

A14 ELLINGTON TO FEN DITTON IMPROVEMENT
FURTHER CONSULTATION- ELLINGTON TO FEN DRAYTON

To: **Cabinet**

Date: **27th February 2007**

From: **Deputy Chief Executive,
Environment and Community Services**

Electoral division(s): **Huntingdon, Godmanchester, Brampton & Kimbolton, The
Hemingfords & Fenstanton, Papworth & Swavesey, Buckden,
Gransden & The Offords, Sawtry & Ellington and St Ives**

Forward Plan ref: **N/a** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose ***To inform the Cabinet of the further Public Consultation
by the Highways Agency on the improvement of the A14
between Ellington and Fen Drayton and to determine the
County Council's response.***

Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to approve the following:

- 1. The County Council continues to fully support the Highways Agency's intention to improve the A14 and would urge the Agency to expedite its provision.**
- 2. With regard to the Further Consultation options for the length of the improvement from Ellington to Fen Drayton:**
 - The blue variation 2 route be rejected on grounds of environmental disturbance, waste hazard and inadequate traffic capacity.**
 - The brown route be rejected on grounds of unknown environmental risk, and waste hazard risk. It is also contrary to the County Council's adopted Waste Local Plan and emerging Minerals and Waste Development Documents.**
 - The blue route be rejected on environmental grounds because of proximity to Brampton, Godmanchester and Brampton Wood.**
 - The blue route variation 1, whilst an improvement on the blue route be rejected on grounds of proximity to Godmanchester.**
 - The orange route be supported subject to the alignment west of the A1 being designed to incur the minimum noise level in Brampton.**
- 3. The need for the provision of adequate environmental ameliorative measures for residents affected by the scheme.**
- 4. The safeguarding and enhancement of Public Rights of Way (PROW) along and across the route. This should include provision for non-motorised users and appropriately located bridges.**
- 5. The need for full reimbursement by Government of any ongoing Council maintenance costs of de-trunked roads arising from the scheme.**
- 6. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive be authorised to make changes to the submission in the light of further information from the Highways Agency or requests from key partners.**
- 7. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive be authorised to agree with the District Councils and other key partners a joint statement of general support for the proposals.**

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1. **BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 A further consultation on the A14 routing has been taking place as a result of an out of court settlement between the Highways Agency and the Offords' Action Group. This is with respect to halting the legal action by the Offords Action Group, over the conduct of the original consultation carried out in the spring of 2005. This current consultation concludes on 9th March 2007 .
- 1.2 The issue solely being consulted on is the determination of the proposed off-line route between Ellington and Fen Drayton. Junction strategy and layouts remain similar to those displayed at the earlier consultation. Further for the purposes of the consultation, it has been assumed that the Huntingdon Viaduct would be removed and that the new off-line route would be built to a three-lane dual carriageway standard. Both these assumptions are in line with previous resolutions of the County Council's Cabinet and have been made by the Highways Agency without prejudice to the Preferred Route Announcement by the Secretary of State.
- 1.3 No further consultation is being undertaken on the remainder of the scheme from Fen Drayton to Fen Ditton, and following this consultation, it is hoped that the Secretary of State will make a Preferred Route Announcement about his intentions for the whole length of the A14 improvement.
- 1.4 The County Council gave detailed consideration to the routing of the future A14 in 2005 and fully supported the Highways Agency's own favoured orange route, (Cabinet, 14th June 2005). This further consultation has brought forward additional routing information and the County Council needs to review whether in the light of this new information the original decision should be amended.

2. **FURTHER CONSULTATION - A14 "POSSIBLE ROUTES FOR A NEW ROAD BETWEEN ELLINGTON AND FEN DRAYTON"**

- 2.1 Several alternative lines for the new section of the A14 have been put forward by the Highways Agency for consideration. These are described below and are shown on the attached Highways Agency consultation leaflet.
- the orange route which was the one put forward in the original consultation exercise would run from Ellington, run close to the A1, run to the south of the Buckden landfill site, run south of Offord Hill, run south of the Wood Green Animal Shelter and after passing to the south of Fenstanton and Conington landfill sites join the existing A14 at Fen Drayton.
 - the brown route is a new route to those previously publicly considered and which from Ellington, would run close to

Brampton Wood, would cross through part of the Buckden landfill site , would run on the hillside above Godmanchester, run north of the Wood Green Animal Shelter and rejoin the existing A14 at Fen Drayton.

