

**HIGHWAY AGENCY CONSULTATION ON A14 THRAPSTON TO  
BRAMPTON JUNCTIONS  
(Report by Director of Operational Services)**

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To consider proposals by the Highway Agency for improvements to the junctions between Thrapston and Brampton on the A14.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At the Cabinet on 23 October 2003, a report was considered relating to the withdrawal by the Highway Agency of a scheme to improve junctions, by the use of grade separated inter-changes/fly-overs, between Thrapston and Brampton on the A14. At that time, Cabinet expressed considerable concern at the withdrawal of this scheme, especially in the light of the fact that there had been considerable consultation and the expectations of local people had been raised in terms of dealing with what was considered to be highway safety issues.
- 2.2 The Highway Agency has now published a revised set of proposals for consultation. A copy of the plan showing the junctions is attached (Annex A).
- 2.3 The District Council has been asked to respond on all of these proposals.

**3. IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Before commenting on any of the proposals, it is important for the Council to make it very clear that it supports the option preferred by the District Councillors and Parish Councils representing communities along the route. Anything less than the provision of grade separated inter-changes/flyovers, as was originally proposed, is considered unsatisfactory and leaves local people exposed to unnecessary risks. It is very important that this position is clearly stated and that any subsequent comments on the proposals for individual junctions are seen as not prejudicing the Council's position regarding its preferred solution.
- 3.2 An additional introductory remark also needs to be made in terms of the raising of residents' expectations related to this consultation process. It would be extremely damaging to the credibility of the Highway Agency if once this consultation had been completed, the Agency was to be unable to deliver even these lesser proposals to resolve issues at these junctions. It is therefore important that we make clear to the Agency that following consultation some implementation takes place as a matter of urgency.
- 3.3 Three options have been discussed with local representative and these are summarised in the table below —

	<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Option 3</b>
<b>Location 1</b> – Denford Road	acceleration/ deceleration lanes + close central reservation	close central reservation	no change
<b>Location 2</b> – Polopit Road/Tichmarsh Turn	acceleration/ deceleration lanes only + close central reservation	close central reservation	no change
<b>Location 3</b> – Obelisk Farm	acceleration/ deceleration lanes only + close central reservation	close central reservation	50 mph speed limit on both east-bound and west-bound lanes + provision of fixed safety cameras
<b>Location 4</b> – Toll Bar Lane - Bythorn/Keyston	Grade separation	Grade separation or upgrade existing agricultural crossing	
<b>Location 5</b> – Chainbridge Lane	acceleration/ deceleration lanes only + close central reservation	close central reservation	
<b>Location 6</b> – B660/Catworth Fox	acceleration/ deceleration lanes only + close central reservation	no change	
<b>Location 7</b> – Staunch Hill – Leighton	Grade separation	acceleration/ deceleration lanes	
<b>Location 8</b> - Spaldwick	acceleration/ deceleration lanes only + close central reservation	no change	
<b>Location 9</b> – Wooley/Easton	Grade separation	acceleration/ deceleration lanes	
<b>Location 10</b> - Ellington	acceleration/ deceleration lanes only + close central reservation	no change	
<b>Location 11</b> - Little Meadow	acceleration/ deceleration lanes only + close central reservation	close central reservation	

3.4 These options are in descending order of preference. In addition local representatives would also like to see consideration given to the following additional safety improvements –

- a comprehensive review of footpaths and bridleways severed by the A14 to remove the need for these to cross at grade.
- the upgrading of safety signage and particularly the introduction of countdown markers at all junctions.
- the introduction of further matrix signs to give advice of queues etc.

3.5 Regular users of the various junctions perceive the greatest risk as having to **decelerate on the carriageway** to execute left turns off the A14. Following drivers do not appreciate that this is necessary and do not slow, resulting in the turning manoeuvre having to be aborted to avoid a collision. At the very least, therefore, it is considered that deceleration lanes are required at all junctions if speed restrictions are not introduced and rigorously enforced.

3.6 Notwithstanding the foregoing the following comments are made about the individual junction proposals.

#### **Location 1 – A14 junction with Denford Road at Thrapston**

- ❖ Whilst this junction is not within the District of Huntingdonshire, all the proposed options are considered to provide low safety benefits which would appear not to provide acceptable alternatives in terms of local residents' concerns.

