



To: Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport: Councillor Blencowe
Report by: Head of Planning Services
Relevant scrutiny committee: Environment 8/7/2014 Scrutiny Committee
Wards affected: All Wards

Cambridge City Council's initial response to the Highways Agency's Pre-Application Consultation on the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme (April – June 2014)

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 As part of the proposals to improve the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon, the Highways Agency has recently undertaken pre-application consultation on the proposed improvement scheme. Consultation started on 7 April and ended on 15 June 2014.
- 1.2 Due to the timescales of the consultation and gaps in some of the key information necessary to consider the Council's position on this scheme, the City Council has agreed with the Highways Agency that its response will be submitted as soon as practical after the close of consultation.
- 1.3 This report sets out the background to the A14 improvements and outlines the details of the proposed scheme. Appendix A includes a copy of the exhibition panels which gives an overview of the current stage and scheme proposals. For more information, the main supporting documents can be found using the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a14-cambridge-to-huntingdon-improvement-proposed-scheme>
- 1.4 Appendix B sets out the Council's in-principle support for the scheme, the response to date based upon available information and the proposed interim representations to the Highways Agency.

2. Recommendations

2.1 This report is being submitted to Environment Scrutiny Committee for prior consideration and comment before the decision by the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

2.2 The Executive Councillor is recommended:

- To agree the Council's interim response to the Highways Agency consultation as set out in Appendix B;
- To agree the Council's final response be submitted by the Head of Planning Services in consultation with the Executive Councillor and Chair and Spokes of Environment Scrutiny Committee;
- To agree that, in the interests of expediency, delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning Services to prepare and submit reports, proofs of evidence, technical papers, statements of common ground and other such documents, undertake appropriate negotiations and make further minor additions to the councils case at the examination of the A14 scheme if in the opinion of the Head of Planning Services it is appropriate and necessary to do so and to take such other necessary steps as are conducive or incidental to the presentation of the councils case at that examination. The exercise of this delegation to be reported back to Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee at the end of the examination process.

3. Background

3.1 The need for improvements to the A14 have long been recognised. In 2001, the Cambridge to Huntingdon Multi-Modal Study (CHUMMS) recommended improvements to the A14 to provide additional capacity. This led to detailed proposals for the A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton scheme being taken forward until they were cancelled by the Government in 2010 as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

3.2 Following this, the Department of Transport undertook a new study in 2011 which looked at other options including rail freight and public transport. A number of highway packages emerged from this study and formed part of the Highways Agency's consultation on the proposed scheme between September and October 2013. This

consultation also sought comments on how tolling could work. The City Council agreed it's response to the consultation at Environment Scrutiny Committee in October 2013:

<http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/documents/b7422/A14%20Consultation%2008th-Oct-2013%2017.00%20Environment%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=9>

The Current Process

- 3.3 The proposed A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), as defined by the Planning Act 2008. In effect this means that the proposed scheme is considered to be of national importance and that the application for development consent for the scheme will be examined and assessed by the Planning Inspectorate, before a decision is made by the Secretary of State.
- 3.4 The Planning Act 2008 requires the Highways Agency to submit an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate, setting out the details of the proposed scheme. The table below sets out the previous stages in the process as well as outlining the next steps and key timescales.

Date	Process Timetable	Stage
2011/12	Pre-application	Development of options
July 2012		Government confirms A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme will be tolled
September – October 2013		Public consultation on scheme options
December 2013		Decision made not to toll the A14
January – April 2014		Further examination of non-tolled options
April – June 2014 (current stage)		Pre application consultation on the proposed scheme (current stage)
Autumn 2014	Application	Development Consent Order application
	Acceptance	Development Consent Order application accepted by the Planning Inspectorate
	Pre-examination	Register as an interested

		party
		Submit representations
Spring/Summer 2015	Examination	Development consent order examination starts
Autumn 2015	Recommendation	Report to the Secretary of State
Early 2016	Decision	Secretary of State decision
By end of 2016	Implementation	Start of work
End of 2020		Works completed

3.5 Subject to receiving development consent, the Highways Agency intends on starting work on the scheme at the end of 2016, with the aim of it being completed by 2020.

3.6 This pre-application consultation is part of the prescribed process outlined in the table above and marks the current stage in the A14 Huntingdon to Cambridge Improvement Scheme proposed by the Highways Agency.

