

Joint Local Impact Report

**produced by
Cambridgeshire County Council
Huntingdonshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cambridge City Council**

2. Executive Summary

2.1. Description of the proposals

2.1.1. The scheme includes proposals that seek to meet the objectives set out in plan:

- A bypass to the south of Huntingdon and Godmanchester
- Carriageway widening on the existing A14 between Swavesey and Girton and improvements to the Cambridge Northern Bypass
- Junction improvements and the widening of the A1 trunk road between Brampton and Alconbury and new local access roads
- De-trunking of the existing A14 just west of Brampton Hut to and Swavesey
- Removal of the road viaduct over the East Coast mainline at Huntingdon
- Changes to the local road connections in Huntingdon town centre

2.2. The Existing Characteristics

2.2.1. The landscape in the scheme area is made up of agricultural farmland, natural features such as the river Great Ouse and Brampton Wood, the A1, A14 and East Coast Mainline, the market towns of Huntingdon and Godmanchester, surrounding villages and other residential areas and settlements, commercial business parks and recreational sites such as Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Fenstanton Lakes, Buckden Gravel Pits County Wildlife Site and Milton Country Park.

2.2.2. The largest settlements are Huntingdon to the west and Cambridge to the east. Between these urban areas lie numerous settlements including, the Hemingfords, Swavesey, Fenstanton, Fen Drayton, Longstanton, Oakington, Girton, Histon and Impington and Milton, all north of the A14, with Hilton, Conington, Boxworth, Lolworth, Bar Hill, Dry Drayton, Madingley, Girton and Orchard Park all south of the existing A14. South of Huntingdon lie the settlements of the Offords, Buckden, Brampton and Godmanchester.

2.2.3. In terms of cultural heritage the Earthwork on Mill Common, Huntingdon and Huntingdon Castle are both known archaeological assets classified as Scheduled Monuments. There are several important historic buildings through the scheme area including Huntingdon Station, Huntingdon Bridge, All Saints Church, Lolworth as well as two conservation areas in Godmanchester¹.

2.2.4. The ecological assets of the area include Sites of Special Scientific Interest at Brampton (Brampton Meadow, Brampton Wood and Brampton Racecourse) Madingley Wood,

¹ Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER), Cambridgeshire County Council (2014)

Portholme, St Neots Common and Paxton Pits. The Ouse Washes is considered a wetlands site of international importance (RAMSAR). In addition to the statutory designated sites there are County Wildlife Sites at Buckden Gravel Pits, Fenstanton Pit, along the River Great Ouse and at Fen Drayton Gravel Pits among others². In terms of species the White spotted pinion moth, the common toad and Cetti's warbler are section 41 listed species present in the local area³, while the cuckoo is also a species of County Value with habitat in the scheme area.

2.2.5. In terms of the existing noise environment there are approximately 23 areas along the A14 corridor which have been classified as 'Important Areas' by the Department for Environment, Farming and rural Affairs (Defra) on account of the existing noise environment⁴. These areas are at Alconbury, Brampton, Huntingdon, Godmanchester, Hemingford Abbot, Fenstanton, Swavesey, Dry Drayton, Girton, around the Cambridge Northern Bypass and in Impington. Traffic noise from the A14 is the main contributor to the local noise environment at these locations. There are a number of other settlements along the route which experience noise from local road traffic and the East Coast mainline, such as Buckden and the Offords, Brampton, Bar Hill and Orchard Park.

2.2.6. Air Quality management Areas (AQMA) exist in Huntingdon, Brampton, on the A14 near Fenstanton, and along the A14 between Bar Hill and Milton as well as in Cambridge City Centre⁵. These are areas where the levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) are above the threshold levels set by the European Commission. The three AQMA in Huntingdonshire and the single AQMA in South Cambridgeshire are mainly caused by heavy traffic flow on the existing A14.

2.2.7. The existing A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon is considered a 'congestion hotspot' by Highways England⁶. Local roads are impacted as a result of the A14 reaching capacity and travellers seeking other routes. Journey times are significantly unpredictable on a regular basis and combined with the growing population in the county and the economic growth of Cambridge and the Sub-Region and the wider area congestion is likely to increase.

2.2.8. There is very limited use of the A14 by pedestrians, cyclists and equestrian travellers. There are several locations where local roads, bridleways and footpaths join the A14, however these are not widely used by these modes. The A14 does have a range of crossing points at existing junctions and some public rights of way that pass over or

² Designated Sites Search, Natural England website
<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx> (2015)

³ Terrestrial Invertebrate Survey Report, Environmental Statement, A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme, DCO submission Highways Agency, (2013)

⁴ Noise Action Plan (Including Major Roads), Environmental Noise Regulations, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (2014)

⁵ Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Air Quality website, <http://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/> (2015)

⁶ A14 Study, Department for Transport (DfT) (2012)

under the route. The main cycle routes within the scheme area are National Cycle Network routes 11, 12 and 51. There are also long distance walks, notably, the Ouse Valley Way walk and the Pathfinder Long distance route.

