

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Council 23rd June 2005.
AUTHORS: Director of Development Services/Chief Environmental Health Officer

**A14 ELLINGTON TO FEN DITTON PROPOSED SCHEME
PUBLIC CONSULTATION
RESPONSE FROM SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

Purpose

1. To agree the Council's response to the Highways Agency's public consultation on the proposed scheme for improving the A14 from Ellington to Fen Ditton.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

Objective	
2. Quality village life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist the preservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment.• Assist the effective delivery of sustainable development at Northstowe and other major developments on the edge of Cambridge and development of sustainable communities.• Assist working with partners to help the early and sustained development of necessary infrastructure.
3. A sustainable future.	
4. A better future through Partnerships.	

Background

2. The Government published its general proposals for the A14 in the summer of 2001 in what is known as CHUMMS which recommended that: -
 - The A14 be constructed to the south of Godmanchester, Huntingdon and Brampton to rejoin the A14 to the west of the A1.
 - Parallel local roads be provided alongside the widened section between Girton Interchange and the point where the widened section begins east of Fenstanton. Extra links and slip roads were recommended at M11 Junction 13 (Madingley Road and Junction 14 Girton Interchange).
 - Improvements should be made to the junctions of the A14 with the B1049 (Histon) and A10 (Milton). Measures to enable public transport to cross the A14 Cambridge Northern Bypass should be investigated.
 - The existing A14 from Fenstanton to Huntingdon should be used as a public transport corridor and for access to Huntingdon centre and railway station. The status and standard be widened to a dual 3 lane carriageway, where necessary on its existing line between Fen Ditton and a point to the east of Fenstanton, and

that a new dual 3-lane carriageway of the existing A14 should be downgraded to discourage its use by long distance through traffic.

- Full consideration should be given to the needs of non-motorised travellers.
3. South Cambridgeshire's Cabinet in July 2001 agreed the Council's formal response and:
- welcomed the general approach of Option 2 for road improvement and new road building, but recognised the need to secure greatly improved landscaping and other measures to reduce visual intrusion and noise impact;
 - welcomed the reduction from dual four lanes to dual three lanes along the A14 Cambridge northern bypass, but continues to press for the Girton section to be covered;
 - welcomed the preference for guided bus, but emphasised the need for the cost to be reflected realistically in the Local Transport Plan settlement at an early stage;
 - recognised that there remained a number of important design issues which need to be addressed, particularly in respect of the improvements to the A14 interchanges with the B1049 (Histon) and A10 (Milton) and the extra links and slip roads at the M11 junctions 13 (Madingley Road) and 14 (Girton);
 - supported the extension of Park and Ride, subject to satisfactory sites being found and acknowledges that there will be a need for additional Park and Ride sites outside the study area;
 - noted that the problems on the road are acute now and can only deteriorate as development continues in the Cambridge area. Great strain would be put on the road for the development committed in planning permissions and Local Plan allocations, let alone the increased rate of development envisaged in RPG(S)6. A timescale of 10-12 years for a solution to be put in place would be totally unacceptable. If the Cambridge area is to deliver, there must be an early delivery of improvements to this route. The work should therefore be programmed so that some improvements to the road, including increased capacity and public transport improvements such as the use of the St Ives route, come forward at an early stage;
 - was concerned at the impact that construction would have on adjoining villages, particularly in terms of rat-running, and asks for suitable traffic management measures to be introduced.
4. The Highways Agency has now published its outline scheme for consultation. Consultation began on 30th March 2005, but almost immediately the exhibitions informing the public had to be suspended because of potential conflict with the General Election campaign. Exhibitions were resumed on 17th May. Despite protests from this Council and others, the end date for the consultation remains at 30th June.
5. The Highways Agency envisages the following timetable:
- | | |
|------------|------------------------------|
| Early 2006 | Preferred Route Announcement |
| 2007 | Draft Orders published |
| 2008 | Public Inquiry |
| 2008/9 | Start of construction |
| 2011/15 | Opening in stages |

The Current Proposals

6. The current scheme now put forward by the Highways Agency proposes some 35km of new or improved 2 and 3 lane dual carriageway trunk road, a number of diversions

to side roads, 10 route km of new local roads to a range of standards, seven new grade separated interchanges and the potential de-trunking of 17.5km of existing grade separated dual carriageway (depending whether the “CHUMMS” or an “Alternative” option is chosen).

