

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HORIZONS BOARD MEETING

A14 Huntingdon-Cambridge

An update provided by the Highways Agency covering:-

- 1.0 Ongoing Operational activities
- 2.0 The Major Scheme (Widening between Ellington-Fen Ditton)
- 3.0 Northstowe

1.0 Ongoing Operational activities

1.1 Installation of Average Speed Cameras (sometimes referred to as SPECS):

Average Speed Cameras on the A14 are now operational and the police commenced enforcement on 7th July 2007. The Highways Agency has received positive comments about the effect of these cameras in terms of controlling of vehicles speeds, increasing 'headways' (ie distances) between vehicles and generally having a positive effect on driver behaviour. The first "after" speed survey was undertaken in October 2007 and analysis of the results is underway and should be available this month.

The Accident records will be reviewed once the October 2007 to December 2007 data has been collated, at which point it will be validated to determine whether accident trends are favourable. The Agency will be publishing details of the casualty savings, changes in journey times and vehicles speeds in June 2008.

However, anecdotal evidence suggests that there has been a significant improvement in 'headways', less variability in vehicle speeds and a reduction in the number of collisions.

The publicity campaign to support the introduction of the Cameras, led by Cambridgeshire County Council's Road Safety Team, has been well received.

1.2 Parking in Lay-bys

A study in 2006/7 showed that about 15% of all injury accidents on the A14 in Cambridgeshire have some relationship with lay-bys – either the presence of the lay-by itself or vehicles moving in or out of the lay-by. The Agency has now completed a scheme to prohibit parking in

sub-standard lay-bys, except in an emergency and the total closure of one lay-by.

The Agency is receiving increasing complaints about the amenity impact of lorry parking in villages such as Bar Hill and Impington. Discussions with Cambridgeshire County Council have taken place and agreement reached that the problem is a lack of off-street lorry parks. We agreed to continue to work together to promote off-street lorry parks, within our respective powers, and also involve respective district councils (as planning authority).

2. The Major Scheme (Widening between Ellington-Fen Ditton)

- 2.1 A preferred route for the Fen Drayton to Fen Ditton section of the scheme was announced on 22 March 2007 and a preferred route for the Ellington to Fen Drayton section of the scheme was announced on 24 October 2007.
- 2.2 Costain/Skanska JV were appointed on 28 January 2008 as ECI contractor to design the scheme in its entirety and to construct the section from Fen Drayton to Histon. The contractor is now developing the design of the preferred route. This will lead to the publication of draft Orders and an Environmental Statement for the full scheme in Spring 2009 and 'Pre Orders' exhibitions are expected to be held at the end of 2008 to show detailed proposals. If objections to the draft Orders cannot be resolved a public inquiry will be held.
- 2.3 Construction work on the scheme is programmed to start in late 2010 and to be completed in 2015; construction of the Ellington to Fen Drayton and Histon to Fen Ditton sections of the scheme will be subject to separate tendering and contract award procedures, following completion of statutory processes (ie after the publication of draft Orders and, if required, a public inquiry).
- 2.4 As noted above, the contractor is developing the design and construction to meet the Agency's requirements. It is hoped that this can be shared with Key stakeholders, including Cambridgeshire Horizons in the not too distant future.

3. Northstowe: Overview

- 3.1. The formal planning applications for the Northstowe development were submitted on 19th December 2007. The formal response by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) to the public consultation last month is likely to result in revisiting a number of transport related issues. Discussions have begun with the developer to identify and address these.
- 3.2. It was agreed that the Northstowe development should seek to achieve a high level of transport sustainability in order to minimise the number of vehicle trips that would be generated. The developers of Northstowe are

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committed to this objective and a considerable amount of work has continued over recent months in order to ensure that the balance of land uses that will be promoted at Northstowe is such that (a) it maximises the number of trips that would be contained within the new town, (thereby reducing the number of external vehicle movements that would be generated); and (b) encourages the most sustainable modes for all other trips.

Proposed mitigation measures

- 3.2. Existing conditions on A14 (safety and/or congestion) are well understood and the resultant level of service is often poor. Taken at face value, there is no spare capacity with which to allow Northstowe to commence prior to the Widening scheme being in place. To counteract this, the developer and public sector partners continue to work together to identify Interim Mitigation Measures which could allow an early start to the development. This includes a Draft Travel Plan which has been reviewed by the Highways Agency and Cambridgeshire County Council. A revised Draft incorporating their comments is expected soon. There are still a number of issues to be agreed regarding the range of measures and the scale of potential benefits. This is also closely linked to the ongoing transport modelling work referred to below.
- 3.3. Early modelling work indicated one of the key elements of a package of measures to be a link road that would run parallel to the A14 between the Bar Hill and Dry Drayton interchanges to split local/long distance movements and thereby create some additional capacity along the A14 corridor in the vicinity of Northstowe. Following on from the Interim Measures workshop on 12th February, Northstowe's promoters are continuing discussions with CSJV on detailed design and construction issues to ensure full compatibility between the Interim Measures and the full A14 improvements, including areas of potential cooperation and mutual cost savings. Final decisions upon the suitability of all Interim Measures including the parallel link road will be taken when the outputs from the modelling are finalised and the amount of residual traffic in the peak periods identified (see below).
- 3.4. As part of this package the Highways Agency will continue to press for area-wide 'Access Control' measures in addition to physical highway measures and travel plan measures, although the Agency recognise that access control would only be introduced if the other measures proved in themselves to be insufficient. Again, this is closely linked to the transport modelling.

Transport Modelling/Planning Scenarios (to test the effects of Northstowe development)

- 3.5. The developer has made some progress with the modelling work but progress remains frustratingly slow. It was anticipated that the Highways Agency would by now have been in a position to agree all the baseline cases but this is now unlikely before early/mid July 2008. The Agency is

continuing to work with the developer to resolve the outstanding issues.

Construction Traffic

- 3.6. The developer has submitted an initial draft Construction Travel Plan. Discussions are continuing between the Highways Agency and the developer as to how construction traffic will access the Northstowe site before the building of the A14 scheme. Given the existing travel conditions on the A14 the Highways Agency is currently maintaining its position that Northstowe construction traffic cannot use the A14 between 7am and 7pm. The local authorities' position is that Northstowe construction traffic cannot use the local road network either. The developer is now attempting to develop a proposal to allow the construction traffic to use the A14 between the morning and evening peak periods. This issue is also being discussed with CSJV as some of these challenges could also become significant during the construction of the A14 improvements. Further meetings have taken place to explore a solution acceptable to all stakeholders.

Summary

- 3.7. Work to complete the traffic modelling and assessment, and on defining a potential package of Interim Measures is ongoing (travel plans, engineering, levels of service, access control and programming). This will now need to include consideration of changes resulting from SCDC's formal response to the applications.
- 3.8. Work to agree a solution to the interim access for construction traffic is also ongoing. Discussions to resolve all of the outstanding issues are continuing, with a view to agreement preferably by the time a revised application is ready for submission (understood to be late 2008/early 2009).

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