



Department for
Transport

From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State

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30 September 2009

Dear Jonathan,

A14 ELLINGTON TO FEN DITTON

I am writing to update you on progress with the A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton improvement scheme.

The Highways Agency will today publish draft Orders for the scheme. Public Notices will appear in the London Gazette, Hunts Post and Cambridge News and an Environmental Statement for the scheme will be published. I attach a copy of the press notice announcing the publication of the draft Orders and the public exhibitions in October for your information.

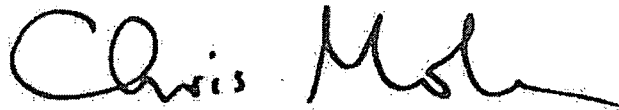
Also enclosed is a Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Statement, which explains the reasons for the proposals and summarises the impact of the proposals on the surrounding area. The draft Orders are open for objection and comment until 6 January 2010. If you require copies of the draft Orders or wish to make any comments about the proposals, please contact Tim Hughes at Woodlands, Manton Lane, Manton Lane Industrial Estate, Bedford MK41 7LW.

I also want to update you on the delivery of this scheme. As you are aware draft Orders publication date had to be postponed until this month to carry out further work to assess future traffic flows. Accurate traffic predictions are an essential part of the Environmental Statement for the scheme, which assesses the impact on the environment of both the road improvement and the traffic predicted to use it. This has now been completed and the Highways Agency is confident in the quality of the data.

Following detailed work over the past few months, the Highways Agency has also reviewed the timetable for the scheme.

In order to ensure a more robust timetable that will allow the maximum permitted time for the public to consider the complex and detailed plans for the scheme, additional time has been allowed for objections to be responded to and for proofs of evidence to a possible Public Inquiry to be prepared. This means that if required, a Public Inquiry will now take place over summer 2010, and, subject to successful completion of the statutory processes, construction will start on site in spring 2012. On this timetable I would anticipate that the new strategic route will be open to traffic in winter 2015/16 with the work in Huntingdon, including the demolition of the viaduct currently carrying the A14, completed by the end of 2016 at the earliest. I realise that this revision is disappointing and I have asked the Highways Agency to ensure that they now meet the new timetable.

The Highways Agency will be inviting you to a preview of the draft Orders exhibition at the Huntingdon Racecourse on Friday 9 October 2009 and a letter of invitation from them will follow shortly.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Mole". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

CHRIS MOLE

30 September 2009

HIGHWAYS AGENCY PUBLISHES DRAFT ORDERS FOR A14 ELLINGTON TO FEN DITTON SCHEME

The Highways Agency has today published draft Orders and the Environmental Statement for the A14 major improvement scheme between Ellington and Fen Ditton in Cambridgeshire.

The scheme will reduce congestion and improve safety and journey time reliability on this busy stretch of the A14 which carries between 65,000 and 85,000 vehicles each day.

The documents are now available to view at the Highways Agency offices in Bedford, council offices and local libraries. Public exhibitions will be held in October 2009 where members of the public can view the detailed plans for the scheme and ask the Highways Agency any questions they may have. The draft Orders are open for objection and comment until 6 January 2010.

Depending on the nature and weight of objections to the proposals, a Public Inquiry may need to be held. With this in mind, the Highways Agency has revised its timetable for delivery of the scheme to give the public the maximum time permitted to consider the complex and detailed plans that have been published today, and to allow additional time to respond to objections and prepare for the Public Inquiry.

If a Public Inquiry takes place in summer 2010, and subject to successful completion of the statutory processes, a revised construction date of spring 2012 is expected. The new strategic route could be open to traffic in winter 2015/16, with the work in Huntingdon, including the demolition of the viaduct currently carrying the A14, completed by the end of 2016 at the earliest.

Tim Hughes, Senior Project Manager for the Highways Agency said:

“The A14 is a heavily used trunk road of national and regional importance providing a major link between the Port of Felixstowe and the Midlands. Today’s publication of the detailed plans brings the scheme another step closer, subject to the successful completion of statutory process including a Public Inquiry.”

The A14 would be upgraded with three lanes in each direction along the entire length from Ellington to Fen Ditton except between Ellington and the A1 where only two lanes are required. A new road would be built between Ellington and Fen Drayton, and the existing A14 between Fen Drayton and Fen Ditton would be widened.

The scheme would also provide local access roads alongside the widened A14 between Fen Drayton and the M11 Junction 14 at Girton and major new interchanges would be built where the new section of A14 will join the A1 at Brampton and at the existing A14 at Fen Drayton, and the M11/A14/A428 interchange at Girton.

Public exhibitions will be held at Huntingdon Racecourse, Brampton, Huntingdon, PE28 4NL from Friday 9 October – Monday 12 October and at the University Arms Hotel, Regent Street, Cambridge, CB2 1AD, from Thursday 15 – Sunday 18 October.