The Proposed Scheme

3.7 The proposed scheme includes:

- The widening of the A1 between Brampton and Alconbury from the existing two lane dual carriageway to a three lane dual carriageway. This would be achieved between Brampton and Brampton Hut by constructing a new road to the west of the existing A1, with the existing A1 road becoming part of the new A14 Huntingdon Southern Bypass;
- A new Huntingdon Southern Bypass which would provide a two lane dual carriageway between Ellington and the A1 at Brampton and a three lane dual carriageway between Brampton and Swavesey. This would remove a large proportion of traffic from the section of the existing A14 between Huntingdon and Swavesey as well as Brampton Hut and Spittals interchange. The new bypass would include a raised viaduct section of road running across the river Great Ouse and a bridge over the East Coast Mainline railway. It would include junctions with the A1 at Brampton and with the A1198 at Godmanchester;
- Downgrading the existing A14 trunk road (de-trunking to county road status) between Ellington and Swavesey, as well as between Alconbury and Spittals interchange;

- Improvements to Huntingdon Town Centre including the demolition of the A14 rail viaduct over the East Coast Mainline railway and Brampton Road in Huntingdon. A through route would be maintained broadly along the line of the existing A14 through Huntingdon, making use of the Brampton Road bridge to cross the railway line and by constructing a new link road from Brampton Road to connect with the A14 to the west;
- Widening of the existing A14 to provide three lanes in each direction between Swavesey and Bar Hill and to four lanes in each direction between Bar Hill and Girton;
- Widening of the Cambridge Northern Bypass between Histon and Milton;
- Improvement of existing A14 junctions at Swavesey, Bar Hill and Girton; and
- New local access road, to be constructed as a dual carriageway between Fen Drayton and Swavesey and as a single carriageway between Swavesey and Girton. The road would provide a route for local traffic between Cambridge and Huntingdon as well as providing access to properties and businesses along the corridor.

Benefits of the Proposed Scheme

3.8 The Highways Agency has outlined the following benefits of the proposed scheme:

- Relief of traffic congestion on a critical link in the national transport network, providing more reliable journey times;
- Unlocking local economic growth potential by improving access to commercial districts, making it easier to travel to work and to do business in Cambridgeshire;
- Enhancing national economic growth potential by increasing the capacity and resilience of a critical part of the Trans-European Transport Network and by improving links to, and from, the east coast ports;
- Connecting communities by keeping heavy through-traffic out of villages, which will reduce community severance, and by de-trunking the former A14 through Huntingdon to prioritise local needs;
- Improving safety and reducing driver stress by keeping the right traffic on the right roads and providing safe local access for pedestrians and other non-motorised road users;

- Improving the environment in Huntingdon by de-trunking the existing route through Huntingdon which will improve air quality and reduce road traffic noise; and
- Creating a positive legacy that enhances the reputation and attractiveness of Cambridgeshire and which establishes a distinctive gateway to a region known for excellence in science and learning.

Changes to the Proposed Scheme since 2013 route options consultation

3.9 As a result of the consultation undertaken in autumn 2013 along with further work undertaken by the Highways Agency, a number of changes on the proposed scheme have been made. Changes include:

- Decision not to toll - Since the decision was made not to toll the A14, the proposed scheme has been tested to ensure that it remains the best non-tolled solution and any tolling-specific design elements have been removed;
- A1 / A14 Brampton interchange - An improved highway layout has been developed for the new A14 between Ellington and the Brampton junction with the A1 trunk road;
- Improved method of road widening – Asymmetric widening is proposed. This involves adding both new lanes on one side only and moving the central reservation. This method causes fewer disruptions to road users and improves safety during construction. A similar approach is proposed for widening the A1 trunk road between Brampton and Alconbury;
- Junction layout improvements - Improved junction designs at Brampton, Swavesey, Bar Hill and Girton. These changes will improve the capacity of the junctions and make better provision for future housing developments such as that proposed at Northstowe; and
- Local access road and improvements for non-motorised users – Improvements to the alignment of the proposed new local access road that would run alongside the improved A14 between Fen Drayton and Girton.

Proposed Response

3.10 Appendix B sets out the Council's proposed response. The council supports the A14 improvement scheme but there are a number of detailed technical issues relevant to the impacts upon the city that need to be satisfactorily addressed, these relate to:

- § Congestion and vehicle movement;
- § Walking and cycling;
- § Air quality; noise and vibration
- § Impact on the access, setting and operation of Cambridge Crematorium

3.11 At the time of drafting this report the information contained within the public consultation and available to properly assess the impact of the proposals upon Cambridge is limited. Key information in the form of peak time traffic modelling and the local verification of that data has not been made available. That information will be presented to City Council officers on 4th July. At the moment only daily average traffic modelling data is available. This does not give sufficient detail for the council to be able to understand the localised impact of the scheme on arterial routes coming into Cambridge, nor does it allow understanding of the attendant air quality and noise impacts. Because of this the Council's response is of necessity interim at this stage. The councils complete response will be fed back in stages as