7. The scheme comprises:
- a new two lane dual carriageway for the A14 from Ellington to the A1,
 - a 1.5km widening of the A1 to three lane dual carriageway north of the new A14 /A1 interchange,
 - a three lane dual carriageway from the A1 to Fen Drayton. This length would only be to a two lane dual carriageway standard if an “Alternative” option of retaining the existing A14 Fen Drayton to the A1 at Alconbury was retained as a through route,
 - on-line widening to three lane dual carriageway standard from Fen Drayton to Bar Hill,
 - a replacement three lane dual carriageway between Bar Hill and Girton
 - a rebuilt and re-modelled Girton Interchange,
 - an on-line widening of the Cambridge Northern Bypass between Girton and Fen Ditton. Extended sliproads/ weaving lanes are proposed between Girton and Histon,
 - intermediate junctions with other roads would only be provided at the A1, Fen Drayton, Girton /M11, Histon, and Milton. (This is one less than the CHUMMS proposals which also proposed a junction on the A1198 south of Godmanchester and suggested modifications to Junction 13 of the M11).
 - a network of local roads to link to nearby settlements, which will become the responsibility of the County Council as Local Highways Authority .
8. The Highways Agency is seeking views on the proposals before confirming the route through the publication of a Preferred Route Announcement which would mean that the route could be protected under the Highways Act. The Agency would then appoint a Contractor/Consultant under the “Early Contractor Involvement” ECI procedure to work up the detail of the scheme. The proposed scheme is still at a relatively high level with many aspects of the details of design and potential impact still unclear.
9. The Highways Agency attended a meeting of Planning Policy Advisory Group (to which all members were invited) on 27th May to present the scheme and answer Members’ questions.

Partnership Working

10. The County Council has considered the scheme through a meeting of its Joint Planning and Transport Service Development Group (25th May) and Cabinet (14th June).
11. Discussions have taken place with the County Council at both officer and Lead Member (Portfolio Holder) level to gauge the extent to which there is common ground on issues arising from the consultation. The County Council determined its response at a Cabinet meeting on 14th June, but also agreed that *“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. This*

authorisation will extend to the submission of an addendum to this report, which safeguards the County Council's technical and other interests under this scheme. 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."

12. It is my assessment that the approach in broad strategic terms recommended to the County Council by its Deputy Chief Executive is very similar to my recommendations set out in this report. There would be much value in striving to achieve a joint statement in general terms with the County Council, and therefore I suggest that the Planning Portfolio Holder be given similar authority as the County Council's Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services.
13. Improvements on the scale envisaged in the proposed scheme are essential to meet the objectives of:
 - improving safety for long distance traffic
 - ensuring improved access for local traffic
 - reducing congestion
 - reducing the impact of noise on communities
 - improving air quality
 - enabling the continuing economic development of the Cambridge area to
 - providing improved opportunities for non-motorised modes.

Key Issues for South Cambridgeshire

Speed of Delivery

14. The programme set out above and derived from the Highways Agency is likely to be the best in terms of early delivery. There is a risk that the public inquiry could raise many complex issues and take longer than that estimated. Given the existing problems on this route, the need for it to support the increased rate of development in the area as required in RSS6 (and merging RSS14) and the Structure Plan, and given the importance of this route nationally and internationally it is essential that all stages in the process of delivering the scheme be expedited. The Government should be urged to consider this scheme as one of the highest in priority in national terms.

The Alternative: Keeping the Existing A14 Open in the Huntingdon Area

15. Although this is primarily an issue for the County Council and Huntingdonshire, taking account of the need to ensure the continued social and commercial vitality of Huntingdon and needs to take account of further study and clarification of the transport strategy for Huntingdon. This Council's view of the Sub-regional development strategy is that the market towns are sustainable locations for further development rather than in rural parts of South Cambridgeshire or by unacceptable release of Green Belt to the detriment of the special character of Cambridge. It is therefore not in this Council's interests to support the Alternative Option which could limit Huntingdon's potential.
16. The issue for South Cambridgeshire is whether there are unacceptable consequences of building the new length of A14 west of Fen Drayton as three lanes

of dual carriageway rather than two lanes of dual carriageway. I consider that there would be very little limited additional impact.