- the blue route which has previously been discounted by the Highways Agency, would run from Ellington close to Brampton Wood, run to the north of the Buckden landfill site, run very close to the south side of Brampton village, run on the hillside above Godmanchester and then run as the brown route to Fen Drayton.

2.2. In addition, three variations to the blue route are included in the current consultation:

- variation 1- a re-aligned length of new A14 would run adjacent to the A1 to pass south of Buckden Landfill site (purple/blue) as in the orange route, and then to follow the blue route to Fen Drayton.
- variation 2 - a re-aligned length of new A14 to run from north of the Animal Shelter to join the existing A14 at Galley Hill. This would include on- line widening to three lane dual carriageway standard through Fenstanton to Fen Drayton (dashed purple) with some limited side road provision.
- Variation 3 - both variations in combination.

2.3 A great deal of documentation has been made available about these routes, both in the original work in 2005 and for the current consultation. Officers have reviewed this technical information and the outcome of the review is set out below. It is appropriate that each route should be considered on its merits and although the Agency is asking the general public to rank 1st, 2nd and 6th (worst) choices, for the County Council, a process of elimination is recommended to reveal a single choice as this would assist representation at any future Public Inquiry. Clearly, however, if some routes are deemed to be completely unacceptable, this should be included in our consultation response as well.

3. MEMBER PROCESS

3.1 In order to give detailed consideration to the alternative lines, the issues have been considered by the Transport and Delivery Service Development Group (TSDSG) on the 25th January. Also, because the newly defined brown route would conflict with protective policies within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Local Plan (2003), and the emerging Minerals and Waste Development Documents, the County Council's interests as Waste Planning Authority were considered by the Environment, Waste and Business Service Development Group (EWBSDG) on the 2nd February. Local Members whose divisions

could be affected by any route were invited to both meetings to speak on behalf of the interests of their constituents if they so wished.

- 3.2 Co-ordination between the County and the District Councils is highly desirable when responding to this consultation and Officers are liaising with the District Councils to ensure consistency where possible.
- 3.3 Also, it proved possible at the end of the previous consultation for the County Council and four District Councils to agree a common statement of support for the A14 scheme with ten other leading stakeholders. It ought to be possible to repeat that action this time to lend weight to the conclusions of the signatories, and Officers are discussing this with the District Councils and other organisations.

4. TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 From the technical information provided by the Highways Agency it is possible to compare some important features of the different route options with a view to determining a preference for one option. These are set out below with Waste Planning, Pollution Prevention and Municipal Waste Management issues surrounding the brown route, set out separately in section 5.

Alternative Route Alignments and Costs

- 4.2 All six routes try to meet the CHUMMS Study objective of providing a route to the south of Brampton and Godmanchester for long distance traffic, whilst retaining the old route for local traffic. The cheapest schemes (allowing for inflation) are those involving the blue variation 2, which join the off-line A14 route to the current A14 to the west of Fenstanton. This involves widening the current A14 through Fenstanton and they would cost about £617/ 620m. However, the most expensive is the brown route at £714m, principally because of the estimated cost of building across the Buckden landfill site. The estimated cost of the orange and blue routes are about £639/ 640 m.

Traffic and Operational Matters

- 4.3 In terms of traffic and operational matters, the routes are very similar in their impact on the routing of traffic across this localised area. All indicate the need for a three-lane dual carriageway for the main off-line section and all highlight the unacceptability of the continued lack of improvement to the existing A14 route now and in the future. Further, the blue variation 2 option, which combines both the long distance traffic and local traffic in the vicinity of Fenstanton indicates an unacceptable traffic capacity situation - the forecast flows suggest there would be congestion from early in the life of the scheme at that location.
- 4.4 In considering the beneficial impact on accident savings, the blue options including variation 2 forecast a reduction of about 113 injury accidents per year compared to about 120 per year for other options.