3.12 The current position with the technical assessment of the issues is tabulated in appendix B and summarised below:

- **Congestion and vehicle movement;**

WSP consultants have been appointed to advise the Council on these issues. The initial report from WSP attached at Appendix C identifies the overall benefits of the A14 scheme but also the need for understanding of the implications for Cambridge. This requires key data on peak time traffic modelling identifying impacts on arterial routes coming into Cambridge. The lack of this information means it has not been possible to assess the peak time impact of the scheme upon Cambridge. At a level of principle it is possible to support the A14 scheme but assessment of the negative/positive/neutral impacts upon Cambridge and the mitigation of those have not been possible so far.

- **Non-motorised Users - Walking and cycling (summarised in Appendix B)**

The Council welcomes the proposed on what has been seen so far but again some key information is missing to be able to comment in full.

- **Air quality; Noise and Vibration (Technical advice from Environmental Services summarised in Appendix B)**

The full understanding of these implications and whether appropriate mitigation is provided is reliant on more detailed traffic modelling and subsequent assessment of these issues which will be available from July 4th.

- **Impact on the access, setting and operation of Cambridge Crematorium**

In general the improvements to the current access and egress arrangements and opening of a local road access are welcomed. The new local access route will supply a cycle/walk route, accessible from Cambridge which will be a benefit for the Crematorium.

The level of detail provided is however not sufficient for all implications and mitigations to be clearly understood. The new access created to the rear of the Crematorium site is somewhat convoluted for anyone accessing the site from the east and the success of the new access as a whole will be dependent upon a comprehensive signing approach to ensure people can easily find the facility from all directions.

There are three proposed Borrow Pits (for construction mineral extraction) proposed to be sited on the other side of the A14. Their operation, plus the new access location has potential to increased noise and disturbance at the Crematorium site. Any impact upon the tranquillity of the site will be of concern and it's not clear whether the 'indicative noise barriers' will be sufficient to mitigate this impact.

Next Steps

- 3.12 The Highways Agency intends on submitting the application for the proposed scheme in autumn 2014. A consultation report summarising the responses received and how they have been considered will be submitted alongside the application to the Planning Inspectorate. The application will be subject to formal examination in late spring 2015.

The Council will need to pursue any representations through the examination process unless any issues can be addressed before that stage. Because of the gaps in information in the current public consultation the council is having of necessity to provide its response incrementally as and when more detailed information becomes available. This is unfortunate but will enable the Highways Agency to be able to resolve issues ahead of the formal examination process next spring.

- 3.12 As part of the process for examining nationally significant infrastructure projects, once the application has been accepted, the relevant local authorities will be invited to submit Local Impact Reports (LIR) by a given deadline. The Secretary of State must have regard to LIRs submitted by the deadline. Where a number of local authorities are involved joint LIRs may be submitted.
- 3.13 The definition of an LIR is ‘a report in writing giving details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the authority’s area (or any part of that area)’. The LIR does not need to replicate the environmental impact assessment or any other assessment based on national policy but should draw on existing local knowledge and experience. The report should consist of a statement of positive, neutral and negative local impacts, but it does not need to contain a balancing exercise between positives and negatives. It could also include an appraisal of the proposed scheme’s compliance with local policy and guidance. It could also include a view on the relative importance of different social, environmental or economic issues and the impact of the scheme on them. Where specific mitigation or compensatory measures are proposed by the applicant, by way of suggested DCO articles and requirements; or DCO obligations, these should be identified and commented upon.
- 3.14 In addition to the above, the Council will also be able to submit a separate representation to express a particular view as to whether the application should be granted. The recommendation asks that in the interests of expediency the Head of Planning Services be given delegated authority to manage the Council’s future submissions into this process, by agreement with the Executive Councillor.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The keep Cambridge Moving Fund has been established to support

measures to address the impacts of congestion on roads within Cambridge and the examination of the A14 proposals will feed into projects that maybe funded from that source.

(b) Staffing Implications

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

(c) Equalities and Poverty Implications

As part of the process of responding to the Highways Agency, now and in future we will be mindful to monitor economic benefits that have the potential to make a positive impact upon addressing poverty in the City, this could be during the construction stage and in the longer term and as a legacy of the scheme.

(d) Environmental Implications

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report. However, there are environmental implications from the A14 scheme that need to be clarified. Matters relating to walking, cycling, air quality, vibration and noise are detailed in the report attached at Appendix B.