17. However, the proposed new route does pass very close to Conington. Its impact will be made greater by the fact that it will be on embankment in this section. Not only would the new road impact on the village which has a very rural character but also on Conington Hall (a Grade 2* Listed Building with the Stables being Grade 2) and its parkland which is recognised in the Local Plan 2004 as a landscape of local value. The Highways Agency should be asked to consider realigning the route to run slightly further to the north and as close as possible to the Conington Landfill site which would increase the distance from Conington village, the hall and its parkland. It is also essential that there is the highest standard of provision of landscaping and noise attenuation to minimise the impact on Conington.

An Additional Interchange with the A1198?

18. The Highways Agency scheme does not propose that the new route would connect with the A1198 where it crosses that road south of Godmanchester and north of the Papworth villages. The County Council is suggesting that consideration be given to an additional interchange here to assist access to Huntingdon and reduce through car and HCV traffic on the existing route through Huntingdon. The County Council suggests that the traffic movements at this junction should be part of the further study into understanding the traffic movements in Huntingdon.
19. My comments about the advantages of ensuring the continued vitality of Huntingdon are similarly pertinent to this issue. However, I do have concerns that such an interchange could encourage more traffic along the A1198. Whilst Caxton does have a bypass and Papworth Everard has one programmed, communities in other villages to the south, including Long Stowe, Arrington and Kneesworth are severed by the road. My advice therefore is that South Cambridgeshire should be cautious about the County Council's proposal. It may be that the interchange could be designed to facilitate access to Huntingdon alone, with only "north facing slip roads".

The Fen Drayton Interchange and Access to the Swavesey Services Area

20. Under the scheme proposals originally put forward by the Highways Agency, access to the Swavesey (Cambridge) Services area would only have been by means of the local distributor road via the interchanges at Fen Drayton and Girton. This would not be satisfactory as traffic would have to make the decision to leave the A14 at a considerable distance for the Services and it would have meant a significant number of HCVs using the local distributor road in close proximity to Bar Hill village – thus reducing the advantages of aligning the A14 away from the village.
21. The Highways Agency advised PPAG that they had taken note of concerns expressed on this issue, and have brought forward a revised proposal which would be a combined Fen Drayton Interchange/Trinity Foot Junction, which would allow the Services site to be served directly from the A14 instead of from the Girton Interchange. There would also be a dual carriageway between Cambridge Services and the Fen Drayton Interchange which is an improvement on the original single track provision.

Fen Drayton to Bar Hill

22. The local road along this section is proposed by the Highways Agency to be single carriageway, whereas for all other sections a dual carriageway standard has been put forward. The revisions now proposed by the Highways Agency to provide a dual carriageway local road between Fen Drayton and Trinity Foot as part of the improved access for the Swavesey Services is an improvement, but highlights the inadequacy of the section between Fen Drayton and Bar Hill, which may well not have adequate capacity and certainly the variation in standard is likely to lead to driver confusion and therefore safety problems. The Highways Agency should be urged to reconsider this matter.
23. Access to Northstowe is proposed to be exclusively via the local parallel distributor roads rather than the A14 itself. Northstowe traffic would connect to the A14 east and the M11 by means of the Girton Interchange. Connections with the A14 west would be via the revised Swavesey/Fen Drayton Interchange(s). Although it might be considered appropriate for a town the size of Northstowe to have a direct interchange onto the A14, the town is intended to be part of solving the development, particularly housing, needs of the Cambridge Sub-Region; to provide direct A14 access could fuel the perception of Northstowe fulfilling the housing needs and aspirations of London and other areas to the south. In this context a direct link to the A14 might simply encourage long distance driving and not encourage the use of the Guided Bus local for local journeys within the Cambridge Sub-Region.