Economic Benefit Issues

- 4.5 All options show significant benefits in terms of travel cost savings from the investment in the scheme. In conventional benefit to cost ratio terms, they all appear to be very good investments varying from 8.76 to 1, up to 10.83 to 1.
- 4.6 In terms of net present value of travel benefits, (benefits less costs), the poorest results are shown by the blue route options when including variation 2. They are the cheapest routes and would bring unacceptable environmental conditions in Fenstanton and additional travel distance and congestion costs. The best routes in this regard are the blue and the brown routes, mainly because they “cut the corner off” for A14 traffic in the vicinity of Brampton Wood but this again would bring other environmental disbenefits, which are discussed later. These are the most expensive options and the brown route is so expensive that it has the poorest benefit to cost ratio of 8.76 to 1.
- 4.7 The blue with variation 1 and orange routes produce marginally less net travel benefits, but with their reduced costs show better benefit to cost ratios, i.e. 10.60 to 1 and 10.83 to 1 respectively.

Environmental Considerations

- 4.8 In terms of air quality, there would be improvements in the Air Quality Management Areas alongside the existing A14 and on other roads where there would be a reduction in traffic from all options. The orange and brown routes would lead to improvements at the greatest number of properties. Of note is that the blue variation 2 and blue variation 1+2 options would have a negative impact on overall exposure to air pollution. The increase in greenhouse gases is similar between options, but the orange route is marginally greater due largely to the slightly longer route in the vicinity of Brampton.
- 4.9 The orange, blue variation 1 and brown options would have least noise impact on households. Blue, blue variation 1+2 and blue variation 2 options would have the greatest impact. It is believed with the orange, blue variation 1 and blue variation 1+2 options where the future A14 would run alongside the A1 in the vicinity of Brampton, that there is the best opportunity to provide the most effective noise reduction measures for Brampton village.
- 4.10 In landscape terms, the River Great Ouse viaduct will have an impact in all options. The span of the viaduct would extend to 1090 metres for the orange and blue with variation 1 route options although they also incorporate the crossing of the East Coast Mainline, or would reduce down to 840 metres excluding the railway crossing, for the other route options.
- 4.11 There would also be a visual impact of the new road from several village locations including the Offords from the orange route, but

particularly in Brampton with blue and blue variation 2 route options and particularly strongly in Godmanchester with brown, blue, and blue variation 2 options, but slightly less in blue variation 1 and blue variation 1+2 options.

- 4.12 Three Sites of Special Scientific Interest lie within 1km of the different routes and the brown, blue and blue with variation 2 lie within 100m of the Brampton Wood, which is also an ancient woodland. If one of these routes were to be chosen, special mitigation/ enhancement measures would be required.

Archaeology

- 4.13 Overall the impacts of the routes on built heritage and archaeology are similar, with the number of known archaeological sites varying from 43 (orange route) to 53 (blue variation 1+2 route option). Although the routes incorporating the blue route 2 variation involve the greatest impact on cultural heritage sites, they include the least new land take which might reveal as yet unknown archaeological sites. Early investigation of the chosen route and liaison by the chosen Contractor/ Consultant with the County Council is requested.

Public Rights of Way

- 4.14 Over the length of the off-line scheme and across the variety of options, there are approximately twenty-five Public Rights Of Way (PROW) routes, depending on which potential A14 route is being considered. Whilst it is recognised that this consultation is focusing solely on the alignment of the A14 itself, the Council could make the following points:
- The new off-line route is likely to sever significant parts of the local PROW network including recreational routes (eg, Mere Way, Pathfinder Long Distance Path and Ouse Valley Way) and local inter-village footpaths and bridleways.
 - Crossings by routes of interest to “soft users” (i.e. walkers, riders and cyclists) need to be of width and headroom (for underpasses) to cater for equestrians and cyclists.
 - There are potential opportunities to improve the PROW network, for example to improve access to Brampton Wood from Brampton, especially where the A14 and A1 run together in the orange and blue with variation 1 route examples.
 - Early consultation by the chosen Contractor/ Consultant on PROW matters is requested.
- 4.15 A group of fourteen Town and Parish Councils in the A14 corridor is producing a joint statement of concern over the environmental impact and the impact on public rights of way of the A14 improvement scheme. Although the points have already been covered above and/ or in the earlier (June 2005) Cabinet report and submissions, a draft of the statement has been appended to this report for Members information.