2.2.9. There are several watercourses in the area of the scheme including Alconbury Brook, Ellington Brook, Brampton Brook, the River Great Ouse, West Brook, Oakington Brook, Cottenham Lode /Beck Brook and Washpit Brook. Recent instances of flooding have occurred in Alconbury, Brampton, Hilton and Oakington and Girton⁷.

2.2.10. The main borrow pits sites proposed are located within the scheme area are west of Brampton (BP1), South west of Brampton (BP2), Fenstanton (BP3), Boxworth (BP5), Dry Drayton (BP 6) and Alconbury (BP7). These borrow pits can supply sand, gravel and clay⁸.

2.3. Compliance with local plans and policies

2.3.1. There are several local development plans and policies that apply to development in the local area. These are listed and assessed for compliance in Chapter 4 and Appendix A.

2.4. Traffic and Transport patterns

2.4.1. The traffic and transport patterns across the local area are identified in chapter 8. In summary the existing A14 between Huntingdon and Cambridge is well known for congestion and delay and is used by a mixture of local traffic and strategic traffic, such as Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs). There are often long delays and if there is an accident the impacts on local roads is worsened by traffic using alternative routes. Other strategic roads in the vicinity of the A14 are the A1(M) and the A428. The A1 (M) runs between Alconbury and Buckden in the scheme area and the A428 runs between the A421 and A1 at St Neots and the M11 at Madingley.

2.4.2. Other important local roads include the A141 around the north of Huntingdon, the A1123 from Huntingdon to St Ives, the B1514 between Huntingdon and Brampton and Buckden, the A1198 at Ermine Street which provides a route from Godmanchester to the A428 and the B1044 connecting Huntingdon to St Neots via the A428 through Godmanchester and the Offords. Between Huntingdon and Cambridge the A1198 is a north-south connection between the A14 and A428, while the B1040 also runs north-south between the A14 and A428 via the village of Hilton. Strategic traffic is known to use a number of these routes to avoid congestion on the A14.

⁷ "What's in your backyard" section of Environmental Agency website <http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/37837.aspx> 2015

⁸ Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Site Specific Proposals Plan, Cambridgeshire County Council (2012)

2.5. Local Impacts

2.5.1. Summary table of Local Impacts: positive, negative and missed opportunities

Table 1: table of Local Impacts: positive, negative and missed opportunities

Landscape

Positive
<p><i>During operation</i> Extensive areas of mitigation and ecological planning, including adjacent to the highway to break up the scale of the road, screen traffic and lighting and integrate the scheme into the landscape.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Reduction in views of highways infrastructure and improvement in landform through removal of highways infrastructure and traffic (e.g. removal of Huntingdon viaduct).</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Lighting design will minimise light pollution</p>
Negative
<p><i>During construction</i> Removal of trees and vegetation during construction.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> There will be a period during operation where trees and vegetation will not have fully matured (2020-2035).</p>
<p><i>During construction</i> Views of heavy construction plant and materials, major earthworks and temporary traffic management.</p>
<p><i>During construction</i> Excavation of borrow pits, drainage lagoons, ecological ponds, SUDS features, and creation of environmental bunds, road embankments and cuttings during construction, all leading to disruption to landform.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Introduction of new highways infrastructure and associated traffic (sections of highway west and south west of Brampton, the Ouse Valley crossing, the Southern Bypass, roundabouts, bridges / crossings). Adverse effects on visual amenity and landscape character.</p>
Missed opportunity
<p>Additional off-site planting between A14 and the Local Access Road.</p>
<p>Creation of a positive recreation and ecological resource at the borrow pit areas.</p>
<p>Lack of 10 year aftercare programme and additional rights of way at Borrow Pits means that the potential for new and publicly accessible resources for nature conservation and passive recreation are being ignored – to the detriment of the local community.</p>
<p>Assessment of impact of artificial lighting.</p>

Cultural Heritage

Positive
<p><i>During operation</i> Positive benefits for 3 conservation areas (Godmanchester Post Street, Godmanchester Earning Street and Huntingdon Bridge) as a result of reduction in traffic levels and noise intrusion.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Removal of Huntingdon viaduct will have a positive impact on character of Huntingdon conservation area and Huntingdon Station.</p>

Negative*During construction*

Slight adverse visual and noise impact on Earthwork on Mill Common, which is classed as a high value archaeological remain asset.