(e) Procurement

There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report.

(f) Consultation and communication

There are no direct consultation and communication implications arising from this report. Consultation undertaken by the Highways Agency is a prescribed process set out in the Planning Act 2008.

(g) Community Safety

There are no direct community safety implications arising from this report.

5. Background papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme Public Consultation April 2014

- Consultation responses to previous A14 schemes

6. Appendices

- Appendix A: Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme Exhibition Panels April 2014
- Appendix B: Comments on Issues that will form the basis of the Draft Representation to the Highways Agency

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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Appendix B – Initial Response to the Highways Agency including initial assessment of Issues and implications

<p><i>Methodology for Environmental Assessment Approach:</i></p> <p><i>Was this approach discussed with the City Council and is it agreed that the work has been undertaken in accordance with an appropriate or agreed methodology?</i></p>	<p><i>Have the Impacts from the scheme/works been identified correctly and to the degree/level the City Council concurs with</i></p>	<p><i>The Mitigation Approach and the steps suggested are the ones/is to the level the City Council expects to see</i></p>
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AIR QUALITY IMPACTS – OPERATIONAL AND DURING CONSTRUCTION

<p>The methodology was agreed at a meeting in January 2014, but the work has not yet been undertaken.</p> <p>The study area will consist of the area within 200m of the affected road network and will include contour mapping of projected pollution levels. Further technical details can be made available on request.</p>	<p>Operational impacts – Yes</p> <p>The Preliminary Environmental Information Report states that there is not expected to be a change in the Cambridge Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) as a result of the January 2014 scheme. No information is yet provided to support this assertion. The previous study noted that there would be an increase in emissions and a negative impact on parts of northern Cambridge. We expect that this study would have similar findings, given the predicted traffic</p>	<p>Operational Impacts- Yes</p> <p>Air Quality mitigation measures are not proposed in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report, presumably because none are anticipated by the HA. It is important that the Air Quality Assessment is carried out quickly so that the appropriate mitigation for the expected impact can be designed into the scheme prior to submission of a formal application in September.</p>
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	increases on the northern feeder roads that connect to the AQMA.	
	Construction Impact. Yes. The Preliminary Environmental Information Report states that the main construction impact upon air quality would be likely to be dust, which can cause nuisance to people and property in close proximity to construction activities	Construction Impact. In part. The Preliminary Environmental Information Report states that there are various construction practices which would be applied to control dust emissions and the Contractors would be required to implement them, but does not give any detail. The EIA Scoping Report (January 2014) refers to guidance that has since been updated.

NOISE AND VIBRATION IMPACTS – OPERATIONAL AND DURING CONSTRUCTION

<p>(Noise) The methodology has largely been agreed although no additional modelling/assessment work has been presented within the Preliminary Environmental Information Report.</p> <p>Some areas of the methodology require clarification/expansion, including:</p> <p>Reference to Local Plans and Policies is required as well as National Policy and Guidance.</p>	<p>Operational Impact. No.</p> <p>The Preliminary Environmental Information Report recognises that there is a potential for an increase in noise at sensitive receptors over the long term operation of the scheme. Whilst the Preliminary Report recognises the potential for adverse noise impacts, it does not provide the specific detail we require, such as location or severity of impacts. It is understood that this detail is to be</p>	<p>Operation Impact. No.</p> <p>The Preliminary Environmental Information Report does not provide further detail on “operational” noise/vibration mitigation measures. It is acknowledged that detailed modelling is to take place to aid in the decision making process.</p> <p>The location, design and implementation of any proposed acoustic barriers will need to be agreed with the relevant Authorities and discussions are encouraged with the developers of the NIAB (Darwin Green) site</p>
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<p>The proposed modelling study should refer to the “Noise Action Plans for Major Roads” which has identified First Priority Locations (FPLs) and/or Important Areas (IAs), (areas where 1% of the local population will be affected by noise levels from major roads), along the A14. The Defra “Noise Action Planning Toolkit” can be used to identify these locations.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the requirements of the above-mentioned Noise Action Plan for protection of existing “quiet” areas.</p> <p>Greater clarity is required on the significance of impacts, the origin of the significance criteria and the marker upon which mitigation measures are deemed to be necessary.</p>	<p>provided in a forthcoming detailed modelling study.</p> <p>It is proposed to model the road network (including a 600m buffer on roads within 1km of the improvement scheme) using baseline data previously obtained.</p>	<p>with regards to facilitation of “noise bunds” to protect future development in this area.</p> <p>Additionally, traffic/speed control measures will need to be considered as part of an overall noise mitigation scheme.</p>
	Construction Impact. No.	Construction Impact. No.