5. WASTE PLANNING, POLLUTION PREVENTION AND MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT

5.1 The compilation of this section follows a meeting with the Environment Agency to learn of its views on the implications of the brown route.

The current waste facilities at Buckden Landfill Site

5.2 The current waste management facilities at Buckden Landfill site comprise:

- The landfill site including a leachate treatment plant
- A Household waste recycling centre
- A commercial waste recycling transfer station
- Inert waste and Green waste recycling facility
- Landfill gas energy from waste plant

5.3 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Local Plan (adopted 2003) and the emerging Minerals & Waste Development Documents are all relevant to this proposal. The current waste management facilities at Buckden Landfill Site are safeguarded and allocated for waste use in the following policies:

- Waste Local Plan: Policy WLP15, WLP 18, WLP 19, WLP20, WLP21, WLP22, WLP31
- Emerging Waste Plan: Policy SSP10, SSP14.

Current Government advice given in paragraph 8.1 of the Companion Guide to Planning Policy Statement 10 states that: *All planning authorities should be concerned with... the likely impact of proposed, non-waste related, development on existing and allocated waste management sites and areas.* Therefore the Council as Waste Planning Authority should be concerned with the potential loss of these Waste Management Facilities.

Characterisation of Buckden Landfill site

5.4 The Landfill site can be separated into two distinct areas namely the southern and northern parts, which have different physical and technical characteristics. The older Southern site is now filled, capped and restored to grassland. It was used for the disposal of mixed municipal and industrial/commercial waste from at least the early 1970s. The contents of the site include asbestos, pesticides and herbicides as well as other biodegradable materials and the engineering containment measures applicable at the time were not equal to today's environmental protection standards. Due to changes in legislation post-1996 some of these wastes are now classed as having potentially hazardous properties if not handled correctly. Such deposited special wastes will now inevitably have become mixed with other wastes increasing overall the volume of contaminated materials within the site.

- 5.5 Landfill gas (predominantly methane) is still being generated by the slow decomposition of waste within the site. The landfill gas is collected and extracted from the landfill cells in a controlled system, which manages any risks. Leachate (a polluted liquid formed through the decomposition of waste) is produced on the site, which is collected and treated at the adjacent leachate treatment plant prior to discharge to a watercourse. This prevents the potential for contamination of the nearby River Great Ouse and adjacent land.
- 5.6 However, the landfill cells in the South site were not designed to modern standards and without the current mitigation works there is potential for escape of polluted water into adjacent land to the south. Therefore any major engineering works close to the site will need to take special precautions to prevent risk of pollution of the river and the water bearing ground strata (aquifer) of the river corridor area.
- 5.7 The Northern site is an active landfill site, with modern standards of containment engineering, which currently accepts municipal waste from Huntingdonshire District, amongst other general industrial and commercial waste. The site does not accept waste with hazardous properties. This site is partially tipped and restored to the west, however it contains many active cells and a large area of void space, which is yet to be filled. As such it represents a significant strategic resource for the future deposit of waste.

Implications and Risks of Building the New A14 across Buckden Landfill Site

- 5.8 The brown route would cross through the centre of the Buckden Landfill site, approximately along the line of the former Huntingdon to Kettering railway, which roughly divides the North and South sites. In order to achieve this, waste which has already been deposited in parts of both the North and South sites, would need to be excavated, treated and removed. This waste would then need to either be accommodated in a remodelled much smaller landfill site on the land or taken to another landfill site for proper disposal. The inevitable mixing of the previously tipped waste is likely to mean that it will have to be taken to a specialist landfill for proper disposal. Under new legislation any hazardous waste excavated from any landfill site would have to be pre-treated before it could be sent for disposal. There are no specialist facilities available within the county and thus this operation is likely to be very costly.
- 5.9 The construction of a major new road through the site will generate significant engineering challenges, which will be costly to overcome. Tipped land is not stable and construction solutions would have to be found to provide a stable foundation for the carriageway and appropriate pathways for road drainage. Excavation of waste would result in easy pathways for landfill gas to escape with possible odorous releases, which could adversely affect local air quality during the construction phase.