During construction and operation

Moderate adverse impact on 2 The Walks North, 3-4 The Walks North, 5-6 The Walks North, Huntingdon through loss of setting.

During construction

Adverse impacts on Huntingdon County Hospital (main building only listed) through loss of setting.

During construction

Adverse impacts on Huntingdon Station through loss of setting.

During construction

Adverse impacts through loss of setting on Offord Cluny Conservation Area, Porch House, Offord Cluny, 208 High Street, Offord Cluny.

During operation

Noise impact on Huntingdon Conservation Area from the presence of new and changed road infrastructure on Mill Common.

During operation

Noise impact on Huntingdon Conservation Area from the presence of new road and changed infrastructure on Mill Common.

During operation

Adverse impact on setting of All Saints Church, Lolworth due to new raised embankment, bridge and lighting in the vicinity.

Missed opportunity

Provision for the long-term display of discoveries in suitable public places as this scheme will generate very large archaeological assemblages of public interest.

Ecology**Positive***During operation*

Mitigation and ecological planting along the route of the scheme would be a positive impact.

During operation

Construction of the scheme would result in a significant amount of new semi-natural habitat (271ha) which would be beneficial to bats.

Negative*During construction*

Insufficient assessment of impact on Fenstanton Lakes County Wildlife Site (CWS).

During construction

Loss/ disturbance of bat habitats adjacent to off-line section.

During construction

Potential unassessed impact on terrestrial invertebrates and reptiles.

During operation

Disturbance to breeding birds of county value associated with Buckden Gravel Pits.

During operation

Disturbance to roosting bats during operation.

During operation

Mortality to bats during operation.

Missed opportunity

Scheme does not achieve the ecological mitigation objectives as set out.
Inadequate assessment of impact on Fenstanton Gravel Pits County Wildlife Site (CWS).
Consideration of Bat Habitats between Brampton Wood and the A1.
Creation of priority habitats.
Development of Long term water strategy.
Insufficient evidence of assessment of impact on terrestrial invertebrates.
Insufficient evidence of assessment of impact on reptiles.

Noise and Vibration

Positive
<p><i>During operation</i> Positive impact on over 2900 dwellings along existing A14 corridor including at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Hinchingsbrooke Park, Stukeley Meadows, including Primary School and Hemingford Nursery School.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Residential dwellings at Alconbury – currently experience noise from the A1(M) Applicant proposes to improve noise barrier.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Improvements near Bar Hill and at other properties along existing A14 between Swavesey and Girton due to mitigation being introduced.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Improvement to the noise environment as a result of reductions in traffic on the de-trunked A14 at the following locations: To the north of Brampton, off Thrapston Road and near Huntingdon Road on the eastern edge of the village Hinchingsbrooke, Stukeley Meadows, centre of Huntingdon and northern Godmanchester South west Fenstanton and Lolworth Hilton, Over, Conington, Knapwell and Boxworth Girton and the Blackwell Caravan Park</p>
Negative
<p><i>During construction</i> Impact identified at 7 communities at RAF Brampton, 30 dwellings in Georges Street, Huntingdon, 6 dwellings between Bar Hill and Girton, 25 dwellings in Girton, 25 dwellings in Impington, 250 dwellings on Chieftan Way, Cambridge and 80 dwellings in Kings Hedges.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Minor adverse effect from road traffic noise experienced at dwellings in the vicinity of Great North Road, Manor Lane, Hillfield, Ash End, Beech End, Maple End, Willow End, School Lane, Sharps Lane, Rusts Lane, High Street, Field Close and Frumetty Lane in Alconbury.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Increase in road traffic noise experienced at dwellings in the vicinity of Stewart Close on the south west edge of Brampton.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Increase in road traffic noise experienced at dwellings in the west edge of RAF Brampton.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Increase in road traffic noise experienced at dwellings in the vicinity of Pear Tree Close, Fenstanton.</p>
Missed opportunity
<p>Ensure cooperation with developers of new development sites to ensure mitigation is appropriate.</p>
<p>Monitor noise levels at locations where a residual impact remains to ensure they do not exceed</p>

threshold for qualification for noise insulation / further mitigation

Air Quality

Positive

During operation

Improvements to air quality both PM₁₀ and NO₂ in Huntingdon and along the de-trunked section of the A14 as a result of reductions in traffic.

Negative

During construction

Residential areas near Borrow Pits such as Brampton and Boxworth likely to experience impacts from dust.

During construction

Dust impacts in residential areas in the north of Cambridge and within Huntingdon town centre from the construction of the new road and the removal of the viaduct. With the mitigation identified in the COCP the impacts are not expected to be significant.

During operation

Small increases in annual mean NO₂ around Kings Hedges Road and some medium increases on Madingley Road.