Exhibition opening times as follows:

Huntingdon Racecourse:

Friday 9 October from 2pm to 8pm
Saturday 10 October from 10am to 8pm
Sunday 11 October from 10am to 6pm
Monday 12 October from 10am to 8pm

A mini bus will be provided to take members of the public from Huntingdon Bus Station to Huntingdon Racecourse. It will leave on the hour between 11:00 and 19:00 and return on the half hour between 11:30 and 19:30.

University Arms Hotel, Cambridge:

Thursday 15/Friday 16/Saturday 17 October from 10am to 8pm
Sunday 18 October from 10am to 6pm.

Anyone who would like to comment on the proposals may do so up until Wednesday 6 January 2010. Comments should be sent to the A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton Improvement Scheme, Highways Agency, Woodlands, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW.

Notes to Editors

1. The Highways Agency is an executive agency of the Department for Transport. It manages, maintains and improves the network of trunk roads and motorways in England on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport.
2. Draft Orders and the environmental statement of the scheme are available from the Highways Agency, Woodlands, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW or can be viewed at:
 - South Cambridge District Council, South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6EA
 - Huntingdonshire District Council, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN
 - Cambridge City Council, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, PE27 5AL
 - Cambridgeshire County Council, Shire Hall, Castle Hill, Cambridge, CB3 0AP
 - St Ives Town Council, Town Hall, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, PE27 5AL
 - Arbury Court Library, Arbury Court, Cambridge, CB4 2JQ
 - Barnwell Road Library, Barnwell Road, Cambridge, CB5 8RQ
 - Bar Hill Library, Gladeside, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB23 8DY
 - Buckden Library, Millennium Community Hall & Sports Centre, Burberry Road, Buckden, PE19 5UY
 - Bottisham Community Library Association, Village College, Lode Road, Bottisham, CB25 9DL
 - Cambourne Library, Sackville House, Sackville Way, Great Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6HD

- Cambridge Central Library, 1 Lion Yard, Cambridge, CB2 3QD
- Cottenham Library, Margett Street, Cottenham, CB24 8QY
- Histon Library, School Hill, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9JE
- Huntingdon Library, Dryden House, St Johns Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3NU
- Papworth Library, Lower Pendrill Court, Papworth Everard, Cambridge, CB23 3UY
- St Ives Library, 4 Library Row, Station Road, St Ives, Huntingdon, PE27 5BW
- Swavesey Library, Your Library – Swavesey, Swavesey Village College, Gibraltar Lane, Swavesey, Cambridgeshire, CB24 5HS
- Willingham Library, Church Street, Willingham, Cambridge, CB24 5HS

3. A non-technical summary of the Environmental Statement can be seen on the Highways Agency website at www.highways.gov.uk
4. The cost range estimate for the scheme is £941m to £1,286m.
5. Following completion of the Cambridge to Huntingdon Multi-Modal Study the Secretary of State for Transport announced on 1 April 2003 that the improvement would proceed as part of the Government's targeted programme of improvements (now the Programme of Major Schemes).
6. The preferred route for widening the 10.5 miles (17km) of the A14 between Fen Drayton and Fen Ditton was announced on 22 March 2007. The preferred route and strategy for the 11.8 miles (19km) new route between Ellington and Fen Drayton was announced on 24 October 2007.
7. Costain Skanska Joint Venture were appointed to design the whole scheme and construct the Fen Drayton to Histon section of the scheme in January 2008. The 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, upon completion of statutory processes.
8. Real -time traffic information for England's motorways and major A roads is now available:
 - From our new Traffic Radio service, available on DAB digital radio and the internet at www.trafficradio.org.uk To tune into the DAB service, simply press the "scan" button on your radio. The radio will tune into all available channels and you can select the new service by scrolling through the channels until you reach "Traffic Radio".
 - On the internet at www.highways.gov.uk/trafficinfo
 - By **phone** from the Highways Agency 24-hour voice activated phone service on 08700 660 115. (Calls from BT landlines to 0870 numbers will cost no more than 8p per minute; mobile calls usually cost more).

9. Before using a **mobile**, find a safe place to park. Never stop on the hard shoulder of a motorway except in an emergency. Make sure it's safe and legal before you call.
10. For more general information about the Highways Agency and its work, visit the Highways Agency website www.highways.gov.uk, or telephone the Highways Agency Information Line on 08457 50 40 30 at any time. (Calls to 0845 numbers cost no more than 3p/min from BT residential landlines. Call charges from other landlines and mobile networks may vary.)

Issued on behalf of the Highways Agency by COI News & PR East. For further information and/or to request an interview, please contact Jenny Thompson or Jeremy Owen on 01223 370784/01223 370783.

Out of hours contact the Highways Agency National Press Office on 0207 081 7443.