



A14 Trunk Road Haughley New Street to Stowmarket Improvement

**Highways Agency's
Summary
Proof of Evidence
for
the Public Inquiry
November 2006**

 **HIGHWAYS**
AGENCY
**Major Projects South
Woodlands
Manton Lane
Bedford MK41 7LW**

**An Executive Agency of
the Department for Transport**

CONTENTS

	Page No.
1. INTRODUCTION	3
Highways Agency's Representative	
Presentation of the Case for the Scheme	
2. BACKGROUND TO THE PUBLISHED PROPOSALS	3
Background to the Scheme	
The Road in its Regional Context	
The Road in its Local Context	
3. PUBLICATION OF DRAFT ORDERS	5
4. TRUNK ROADS, GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES	5
The Need for the Scheme	
Scheme Objectives	
Description of the Scheme	
5. ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHEME	7
Environmental Assessment	
Noise and Vibration	
Traffic and Economics	
Integration	
6. OBJECTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND SUPPORTERS	8
Objections	
Representations	
Supporters	
7. ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY OBJECTORS	8
8. CONCLUSION	8

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Secretary of State for Transport has published proposals for a scheme to improve the existing A14 Trunk Road between Haughley New Street and Stowmarket in Suffolk.

Highways Agency's Representative

1.2 My name is Roger Hawkins. I am a Project Leader within the Highways Agency's Major Projects South Directorate based in the Bedford Office. I have over 30 years experience gained mainly with the Department for Transport and Highways Agency, all of which has been concerned with highway works. I am a Member of the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers.

1.3 My involvement as Project Leader for the A14 Haughley New Street to Stowmarket Improvement scheme began in March 2005 just prior to the award of the Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) contract to Birse Civils Ltd. As Project Leader my principal duties are:

- to provide a focal point for scheme contacts from all stakeholders
- to manage scheme expenditure, programme and quality.
- to manage the Contractor, Birse, employed to design and construct the scheme and our own Consultant, WSP, who act in a supervisory role.
- to undertake media liaison and represent the Agency at Public Inquiries.

Presentation of the Case for the Scheme

1.4 The case for the Orders being made is addressed by a number of witnesses who will present evidence on the specialist topics as set out in the table below.

	Topic	Witness
1	Government Policy and Scheme overview	Roger Hawkins (<i>Highways Agency</i>)
2	Design and Engineering	Trevor Ridley (<i>Mouchel Parkman</i>)
3	Traffic and Economics	Guy Rigby (<i>Mouchel Parkman</i>)
4	Environmental Issues	Paul Reid (<i>Mouchel Parkman</i>)
5	Noise and Vibration	Richard Bines (<i>Sharps Redmore</i>)
6	Construction	Donald Henry (<i>Birse Civils Ltd</i>)

2. BACKGROUND TO THE PUBLISHED PROPOSALS

Background to the Scheme

- 2.1 In December 1995 Suffolk County Council, then Agents for the Highways Agency, produced a feasibility study report for closure of the central reserve gaps between Haughley New Street and Stowmarket. The report recommended consideration of grade separation at the Fishponds Way junction.
- 2.2 Another study was carried out by Owen Williams Consultants in July 1999 looking at methods of reducing accidents along this section of the A14.
- 2.3 These studies were followed by the A14 Haughley Improvement Study carried out by Owen Williams Consultants, which identified larger scale improvements including options for grade separation.
- 2.4 A safety remedial scheme, consisting of a 50mph speed limit enforced with safety cameras, was introduced in June 2000.
- 2.5 Five options were presented at a public exhibition held on the 14th and 15th February 2003.
- 2.6 A Preferred Route Announcement was published on the 16th March 2004. The draft Orders and Environmental Statement were published on the 31st March 2006.

The Road in its Regional Context

- 2.7 This route is part of the United Kingdom's Trans European Road Network. The A14 forms a key link to centres of population and economic activity. The A14 trunk road is a strategic route that connects the east coast of England to the Midlands and the north. It runs in a generally north-west to south-east direction through East Anglia, from the M1/M6 junction (19 on M1) in the west to the port of Felixstowe in the east. The A14 is designated as a high load route.

The Road in its Local Context

- 2.8 The section of the A14 trunk road currently under consideration lies between the village of Haughley New Street in the west and the town of Stowmarket in the east. The trunk road passes through gently undulating open countryside that varies in height between 40 and 55 metres above Ordnance Survey datum (Newlyn).
- 2.9 The section of the trunk road under consideration currently has a mandatory 50mph speed limit in operation that is supported by the presence of police enforcement cameras on each carriageway. East of the U4977 Stowmarket Road junction, Haughley New Street, the eastbound carriageway of the A14 runs along the line of the historical turnpike road and is of a lower standard in horizontal and vertical

geometry than the more modern westbound carriageway located to the south. As a result the central reserve varies in width and cross sectional shape.

- 2.10 There are gaps in the central reserve to allow for most movements on and off the trunk road, but there are turning restrictions at the U4977 junction where Haughley New Street traffic may only enter or leave the A14 to or from the Stowmarket direction; and at Fishponds Way where traffic may not access the A14 westbound in the direction of Bury St. Edmunds as the right turn is not permitted.