	<p>The Preliminary Environmental Information Report does not provide additional data/information.</p> <p>Assessment of construction-phase noise should be carried out as per the methodology within the EIA Scoping Report (January 2014).</p>	<p>The Preliminary Environmental Information Report has not provided mitigation for construction-phase noise. Mitigation measures will need to be proposed and designed based on the results of the detailed BS5228 noise assessment.</p>
<p>(Vibration)</p> <p>Potential impacts of vibration on building structures (see BS5228-2:2009) should be assessed in addition to human exposure to vibration.</p> <p>The assessment of construction noise and vibration should include indirect sources of noise (material transportation, storage compounds etc).</p>	<p>Construction – No</p> <p>A full and detailed noise and vibration assessment (using a combination of BS5228 Parts 1 (Noise) and 2 (Vibration) is required. The assessment will need to take account of indirect (as well as direct) impacts of construction noise and vibration. For example, the potential for noise and vibration from borrow-pits used during construction, storage compounds and transport of aggregates.</p>	<p>Construction – as above</p>
<p>CONGESTION IMPACTS</p>		

<p>The City Council has repeatedly raised the importance of understanding the peak time traffic flow implications of the A14 scheme on key routes into Cambridge. That information has yet to be made available.</p>	<p>The Preliminary Traffic Report states that <i>“traffic patterns on local roads are expected to change significantly as a result of the proposed A14 improvements scheme”</i>. Currently the only information provided on this impact is Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) forecasts in 2020 and 2035. These show that as a direct result of the scheme the number of vehicles per day will increase on the local roads of Huntingdon Road, Histon Road and Milton Road. Although WSP agree that there will be impact on the arterial roads of Cambridge, it is not known how accurate these estimates of impact are.</p> <p>We request access the Local Model Validation Report (LMVR) to check the base year validation of the model in relation to these local roads. The AADT data does not provide any indication of the impacts in the peaks and this is essential for judging the schemes impact on congestion in Cambridge. Finally it is noted that no data is currently provided on the effect of the scheme on the M11 flows and also on the Horningsea interchange and associated local road of Ditton Lane. Also there is no</p>	<p>Traffic congestion mitigation measures on local roads are not discussed in the Preliminary Traffic Report. It is important that further modelling results in relation to peak hour flows are released in order for the magnitude of potential impacts to be identified and mitigation designed into the scheme prior to submission. Given that the majority of Cambridge’s arterial routes are already at capacity, it is anticipated that mitigation measures will need to focus on achieving mode switch away from car and onto more sustainable modes. We would like to see suggestions from the HA on how this could be best achieved, to counter the level of growth expected.</p>
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assessment of change in traffic accidents as a result of expected traffic growth,.

NON MOTORISED USERS (NMU) – WALKING AND CYCLING IMPLICATIONS

The public consultation is the first opportunity to see the proposed approach to NMU

There is no information about the effects of the proposals on traffic levels east of the Milton Road interchange, in particular the radial routes into the city such as Ditton Lane, Newmarket Road and Airport Way. Any increase in traffic on these roads is likely to be detrimental to existing cyclists and pedestrians.

Cambridge:

The increase in traffic on radial routes such as Histon and Milton Road will require a contribution in funding towards mitigation for existing cyclists and pedestrians using these routes. This mitigation could take the form of improved on or off-road cycle provision, safety improvements to junctions or increased/enhanced cycle & pedestrian crossings.

Village to village and village to city routes:

The proposed new Local Access Road with NMU provision and new NMU path is very much welcomed. However, in order to ensure that the proposed improvements do not decrease the number of local journeys undertaken on foot or by cycle or suppress future use of NMU modes, the Highways Agency should ensure the provision of

		<p>continuous and high quality links between villages and from villages to Cambridge along the A14 corridor. The current proposals include some of the links but there are a number of important gaps and missing connections as detailed in the following detailed comments. It is also important that the quality of the provision conforms to best practice in terms of widths and segregation from traffic.</p>
<p>IMPLICATIONS FOR THE OPERATION OF AND ACCESS TO CAMBRIDGE CREMATORIUM</p>		
<p>No discussions ahead of the public consultation</p>	<p>The proposals show closure of the access from the A14 and a new access created to the rear of the Crematorium site.</p> <p>Additionally Borrow Pits for construction mineral extraction is being sited the other side of the A14 and their operation has potential to increased noise and disturbance at the crematorium site.</p>	