The Girton Interchange

24. The remodelling of this Interchange is critical to the success of the scheme overall. Despite being a complex weave of routes, it does not allow all movements to take place. It does not allow traffic from the west coming along the A428 to access the A14 in the direction of Huntingdon with the result that such traffic would have to continue to “rat run” through Dry Drayton (and with the same problem in the opposite direction). Nor does it provide for direct connections for traffic from the west on the A428 to connect to the M11 with the result that such traffic would have to continue to leave the A428 at Madingley and travel along the Madingley Road as at present, thus adding to the congestion and queuing in peak hours. The County Council is particularly concerned about the lack of slip roads to enable the A428/A14 movements, and this approach should be supported whilst also seeking the additional link to the M11.
25. The implementation of the Girton Interchange is crucial to the continuing development of Northstowe as set out in the policies in the Draft Northstowe Area Action Plan which is currently the subject of public participation. The Government has indicated that it wishes to see an early start made to increasing the rate of house-building in the Cambridge Sub-Region. Northstowe is specifically targeted as one of the key opportunities to achieve this but it is dependent upon the A14 improvements. It is essential that the A14 is improved as quickly as possible in general and this part of the scheme is delivered as the top priority when the Highways Agency and its contractors determine phasing and programming.

26. CHUMMS proposed north facing slip roads at the M11/A1303 Madingley Road Interchange. The current scheme does not put this forward. The County Council has accepted that there would be little benefit to be gained by this additional facility at present but notes that further consideration will be needed in the context of the University development in West Cambridge. The provision of north facing slip roads could transfer of traffic from Huntingdon Road to Madingley Road, which is already heavily loaded in the morning peak. It will also be an issue in respect of the development of North West Cambridge.

The Cambridge Northern Bypass and the junctions at Histon/Impington and Milton.

27. The Cambridge Northern Bypass is proposed to be widened on-line between Girton and Fen Ditton, with extended slip roads/weaving lanes at the junctions with the B1049 at Histon/Impington and the A10 at Milton. There are considerable problems of capacity on the B1049 and A10 especially as they approach the A14 and Cambridge. The Highways Agency has made it clear that it considers these problems to be an issue of local rather than strategic accessibility and traffic management. However, given the commitment in the brief for the scheme set out in CHUMMS to consider the needs of non-motorised modes, the provision of a foot/cycle bridge over the A14 (similar to that at Milton) as suggested by the County Council should be supported.

Access to Cambridge East

28. The current scheme ends at the Fen Ditton junction with the A14 and does not propose any changes there or further east. The County Council's Structure Plan lists the need for a new interchange (in the vicinity of Honey Hill) between the Fen Ditton Interchange and the Quy Interchange, replacing the Fen Ditton Interchange and linked to Airport Way to serve development at Cambridge Airport. The Draft Cambridge East Area Action Plan considers how access to the A14 can best be achieved, including potentially a new link road to serve Cambridge East, although recognising that it would not be required for the development of the 1st phase north of Newmarket Road and that any scheme should not include improvements to the existing junction at Fen Ditton.
29. The Highways Agency's scheme does not include this proposal as it ends at Fen Ditton. However, consultations with the Agency in preparing the Area Action Plan indicate that they might resist the introduction of another interchange. That is properly a matter which will need to be determined through the Development Plan process. There is nothing in the current A14 scheme which would preclude such an improvement being made in the future.

Non-car Modes

30. CHUMMS recommended improvements other than merely increasing the capacity of the road network. The Cambridgeshire Guided Bus proposal, as recommended in CHUMMS, is currently awaiting the outcome of the Transport & Works Act public inquiry and will provide a High Quality Public Transport link from Huntingdon/St. Ives to Cambridge for this corridor.

31. However, there is very little obvious direct provision for non-motorised modes – walking, cycling and horse-riding. While the Guided Bus maintenance track will provide a continuous pedestrian and cycle route for the corridor, there is a need to consider the wider network of rights of way.
32. The A14 currently represents a major physical barrier to non-motorised users and horse-riders are particularly disadvantaged. The scheme provides an opportunity to develop an accessible network for all users through the provision of appropriate segregated routes for non-motorised users and new and improved junctions with side roads and bridge crossings where appropriate, such as at Histon/Impington. Where Public Rights of Way cannot be accommodated within the scheme, alternative routes should be provided that maintain network connectivity and quality for users through proper route design and landscaping. The Highways Agency should be pressed to consider these matters in more detail.