- 5.10 If the engineering solution involved the total removal of the waste some 430,000 cubic metres (or 688,000 tonnes) of suitable infill material would be required to support the road itself and also to support the surrounding exposed waste. This in itself would be a very significant engineering project especially if this material has to be brought some distance from a suitable source to the site.
- 5.11 It should also be recognised that seeking to establish major landscaping schemes, involving tree planting, on former capped landfills also raises constraints which can affect the choice of plant species (only shallow rooting) and location, establishment and maintenance issues. Alternatively, provision of major landscaping might require the importation of significant quantities of restoration soils to reprofile the landfill site.
- 5.12 If the new road was built across the land with the benefit of planning permission for landfill approximately 780,000 cubic metres of consented void space would be lost from the area, as well as a household waste recycling centre, a commercial waste transfer station, and potentially the leachate treatment plant (depending upon what the final configuration of the road would be). The current single access and egress point from the public highway to all of these sites would also appear to be compromised of the alignment of new road, and therefore a new vehicular access(s) to any retained facilities would be needed. There would also be significant issues about who would be legally liable should there be any leachate and landfill gas breaches.
- 5.13 The Buckden Landfill site is currently proposed as a preferred option within the emerging Minerals and Waste Local Plan for Cambridgeshire as a strategic resource for recycling. The lost void space and most of the waste management facilities would need to be provided elsewhere within the locality, whilst a revised landfill gas extraction/utilisation system and leachate plant would be required to manage on-site emissions and generation of polluted liquid.
- 5.14 The current approved plan for the final restoration of the landfill site is for a golf course, however this would be impractical if there is a major road passing through the site. Therefore either additional bridging, netting, access, barriers and such like would be required in order to make the golf course feasible, or an alternative restoration plan will have to be provided
- 5.15 The improvement of the A14 with the blue route variation 2 would also cause some of the same problems, as the route involves the widening of the A14 towards Connington Landfill Site and Hemingford Grey landfill site. The Connington site contains asbestos and waste would again need to be removed and re-disposed of at alternative, specialised sites.

6. OFFICER CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 In drawing a conclusion as to which route option the Council should support, reference needs to be made back to the Cabinet resolution of June 2005, when full support was given to the orange route alignment. For the Council to change its mind, there needs to be an option which it now believes on the evidence given by the Highways Agency and other information which has come to light, is equal or superior to the orange route.
- 6.2 In many respects, the traffic and economic impacts of the different options are broadly similar. There are, however, are some clearer differences in relation to the environment.
- 6.3 In considering the other options, those incorporating the blue variation 2 can be rejected on several counts of environmental disturbance and traffic capacity. It is considered that the brown route can be rejected on grounds of risk to delivery and unknown environmental hazards including pollution of watercourses and loss of otherwise consented waste capacity. This is contrary to the adopted Waste Planning Policies. The blue route is less desirable than the orange route because of its proximity to Brampton Wood and the associated difficulty of providing as adequate noise amelioration to Brampton, its proximity to the south side of Brampton village and its position on the hill above Godmanchester.
- 6.4 The blue variation 1 route represents an improvement on the blue route in respect of its prospective impact on Brampton and shows some small improvement for Godmanchester, but in this regard the orange route is preferable to blue variation 1 route. Thus, the **orange** route would appear to remain the preferable option on the basis of information available. This conclusion is based upon the technical evaluation above and the deliberations of the Service Delivery Groups outlined below.

