works are located in an area of high archaeological potential on the eastern edge of the historic city of Ely. Known heritage assets of archaeological interest in the vicinity include mercantile and industrial activity along the waterfront of medieval Ely, including pottery production. Evidence for post medieval and 19th century industry may also survive in the vicinity. The proposals include new bridges and embankment works which may result in impacts to these heritage assets. Ancillary works such as compounds and the siting of plant may also result in substantial disturbance.

Network Rail's supporting document lists heritage as a relevant topic for scoping under Environmental Impact Assessment. We would advise that in addition to designated heritage assets, this should include assessment of the potential impacts on undesignated heritage, including sub surface archaeological features and deposits. EIA should also include an assessment of measures required to address any adverse impacts of development.

The consultation documents show that an Environmental Impact Assessment will be produced for this scheme, which is welcome. We had initially indicated that a Desk-Based

Assessment (DBA) would not be required for the scheme in 2017, but as the scheme design has not yet been fixed it would be useful to have all scheme elements suitably appraised in a DBA against the known evidence contained in the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record, which has been significantly updated in the intervening period.

In a section for Cultural Heritage the following items should be covered within the EIA:

- An appraisal of the potential impacts of the development on the historic environment should be made. There may be some areas of archaeological interest that may be affected by the scheme and the chapter should indicate any locations that might have an impact on archaeological evidence.
- An assessment of the potential impacts on any designated heritage assets and their setting and on undesignated heritage assets, including sub surface archaeological features and deposits and built structures. Any historic structures, signal boxes or other building with significant interest should be tabulated and their significance discussed.

An assessment of measures required to address any adverse impacts of development whether of a permanent or temporary nature should be included. Elements of the scheme which are more likely to impact on the heritage assets include temporary compounds, works on access to sites, balancing ponds and new bridge/ crossing works or any other new groundworks.

We will be pleased to co-operate, collaborate and advise on archaeological matters on this scheme, and we welcome contact from the archaeological consultant who will be working on the EIA to detail what would be required of the Cultural Heritage chapter, and to discuss the archaeological requirements.

Inclusion of Upgrading Level Crossings Between Ely and Ipswich – Resource impact

It is noted that it is the intention to integrate the upgrading of level crossings between Ely and Ipswich under the umbrella of the EACE programme. This is likely to significantly increase the scope of the TWAO and hence the resources required from the County Council to both comment adequately upon the TWAO and to support its potential implementation. The County Council would seek funding from Network Rail for such resources as are required.

Chesterton Fen Road Level Crossing

It is noted that the consultation makes no reference to the impact on the barrier downtime at Chesterton Fen level crossing, despite it apparently being in scope of the study work. This crossing has been of long-standing concern locally due to the amount of time the full barrier is already down for and the severance it causes the community to the east of the crossing, which has no alternative vehicular means of entering or exiting the area. No data has been provided through this consultation to enable the County Council as highway authority to form a view on the acceptability or otherwise of the additional downtime on the operation of the local highway network, in the absence of any mitigation.

Notwithstanding this, additional capacity on the railway network as set out in comments under section 1 is seen as critical to accommodating the growth of the local economy more generally and to help meet objectives to reduce CO2 emissions. The County Council is concerned the longer term development needs of the local area aren't being fully taken

	<p>account of in Network Rail’s forecasting and that this crossing could constrain the number of train movements needed to support the economic growth in the area in the future if steps aren’t taken now to develop a policy position around it. Additional train movements as identified in section 1 of this response would clearly further increase the length of downtime at the crossing and without a solution, would become untenable for the community to the east of the railway. From discussions with Network Rail, it is understood that the crossing is already of the highest safety level and is operated as efficiently as possible from the signal box, leaving closure the only other avenue to be explored. The location of the crossing is in a highly constrained area and it is likely to be very difficult to provide an alternative crossing in the current location. Therefore it is likely that land would need to be safeguarded elsewhere in the vicinity. Should the transport and highway authorities identify preferred alternative accesses requiring land to be safeguarded this could be implemented most appropriately through the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan, however work on this is continuing at pace. Unless there is a clear steer from Network Rail that an alternative to the Chesterton Fen crossing is likely to be needed in the future, it will be difficult to safeguard land and the opportunity to address the constraints at the crossing will become increasingly more difficult in the future.</p> <p>The enduring issues arising from barrier downtime at Chesterton level crossing are of significant local concern, both to the councils and also to local communities. Despite efforts by the local authorities to engage with Network Rail on this specific issue it is considered that the urgency and significance of this issue is still not fully understood. Without a long term strategic view from Network Rail, there remains no confidence that the access problems faced in this area will be resolved or that local strategies can provide a complementary role in support of that objective. As such, we would welcome further engagement with Network Rail’s team to explore the feasibility of alternative access options available; EACE scheme development and future funding bids must in our view consider this issue further.</p>
12	<p>If you wish to be contact by Network Rail with further information or to discuss the feedback you have provided on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancements Programme</p>
	<p>County Council Officers have been in regular contact with Network Rail staff and wish for this to continue as the EACE scheme develops.</p>