Landscape Impact

33. The scheme remains at a high level with insufficient detail to appraise fully the impacts. There is no clear indication of the mitigation measures which would be put in place presumably because they will require consideration as part of the final, more detailed, scheme and full landscape assessments would be a requirement. Assurance should be sought on this point.
34. Certainly there will be considerable impact on the landscape, in particular from the new and remodelled interchanges. There will be noticeable adverse impact on the landscape at the new Fen Drayton Interchange (where there is currently no interchange); Trinity Foot/Swavesey Interchange (remodelled with additional links); Bar Hill (substantial remodelling with new links); Dry Drayton Interchange (remodelled); Girton Interchange (substantial remodelling and new links). There will also be adverse impact from the increased width of the road corridor through South Cambridgeshire where the A14 is improved on the existing general alignment and through the building of bridges and associated embankments where side roads cross the A14. Such impact will need substantial and careful mitigation, and this should not be restricted to narrow planting alongside the highway; it is likely also to require blocks of planting to assimilate the road into the landscape compatible with local character. There may therefore be a number of areas where off-site planting will be essential in order to assimilate the road into the landscape. Some planting should be of more mature stock to provide better mitigation from the beginning. The landscaping of the Girton Interchange will be a particular challenge because of its scale; it may well require landscaping of areas currently occupied by road but which will not be used in the new scheme.
35. Another area of concern is along the Cambridge Northern Bypass where there is limited space to accommodate the widened road which will have an impact on the existing vegetation, especially in the Girton Cutting and at Milton Country Park. This will require very careful landscaping to mitigate the damage.
36. All junctions/interchanges are proposed to be lit which will increase light pollution in the open countryside although the use of modern lanterns will minimise light spillage.

However, lighting of the junctions is judged to be necessary to ensure improved road safety.

37. The new section of road to the north of Conington will be on an embankment around 3m in height which combined with loss of existing hedgerows will mean a significant impact requiring substantial careful and sensitive mitigation.

Noise

38. The noise assessment has been carried out according to the methodology set out in the Noise Insulation Regulation 1975 (as amended 1988). This sets out the accepted method for prediction of traffic noise in the UK.
39. The scheme indicates that there are existing properties within 300 metres of the A14 that will experience noise levels over 60dB LA₁₀ (18 hour) (the World Health Organisation quote levels of 55dB LA_{eq} or more to be sufficient to cause significant community annoyance and Planning Policy Guidance Note 25 would place such locations into Noise Exposure Category B which indicates that in determining planning applications noise should be taken into account and conditions imposed to ensure that an adequate level of protection is afforded). Mitigation measures are proposed including resurfacing with a thin wearing course to reduce levels by 2.5dB(A) and providing acoustic fences or earth bunds which could reduce noise by up to 15dB(A). However the detail provided in the report does not indicate the extent over which any barriers would be required, or exactly where noise levels are predicted to rise by increased traffic on local roads. The problem of reflective noise is raised and consideration must be given to acoustically absorptive barriers where this might be a problem.
40. Traffic noise attenuation will also be a major issue along the Cambridge Northern Bypass. The proposed development at Arbury Camp is designed to use opportunities to prevent unacceptable noise levels being experienced by the future residents and workers on this site. However, there have been many calls in the past from existing residents in Histon, Impington and Milton for improved sound attenuation. Milton Country Park is similarly affected, and the proposals indicate a loss of the existing vegetation screen. The written response from the Highways Agency to PPAG questions indicates that the problem of sound would only be addressed through low noise road surfaces. I consider that additional measures need to be considered. Given the limited width of the corridor, this may well mean solid acoustic barriers. Fencing or walls would not be appropriate in this rural landscape, but the opportunity to use engineered walls of living willow and earth should be explored. These have the additional advantage of absorbing rather than reflecting sound.
41. The EU environmental noise directive is to be implemented in the UK by 2007 and DEFRA is currently drafting a National Noise Strategy which may have implications for the noise environment in this location. Plans should be drawn up to protect quiet areas against noise increases as part of these proposals in advance of the forthcoming requirements.