#### **Location 2 – A14 junction with Titchmarsh turn**

- ❖ Only the options of a grade separated junction and the closure of the central reserve gap provide a medium safety benefit.
- ❖ The closure of the central reserve gap appears to provide the same benefits as the grade separated junction and thus could be supported.

#### **Location 3 – A14 junction with Coales Lodge**

- ❖ All the options provide low safety benefits but the options for gap closure and conspicuous warning signs do at least provide for high benefits in terms of route improvements. These options could therefore be supported.

#### **Location 4 – A14 junction with Tollbar Lane/Bythorn & Keyston**

- ❖ The proposed grade separated junction provides for medium safety benefits and high route improvements. The only other options which provide benefit are the left turn deceleration lane off the westbound A14, the eastbound acceleration lane from the Bythorn turn and the option for conspicuous warning signs. If the grade separated junction is not to go ahead, then these other options should be supported.

#### **Location 5 – A14 junction with Chainbridge Lane**

- ❖ The grade separated junction proposal only offered low safety and economic benefits but high route improvement benefits. Both the conspicuous warning signs and advanced direction signage provides similar benefits and could be supported. However, closure of the central reservation and the access north of the A14 in association with the provision of a grade separated junction at location 4 is preferred.

#### **Location 6 – A14 junction 16 with B6660 Fox Lane/Catworth**

- ❖ The only option with any high benefits is the conspicuous warning sign option and therefore is the only option which should be supported. However, this does not address the poor safety record on the over-bridge where mini-roundabouts are required on each side of the A14 to make the slip-road/minor road junctions safer.

#### **Location 7 – A14 junction 17 with Staunch Hill/Leighton Bromswold**

- ❖ The grade separated junction proposal provided low safety and economic benefits but high route improvements. The only other options which provide a similar level of benefits include provision of a left turn east-bound acceleration lane out of Staunch Hill, conspicuous warning signs, relocating the eastbound advanced direction signing and measures to improve forward visibility for east-bound drivers turning right off the A14 at this location. Only these options should be supported.

#### **Location 8 – A14 junction 18 with Thrapston Road/Spaldwick**

- ❖ There is an option for this junction which provides high safety benefits and this is related to providing fixed or interactive warning signs. As this option provides high safety benefits it should be supported.

#### **Location 9 – A14 junction 19 with Woolley and Easton**

- ❖ The grade separated junction proposal provided high safety benefits and route improvements. No other option provides the similar level of benefit although local representatives consider the provision of deceleration lanes at the Easton junction and Williams Transport Depot would yield significant benefits. Alternatively they would like to see a modified access to the Williams Transport Depot in association with other improvements.
- ❖ The closure of both the Easton and Woolley central reserve gaps does provide high safety and route improvement benefits and should be supported as an alternative.

#### **Location 10 – A14 junction 20 with Ellington**

- ❖ The three options outlined for this junction provide a mix of benefits, but it is suggested that highlighting the limits of the eastbound slip-road exit and warnings of queues will provide safety benefits. Better signage also is required to stop people

going the wrong way on the two-way slip road. Planned development in the vicinity of the junction may also impair sightlines.

#### **Location 11 – A14 junction with Little Meadow**

- ❖ As neither option proposed for this junction provides high or medium safety benefits, there is no reason to support either option. However, action could be taken to prohibit lorries parking on the slip-road.

#### **General Issues**

- ❖ There are a series of options for dealing with the whole of the route between Locations 1 to 11. It would seem appropriate to support the two options which provide high safety benefits, which include conspicuous warning signs.

### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 In general, the only options that should be supported without reservation are those which provide a similar level of benefit as the grade separated junction proposals. However, if this cannot be achieved the preferences of the local representatives should be endorsed.