7. CONCLUSIONS OF THE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

- 7.1 At the TDSDG, local Members who spoke or made representation about specific routes were Cllrs Bates, Brown, Boddington, Downes, Hyams, Kadic and Smith. Additionally, Godmanchester Town Council and the Offords Action Group made written representations.
- 7.2 Cllr. Downes who was concerned about the prospective level of traffic noise along the western side of Brampton submitted a sketch of an alternative "Brampton" alignment for the A14 west of the village. This proposal was similar to the orange route proposal with the new A14 running parallel to the A1, except that the new A14 would be built to a three lane dual standard and the A1 would remain as a two lane dual standard. It was thought that this could reduce noise levels in Brampton

- 7.3 The suggestion was seen as assisting with the future upgrading of the A1 north of Brampton and helping with the long-term aim of a Buckden bypass for the A1.
- 7.4 The meeting concluded that
- There was no support for any of the blue routes
 - There were likely to be major concerns about waste matters with the brown route
 - There was general support for the orange route, but a concern about the impact on Brampton of the orange route to the west of the A1. If the “Brampton” option were not possible then the brown route alignment west of A1 would be preferred.
- 7.5 Since the TDSDG meeting, consultants for the Highways Agency have examined the alternative Brampton alignment and have concluded that it does not comply with safety standards for weaving between the different routes, minimum stopping sight lines on the new bridges and the radii of the curves are too tight. Also, the Agency would have difficulty in providing noise abatement measures west of Brampton without widening, which they intended to undertake asymmetrically, i.e. along its western side. The Agency has also said that the noise level difference between the orange and brown alignments west of A1 is only 0.5dB and that is unlikely to be noticeable to the human ear. By deduction such a difference could be more than compensated for by the introduction of noise amelioration along the A1 with the orange route.
- 7.6 The Agency also confirmed that the orange route would not preclude a later A1 Buckden bypass. Further, widening of the A1 from Alconbury to Brampton would now have to be considered as a regional scheme and its priority assessed and agreed by EERA, under the Government’s Regional Prioritisation process rather than its priority being determined as a national scheme.
- 7.7 Cllrs. Boddington and Hyams made further representations to the EWBSDG, along with a representation from the Offords Action group seeking a deferral of any conclusion by the EWBSDG until its own consultants could provide further information. Nevertheless, the EWBSDG considered that use of part of the Buckden landfill site for a road scheme was contrary to County Waste policy, there were high risks concerning leachate, landfill gases and loss of waste capacity. All of this presented a significant risk to delivery and programme. Delaying a County Council response is unlikely to alter the Highways Agency’s timetable.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The cost of improving the A14 should fall completely to the Highways Agency as a Targeted Programme Scheme. This should include all of

the works involved in providing the main route alignment and side road alterations. The local access roads from Girton to Fen Drayton should also be provided by the Agency unless provided in conjunction with developers, as should works associated with the removal of the Huntingdon viaduct.

- 8.2 Also, in that circumstance the County Council would normally be expected to become responsible for the existing lengths of A14 from Fen Drayton to Brampton and from Spittals to the termination of the A1(M) scheme close to Alconbury. Discussions would be necessary with DfT over short term funding and dowries in respect of becoming responsible for these lengths of carriageway. The Council has previously pointed to the need for full reimbursement by Government of ongoing costs arising from the scheme.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Members are advised of the following key risk management implications arising from this report. These risk issues have been identified using a risk management process carried out in accordance with the Council's risk management strategy.
- 9.2 Three obvious risks are associated with the delivery of this scheme. Firstly, excessive cost escalation is a threat to authorisation by Central Government, this is particularly so for the brown route which represents potentially a cost of some 12% greater than either the orange or blue routes. Although the benefit cost ratios of all of the options are strong, the scale of the scheme as the largest single scheme in the Targeted Programme means Government will always be looking to save costs. The responsibility for bringing the scheme forward lies with the Highways Agency, and so the limit of the Council's ability to mitigate this risk is in terms of pressing for an affordable and effective route for the scheme.
- 9.3 The second obvious risk would be the adoption of the brown route as a scheme that crossed Buckden landfill site. Here contractors would require specialist staff and specialist equipment to handle the waste. In view of the environmental risks, contractors would be likely to price that part of the contract very conservatively. Although about £75m has been added to the estimate of the cost of the brown route versus the orange or blue routes, construction through Buckden landfill site nevertheless represents a major risk to the delivery programme and budget. Again, this risk can be mitigated by pressing for an affordable and effective route for the scheme.
- 9.4 The third risk relates to the potentially significant delay to the Council's delivery agenda including the delivery of Northstowe if the A14 is delayed. Whilst this is unlikely to occur given the Government's commitment to the A14 scheme, the Council will need to continue to