Air Quality

42. The Highways Agency's consultants report is correct in stating that South Cambridgeshire does not currently have any local Air Quality Management Areas, although the Council is presently undertaking detailed modelling of traffic emissions and air monitoring adjacent to the A14 to establish the risk of exceeding the national air quality objectives for fine particles (PM₁₀) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). Both pollutants are derived from vehicle emissions which in this case are by far the most significant source. Should the national objectives be proven likely to be exceeded then the Council would have to declare an Air Quality Management Area and the Council would then have to work closely with the Highways Agency to produce a plan to lower emissions to acceptable levels.
43. The assessment by the Highways Agency's consultants predicts there will be a significant increase in traffic on the A14 by the time of completion of the scheme improvements and also that there will be an overall increase in PM₁₀ and NO₂ concentrations at the properties near to the A14. The increase in pollution would, however, be even greater if the improvements are not carried out. The consultants also predict that the wider network across the study area should see a large decrease overall in both PM₁₀ and NO₂, although the detail of the consultant's report does not identify the exact location of improvement and deterioration.
44. For South Cambridgeshire, the greatest concentration of dwellings affected by emissions are those close to the Cambridge Northern Bypass, especially at Girton, Impington and the Cambridge Northern Fringe. The design and layout of the roads and junctions and the traffic management measures in this section of the route will have to be carefully considered to maximise flow and reduce speed otherwise the implication for local air quality could be significant. The realignment of the A14 around Bar Hill is predicted to improve air quality at the individual properties currently located very close to the A14.
45. Both noise and air quality should be modelled in detail in order to identify where the impacts are going to occur and how they could potentially be mitigated. Provision of other measures such as improved public transport and cycleway network may be necessary to promote a modal shift and correspondingly alter overall emissions, improving local air quality at sensitive locations.

Ecology

46. Consideration must be given to the impact on the ecology of the area. The biodiversity value of the area will need to be established through detailed surveys, and data may take months or more than a year to collate depending upon species found and their habitat needs of the area. The arable landscape of the area must not be dismissed as being poor for wildlife.
47. On national scale the Highways Agency recognises the potential for impact upon biodiversity through road schemes. It has produced many best practise guides (such as *Highways and Birds*, 2001). The principles outlined in these documents should be adhered to. The Highways Agency recognises the potential for habitat management and creation through new road schemes. To this end it has produced its own biodiversity action plan (BAP).

48. It should be made clear to the Highways Agency that the A14 scheme would be expected to contribute to the Cambridgeshire BAP (for example by ensuring that otter habitat is created and that safe underpasses are provided). Once ecological data is collated the Highways Agency's own BAP should be considered against the national and Cambridgeshire BAPs in order to identify areas where the road scheme could significantly contribute towards nature conservation. This need should be above the statutory requirement of the Environmental Statement. Some road schemes (such as the A30, A1, M1) have had their own BAPs produced to further focus nature conservation action specific to the road scheme and this approach should be used for the A14 scheme.
49. A major issue is likely to be the roost areas for the Golden Plover which is loosely focussed in the fields surrounding the Conington Landfill site. The Golden Plover is listed in Annex 1 of the European Union Birds Directive and is therefore a species for which Special Protection Areas could be designated if the population exceeds 1% of the reference population, that is the average population in the UK. There is a suggestion from other sources that the Conington population exceeds 1% of the reference population and therefore the area could be of international importance. One problem in defining this is that there is no specific site for the Golden Plover's roosting but rather covers a series of sites and locations in the general area and it varies from season to season or rather, is dependent on the type of crop under cultivation that season.
50. In coming to the scheme to be presented to the public, the Highways Agency considered a number of alternatives in the Fenstanton/Conington area. One of these would have continued the A14 on its existing alignment to a point further west before striking off on a new alignment. It might have less impact on the Golden Plover and certainly would have less impact on Conington. However, as set out above, the Golden Plover's roost area changes from year to year. The alternative route shows that more than twice the number of houses would experience an increase in noise, and only half the numbers of houses would experience a fall in noise levels compared with the route between Conington village and the landfill site. This is largely because the alternative would continue to affect adversely a large number of properties (in Huntingdonshire). I have carefully considered whether this Council should support such an alternative route, but noting the overall greater adverse impact do not consider that I can make such a recommendation on technical grounds.
51. Given the scale of construction, the development of the road will produce large quantities of spoil. A proportion of this may be used to create embankments for the road as required, but any excess will need to be accommodated in a way which is sustainable and does not adversely affect local landscape character.
52. What is therefore required is the same as the Council is requiring of developers in the Area Action Plans in the Local Development Framework, that is strategies for landscaping, ecology and spoil, which should be published and agreed with relevant key stakeholders.

