

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme

Meeting/Date: Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) -
10th March 2015
Cabinet - 19th March 2015

Executive Portfolio: Planning & Housing Strategy

Report by: Head of Development

Ward(s) affected: All Wards

Executive Summary:

To provide a progress report on the delivery of the A14 project, following the submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 31st December 2014.

The application was accepted by PINS for examination on 27th January 2015. The application seeks consent to construct the scheme, including powers to compulsorily acquire interests in and rights over land and to use land temporarily for the purposes of delivering the project.

The Council is a Tier 1 stakeholder under the terms of the project and continues to support the delivery of the scheme and remain a committed partner to its delivery. This includes continued negotiations on overall key aspects of the scheme prior to a Statement of Common Ground being entered into with the Highways Agency and the submission of a Joint Local Impact Report (LIR) to PINS. The LIR will be a joint submission by this Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Recommendation(s):

Members are recommended to note;

- i) That the Council continues to engage with the Development Consent Order process relating to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme and to seek to reach agreement on the remaining outstanding matters as highlighted at Appendix C.
- ii) To note the Relevant Representation at Appendix B, that was endorsed by Overview & Scrutiny Panel and signed-off by the Executive Councillor for Planning & Housing Strategy and the Corporate Director (Delivery) for submission to PINS by the stated deadline of 12th March 2015.

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1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT/PURPOSE?

- 1.1 This report gives an update on progress with the development and delivery of the A14 Project. A visual display of the whole scheme will be on display at the meeting.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council is a Tier 1 stakeholder with regards to the project and is a statutory consultee under the terms of S.56 of the Planning Act 2008 under which the DCO is being made to PINS.
- 2.2 The Council is also a funding partner towards the scheme with an agreed financial package in place to deliver an overall contribution of £5M towards the project.

3. CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 The scheme has now been accepted by PINS and the Statutory Timetable is included at Appendix A.
- 3.2 The Council's draft Relevant Representation is shown at Appendix B. It was submitted to PINS by 12th March 2015 deadline following consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) on 10th March 2015, these will be reported at the meeting
- 3.3 The project continues to proceed through the pre-examination stage and officers are currently negotiating outstanding matters during this period.
- 3.4 It is important to note that the areas outlined at Appendix B are those matters on which the Council may wish to make representations at the planned Examination. However it is still the broad intention that during the current pre-examination period, these may be entirely or proportionately mitigated away.
- 3.5 Under the terms of the Planning Act 2008 relating to the DCO application, the Council will agree a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) with the applicant, namely the Highways Agency (Highways England as from 1st April 2015). This will take into account current on-going discussions as outlined in Appendix B and the SoCG will list those matters agreed, not agreed and still under discussion and these will form the basis of the Council's representation, if required, at Examination.
- 3.5 Likewise, the Planning Act 2008 places a duty on Tier 1 stakeholders to submit a Local Impact Report (LIR) to PINS that focusses on the transfer of local knowledge and evidence to the Examining Authority and to identify local issues and impacts that need to be highlighted to PINS. A statement of positive, negative and neutral impacts is required and it is for PINS to consider the relative merits as part of the examination.
- 3.6 In the case of National Infrastructure Schemes that cross local authority boundaries, PINS strongly encourages Councils to submit this evidence in the form of a Joint LIR so that it can carry due weight and consideration and therefore for the A14 project, this will be a joint approach between this Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)

- 4.1 The Panel raised concern about the provision of new bridges and the ability to ensure that they are designed to accommodate future development.
- 4.2 In response to questions from Members regarding adequate signage and the noise impact, the Panel were advised that signage had yet to be addressed and the noise impact from the re-routed A14 would benefit a number of households currently affected by the noise.
- 4.3 Following discussion the Panel subsequently approved the recommendations of the report.

5. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?

- 5.1 The key issues at present are the continuing discussions between the Tier 1 stakeholders and the Highways Agency relating to the matters outlined in Appendix B. While the topic headings are broad, this should not cause any degree of undue concern as the Council is simply reserving its position at this stage as it may wish make detailed representation on these at Examination, whether that be in positive, negative or neutral terms.
- 5.2 In detail, it can be confirmed that there are no undue matters where the parties consider that they will not be able to reach an agreed position and Appendix C outlines the current broad positions reached within key topic areas

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 A flow diagram of the overall project timetable from inception to projected completion of the scheme is shown at Appendix D.

7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 The fundamental objective of this Council's engagement in the scheme has been to ensure that the project fully aligns with the key priorities of the Corporate Plan, namely;
- A strong local economy
 - Sustainable growth
 - Thriving communities

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Public consultation is a key requirement of the DCO process as required by the Planning Act and the Highways Agency has been required to demonstrate effective levels of community engagement as part of its overall submission. This Council has been actively involved throughout the Highways Agency consultation processes.
- 8.2 As part of the same process, PINS is required to have due regard to representations from local authority consultees regarding the pre-application stage and this Council provided its 'Adequacy of Consultation' response on 12th January 2015.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Council's primary legal responsibility relates to the legal agreement outlined in Section 9.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Council entered into an agreement with the Secretary of State for Transport on 30th October 2014 relating to its contribution of £5M towards this project, including the agreed timeline under which contributions will be made.
- 10.2 In accordance with the agreement and within two months of the opening date for the Main Improvement Scheme (due December 2019), the 1st payment of £200K will be made, followed by 24 equal payments of £200K per annum (by 30th January each year) over a maximum period of 25 years.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None

12 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 12.1 It is recommended that the Council continues to engage with the Development Consent Order process relating to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement scheme and to seek to reach agreement on the remaining outstanding matters as highlighted at Appendix C.

13. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – Statutory Timetable
Appendix B – Relevant representation
Appendix C – Key Topic Areas
Appendix D – Overall Project Timetable

BACKGROUND PAPERS

A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme – Development Consent Order
<http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/a14-cambridge-to-huntingdon-improvement-scheme/>

A14 Funding Agreement – 30th October 2014

Adequacy of Consultation response – 12th January 2015

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APPENDIX A

STATUTORY TIMETABLE

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Application | 31 st December 2014 |
| • Acceptance | 27 th January 2015 |
| • Relevant Representations | by 12 th March 2015 |
| • Pre-examination | February-April 2015 |
| • Preliminary Meeting | Mid-May 2015 |
| • Full Representations | Expected Mid June 2015* |
| • Examination | May-November 2015 |
| • PINS Recommendation | December-February 2016 |
| • Secretary of State Decision | March-June 2016 |
| • Commencement on site | By end of 2016 ** |

* To be decided at preliminary meeting

** Subject to final decision

APPENDIX B

A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon – Relevant Representation by Huntingdonshire District Council

The above project is one of national and local importance that this Council has resolved to support and we remain a committed partner in the development and delivery of the scheme, including as a funding partner for which formal agreement has been entered into with the Secretary of State for Transport.

This Council is a statutory consultee under the terms of S.56 of the Planning Act 2008.

The Council considers that the project remains vital to the delivery of the growth agenda across Huntingdonshire and the Greater Cambridge area, relieving current congestion, reducing journey times and addressing current safety issues.

The Council will submit written representations regarding this project which will acknowledge the close and fruitful working relationship with the Highways Agency (HA) in developing the scheme now submitted.

While a number of matters are the subject of continuing discussions with the HA in order to seek resolution of outstanding matters, the following are the broad themes still under discussion prior to formal Examination and on which we may wish to make representation. However, we are continuing to have fruitful and meaningful discussions with all project partners, which may entirely or proportionately mitigate away current outstanding matters prior to Examination.

- Environment, Landscape and Visual Impact
- Noise, Vibration & Air Quality
- Land Contamination
- Heritage
- Borrow Pits
- Rights of Way relating to community integration
- Local off-line traffic impacts
- Drainage

Importantly, in relation to all the above matters, the question of legacy remains outstanding. At all levels of the project, the meaning of legacy and its outcomes are still under discussion in seeking a range of outcomes that overcome the continued detrimental environmental impact of the existing route alignment while also delivering a scheme that secures wider benefits across the community than simply delivering a new road.

The Council will be submitting a Joint Local Impact report, together with Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. We are currently negotiating a Statement of Common Ground with the HA.

In relation to the Examination, the Council will make representations to PINS as a response to the DCO process and as previously informed, our formal response will be considered on 18th June, after ongoing Scrutiny processes aimed at reducing any remaining outstanding issues after which we will respond to the Inspectorate.

The Council will wish to attend the 'Preliminary Meeting' and attendance numbers will depend on how the four Councils within the Joint LIR will want to represent their issues. If an 'Issue Specific Hearing' is held, depending on the topic/s, the Council may wish to speak if it relates to the subject headings outlined above.

KEY TOPIC AREAS UNDER DISCUSSION

Local Off-Line Traffic Impacts

- On-going independent review (CCC) of traffic modelling and impact on local road network, including within new Huntingdon Town Centre layout

Air Quality Impacts

Predicted improvement

- Huntingdon
- Along existing A14 between Swavesey, through Huntingdon to Brampton Hut
- Existing AQMA's – all indicate improvements in Air Quality'

Pollutant increase –Within EU limits/no new AQMA will be created

- New Huntingdon southern bypass

Noise Impacts

- Approximately 2,800 dwellings benefiting
- Noise increase for properties located along the new bypass section between Brampton Interchange and Fen Drayton (330 properties)
- Ensure properties qualifying for Noise Insulation are correctly identified
- Noise impact of construction phase will require management, including Ground borne vibration, due to the significant length of construction period
- Noise levels near Borrow Pits may not be at acceptable levels to proceed without necessary mitigation

Borrow Pits

- Significant materials being sourced from new local Borrow Pits
- Extraction will conform to CCC Minerals & Waste Plan
- Materials extracted will only be used on A14 project
- After care, landscape and legacy is a critical issue still subject to on-going discussion including;
 - Ecology
 - Possible recreation use
 - Access to designated areas
 - Future long-term maintenance

Heritage

- Heritage Impacts relating to Legacy
- Mitigating impacts on Listed Building & Conservation areas

Drainage

- Mitigating impacts on existing designated flood areas

Environment, Landscape and Visual Impact

- Impact of new lighting
- Borrow Pits
- Impacts of removal of existing vegetation and recovery periods

OVERALL PROJECT TIMETABLE