pressure Government and work with the Highways Agency to minimise this.

Source Documents	Location
<p>CHUMMS Study Report 2001 A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton Public Consultation Documents 2005 A14 Ellington to Fen Drayton Public Consultation Documents.</p> <p>Cabinet Agendas and Minutes: 25/9/01; 14/6/05; 23/5/06</p> <p>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Local Plan 2003 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan - Preferred Options, November 2006,</p>	<p>Rm A301, Castle Court, Shire Hall Cambridge CB3 0AP</p>

Appendix to A14 Cabinet Report
Environmental Concerns of Communities Arising from the A14 Proposals

Background

Regardless of the route chosen, the updated A14 will have a major impact on nearby communities. Currently there is insufficient detail available to determine these impacts but there is strong concern that the worst environmental impact must be ameliorated by appropriate mitigation measures. Many of the affected communities share common concerns and a wish to prevent the area being blighted for years to come. At a recent meeting held under the administrative lead of Hilton Parish Council these communities agreed to joint forces to press the Highways Agency and local government to address these concerns. A list of the communities involved is shown below.

Aim of this Brief

The aim of this brief is to seek the support of Huntingdonshire District Council to press for adequate amelioration of the environmental impact of the proposed A14 upgrade, whatever route is chosen. We ask you to raise this now so that the Highways Agency is aware of our joint determination to ensure that proper attention is paid to protecting the environment, landscape and quality of life local residents.

Major Environmental Concerns

Noise. This was a major concern to all communities. Current amelioration measures appear inadequate and communities wish to see measures which significantly reduce the noise signature of the new road over a wider area than is currently shown by the Highways Agency.

Visual impact The new road will have a significant visual impact especially over the proposed extensive elevated sections. Communities seek a reduction in the height of the road and cross-over bridges as well as attention being paid to achieving a high degree of visual screening. Communities wish to see measures to minimise carriageway lighting, the impact of vehicle lights, service stations, etc.

Flood Risk. Another major concern is that the A14 would exacerbate the flood risk along the route. Many communities were concerned that detailed studies on this issue have yet been undertaken and at the cumulative impact of other projects on the high levels of water runoff that can be expected.

Local Traffic. In addition to the A14 proposal itself, there are a large number of major concurrent projects in being or planned which will impact on local roads. Together these projects will have a major impact on local communities. Communities were not confident that these changes are being sufficiently coordinated and they felt strongly that there was the need for much more work by all levels of Government to ensure that the impact on local roads and villages was adequately assessed, monitored and then minimized.

Air Quality. Most communities, and especially those closest to the proposed routes, were concerned that the new road would generate significantly higher levels of air pollution, particularly if traffic levels rose beyond those predicted once the road is completed, as has been the case with other new roads.

Wildlife. There are concerns at the adequacy of the Highways Agency's initial assessment for the impact of the A14 on wildlife and on their approach which concentrates on specific sites rather than the area as a whole. Communities wish to see a full environmental assessment for the area and appropriate amelioration where needed.

Footpaths, Bridleways, Cycle paths. Communities are concerned that access to bridleways, footpaths and cycle routes will be lost or rendered unattractive. They request agencies and local authorities work together to take full account of the combined impact of all developments in the area.

Communities

Brampton
Buckden
Cottenham
Dry Drayton
Fen Drayon
Fenstanton
Godmanchester

Hemingford Grey
Hemingford Abbots
Hilton
Offord Cluny
Offord D' Arcy
Papworth St Agnes
Swavesey

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