Pedestrians, Cyclists and Equestrian travellers

Positive

During operation

10km of new NMU facility (comprising a route suitable for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians) would be provided linking Fenstanton, Swavesey, Bar Hill, Dry Drayton and Girton.

During operation

Re-connection of previously severed links e.g. Bridleway 15 between A1 and Brampton Hut Services.

Negative

During construction

Disruption to PROWs due to temporary closure and negative impacts on noise, views and amenity – Substantial disruption to bridleways Madingley 2 and Girton 6).

During construction

Impacts on public rights of way in Huntingdon, Brampton, Godmanchester, Boxworth, Bar Hill, Dry Drayton and around the Histon interchange from noise, visual intrusion as well as physical disruption.

During construction and operation

Severance of public right of way at the Stukeleys as a result of stopping up of A1 southbound layby where users of this popular bridleway park their cars.

During operation

New roads to be crossed for NMU on Brampton Road (NCN 12 and 51) and Hinchingsbrooke Park Road.

Missed opportunity

There is the potential for a long term positive impact in terms of the legacy of the borrow pits sites - For example by providing a NMU link between RAF Brampton and the northern boundary of Borrow Pit 2.

The use of solar studs on NMU routes should be considered as a design feature which will improve the experience for NMU users and encourage use of the routes at all times of day, particularly for cyclists.

Economy

Positive
<p><i>During construction</i> Direct and indirect benefits from employment during construction (between 824 – 1567 new jobs)</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Increased road capacity between Cambridge and Huntingdon and on A1 between Brampton and Alconbury will alleviate existing congestion, reducing rat-running, reducing travel time and leading to greater journey time reliability. Monetised value forecast to be over 1.039 billion over a 60 year period.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Unlock future business growth through greater productivity as a result of agglomeration effects, and reduced transport costs.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Unlock housing constraints – Allow Northstowe Phase 2 to be developed plus significant proposed allocations within the Draft Huntingdonshire Local Plan.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Wider economic growth – improve connectivity with Peterborough, Ipswich, Harwich and Felixstowe plus to the Midlands and North-West.</p>
Negative
<p><i>During construction</i> Disruption to existing travel patterns</p>
<p><i>During construction</i> Temporary loss of land - temporary severance of access to areas of farmland, community facilities and private property as a result of construction haul routes or other construction related land uses.</p>
<p><i>During operation</i> Permanent Loss of Land – Major impact on 9 farms – impact on access and from potential changes in traffic for 9 businesses along the existing A14, minor impact from land take on 3 existing planning applications</p>
Missed opportunity
<p>There is an opportunity to maximise the economic benefits further by setting out in a plan how the various elements of the scheme will result in a positive legacy particularly in terms of benefiting and supporting local economic growth.</p>

Flooding and water

Positive
<p><i>During construction</i> During construction works the planned mitigation will ensure no significant residual impacts post-scheme completion.</p>
Negative
<p><i>During operation</i> Water level rises at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ellington Brook; • Brampton Brook; and • River Great Ouse <p>No significant increase in flood risk to nearby properties</p>
Missed opportunity

Existing flood risk issues at Girton, Fenstanton, Bar Hill, and Brampton could be alleviated through balancing ponds associated with Borrow Pit works.

Assurance that maintenance access for annual works by local authorities will be available.

Minerals and Waste

Positive

During construction

Inclusion of borrow pits has the potential to reduce significant levels of heavy vehicle traffic on the local road network as the distance to transport materials between the scheme and the required area for construction is minimised.

During operation

Positive strategy for sustainable use of surplus soil.

Negative

During construction

There has been a lack of assessment for certain impacts that are likely to occur as a result of the operation of the borrow pits: Archaeology, noise, dust, biodiversity, hydrology.

Missed opportunity

Opportunities to alleviate local flooding issues.

Lack of an aftercare programme beyond 10-years for integrating the borrow pits into the local landscape

Transport of hard rock by sustainable means.

Social and Community matters

Positive

During operation

Reducing severance and improved access between communities.

During operation

Improving access for non-motorised users across the A14 corridor.

During operation

Improvements to the noise and air quality improvement along de-trunked section.

Negative

During construction

Environmental impacts (noise, air quality, HGVs) on communities, particularly Boxworth, from operation of borrow pits.

During construction

Environmental impacts on community facilities - significant negative impact at Hinchingsbrooke School (Huntingdon) during the daytime – period of 5 months.

During operation

Land-take impacts on viability.

During operation

Land-take impacts on accessibility - Community impacts include possible severance that could occur as a result of the footprint of the scheme dissecting farmsteads and access routes between communities, especially along the offline section.

During operation

Noise and air quality impacts on community facilities.

Missed opportunity

Noise monitoring at community facilities where noise increases are currently below thresholds.