Legal Implications

53. None directly for this Council unless the improvements do not take place and the Council has to declare a local Air Quality Management Area.

Staffing Implications

54. The continued involvement of Planning Policy, Conservation and Environmental Health officers will be needed to appraise the scheme as it goes through its next stages. This will be essential to protect the Council's interests and the interests of its residents and their environment.

Risk Management Implications

55. The A14 improvements are a critical part of the infrastructure improvements essential to underpin the developments proposed in South Cambridgeshire. It is also essential that it is provided at the earliest opportunity. Objections to the scheme may delay implementation, particularly if it involves a lengthy public inquiry. On the other hand, there is a risk of unacceptable environmental damage if the scheme is unsatisfactory. Delay or non- implementation of the scheme could also require the Council to declare a local Air Quality Management Area.

Consultations

56. The Highways Agency has consulted widely on the scheme. The District Council has worked in close partnership with the County Council and other District Councils in Cambridgeshire. Officers from both Development Services and Environmental Health have been involved in the preparation of this report.

Recommendations

57. Council is recommended to:
- a. Support the proposed scheme in general terms in order to improve road safety, accessibility, air quality and economic development and reduce congestion and the impact of noise on existing communities;
 - b. Urge the Government and the Highways Agency to give the highest priority to the scheme and deliver it at the earliest opportunity;
 - c. support the original CHUMMS proposal to provide a new 3-lane dual carriageway from Fen Ditton to the A1, but seek a minor realignment north of Conington, and reject the alternative which would reduce this new length of road to 2-lanes dual carriageway and keep the A14 north open as a Trunk Road;
 - d. Propose that if the County Council's suggestion of an additional interchange at the A1198 is agreed then it should be designed with north-facing slip roads only;

- e. Support the Highways Agency's revised proposals for the Fen Drayton Interchange and Trinity Foot junction which would provide direct A14 access for the Swavesey Services Area;
- f. Urge the provision of a 2lane dual carriageway parallel local distributor road between Fen Drayton and Bar Hill so that it of the same standard as elsewhere along the route;
- g. Seek a change to the Girton Interchange to enable all movements to be made to prevent traffic passing through villages;
- h. Require the Bar Hill to Girton section to be the first phase of the scheme in order to facilitate the new developments close to Cambridge especially the new town of Northstowe;
- i. Support the suggestion of a foot/cycle bridge over the A14 at Histon/Impington;
- j. Seek assurance that the access needs of the major development location of Cambridge East will be taken into account;
- k. Require additional work to be undertaken by the Highways Agency to ensure adequate provision is made for non-car modes including the need to establish network connectivity over the wider area;
- l. Require careful consideration to be given by the Highways Agency to mitigating the environmental impacts of the proposals through the development of strategies for spoil, landscape, noise, air quality and ecology;
- m. Authorise the Planning and Economic Portfolio Holder to make any additional comments in the light of further information from the Highways Agency or other stakeholders;
- n. Authorise the Planning and Economic Portfolio Holder to agree with the County Council and other key partners a joint statement of general support for the proposals.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton, Stage 2 Scheme Assessment Reports by Highways Agency/Atkins March 2004
SCDC Cabinet papers 19th July 2001

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