### **5. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

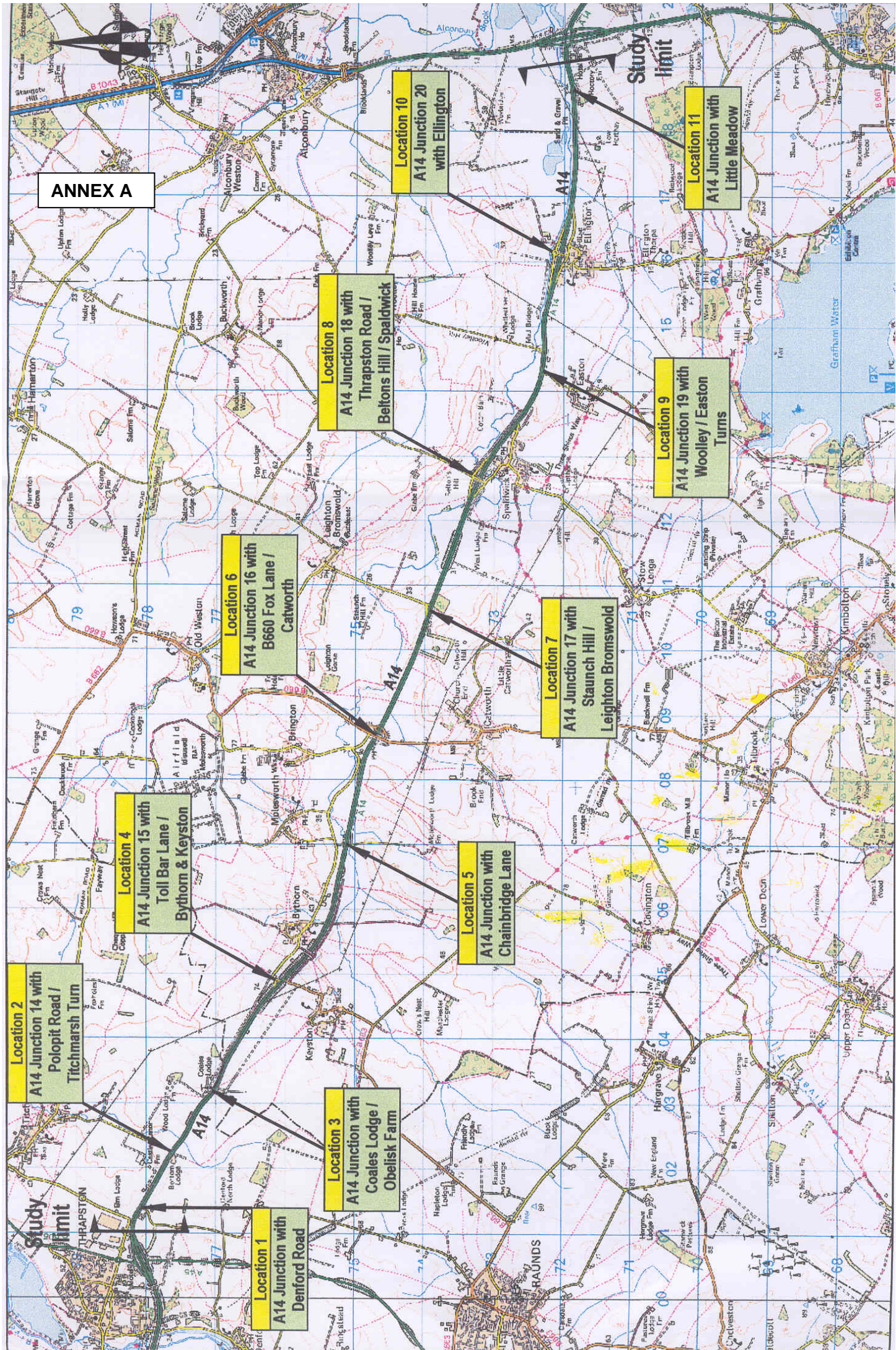
- 5.1 That the Cabinet approve the conclusions set out in this report in response to the Highway Agency Consultation.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- ❖ Highway Agency Consultation dated 18<sup>th</sup> February 2004.

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**ANNEX A**



**Location 2**  
A14 Junction 14 with  
Polopit Road /  
Titchmarsh Turn

**Location 4**  
A14 Junction 15 with  
Toll Bar Lane /  
Bythorn & Keyston

**Location 6**  
A14 Junction 16 with  
B660 Fox Lane /  
Catworth

**Location 8**  
A14 Junction 18 with  
Thrapston Road /  
Beltons Hill / Spaldwick

**Location 10**  
A14 Junction 20  
with Elvington

**Location 11**  
A14 Junction with  
Little Meadow

**Location 9**  
A14 Junction 19 with  
Woolley / Easton  
Turns

**Location 7**  
A14 Junction 17 with  
Staunch Hill /  
Leighton Bromswold

**Location 5**  
A14 Junction with  
Chainbridge Lane

**Location 3**  
A14 Junction with  
Coales Lodge /  
Obelisk Farm

**Location 1**  
A14 Junction with  
Denford Road