3. PUBLICATION OF DRAFT ORDERS

- 3.1 On the 31st March 2006, the Secretary of State for Transport published draft Line, De-trunking, Side Roads, Road Traffic Regulation and Compulsory Purchase Orders for the scheme. The objection period ended on the 26th May 2006. These Orders are titled:

- *THE A14 TRUNK ROAD (HAUGHLEY NEW STREET TO STOWMARKET IMPROVEMENT AND DETRUNKING) ORDER 20 (D401)*
- *THE A14 TRUNK ROAD (HAUGHLEY NEW STREET TO STOWMARKET IMPROVEMENT SIDE ROADS) ORDER 20 (D402)*
- *THE A14 TRUNK ROAD (HAUGHLEY NEW STREET TO STOWMARKET IMPROVEMENT) (PROHIBITION OF VARIOUS TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS) ORDER 20 (D404)*
- *THE A14 TRUNK ROAD (HAUGHLEY NEW STREET TO STOWMARKET IMPROVEMENT) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER (MP NO 48) 20 (D403)*

4. TRUNK ROADS, GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Under the provisions of the Highways Act 1980 the Secretary of State for Transport is the highway authority for trunk roads. The Secretary of State has a statutory obligation to keep under review the national system of routes for through traffic in England and Wales.
- 4.2 The trunk road programme has been developed within the policy framework set out in the July 1998 White Paper "A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone" (CM 3950) (D1). This was issued by the former Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) and introduced a new integrated transport policy.
- 4.3 "A New Deal for Trunk Roads in England" (D2), a daughter document to the Transport White Paper also published in July 1998, sets out Government Policy specifically in relation to trunk roads. This established the Targeted Programme of

Improvements (TPI), to address the most serious and pressing problems on the strategic road network.

- 4.4 “Transport 2010 The 10 Year Plan” (D6), published in July 2000 set out the resources to be committed up to 2010 to deliver the Government’s priority for improved road, rail and other public transport. A Progress Report on the 10 Year Plan was issued in December 2001.
- 4.5 The Government's long term strategy for the transport network is set out in the July 2004 White Paper, "The Future of Transport: a Network for 2030" (D9). The strategy charts a course over the next 30 years for improving the transport system by sustained investment, improvements in the management of the transport network and planning ahead to address projected pressures on the transport system.

The Need for the Scheme

- 4.6 The Scheme is needed for safety reasons. The existing substandard alignment and location of the junctions with local roads means that the visibility along this existing section of the A14 is poor. The recorded accident rate along this stretch of road is substantially higher than the national average. An analysis of the recorded accidents that have occurred has been undertaken and will be addressed in the evidence to be given by Guy Rigby.
- 4.7 The present daily traffic on this section of road is approximately 40,000 vehicles per day, with up to 20% of these being heavy goods vehicles. Traffic is expected to grow substantially resulting in an increase in congestion, driver stress and accident rate.

Scheme Objectives

- 4.8 The Secretary of State’s objectives for this scheme are the “realignment of the main carriageway of the A14 close to the village of Haughley, Suffolk, along with the provision of a new two-level junction to rationalise and replace side road accesses between the A14 and the villages of Haughley, Haughley New Street and Harleston”

Description of the Scheme

- 4.9 A detailed description of the existing road layout and the design of the proposed scheme is provided by Trevor Ridley in his proof of evidence. Trevor Ridley also deals with the provisions for non-motorised users. Details of the construction of the scheme are dealt with by Don Henry in his proof of evidence.

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHEME

5.1 A comprehensive approach to the assessment of road investment proposals is available on the Department's Transport Analysis Guidance website, www.WebTAG.org.uk. This supersedes GOMMS (2000) and a New Approach to Appraisal (NATA) developed in the mid 1990's.

Environmental Assessment

5.2 The Environmental Statement (D1101) and the Non-Technical Summary (D1102), published at the same time as the draft Orders on the 31st March 2006, details the environmental effects of the scheme.

5.3 A description of the assessment methods for the scheme will be included in the evidence given by Paul Reid. His evidence will also include a detailed analysis of potential impacts in relation to:

- Local Policies and Plans;
- Air Quality;
- Landscape and Visual Amenity;
- Cultural Heritage and Archaeology;
- Ecology and Biodiversity;
- Drainage and Water Quality;
- Land Use and Agriculture;
- Effects on Vehicular Travellers; and
- Pedestrians Cyclists, Equestrians and Community Effects.

Noise and Vibration

5.4 A detailed analysis of potential noise impacts has been undertaken and will be addressed in the evidence to be given by Richard Bines.

Traffic and Economics

5.5 A detailed analysis of traffic and economics has been undertaken and will be addressed in the evidence to be given by Guy Rigby.

Integration

5.6 There would be no impact on any passenger or freight interchanges as a result of the scheme and hence the impact is considered to be neutral.

6. OBJECTIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

6.1 Objections

In response to the publication of the draft Orders, letters were received by the Highways Agency from a total of 14 objectors. As of 12 October 2006, three objections have been withdrawn.

6.2 Representations

Twenty one representation letters were received by the Agency.

6.3 Supporters

Five letters from supporters of the scheme were received by the Agency.

7. ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY OBJECTORS

7.1 Objectors who want to promote Alternatives are to provide details to the Highways Agency by 20 October 2006. As at 12 October 2006 the Agency has been notified of three alternative proposals. These retain the main horizontal alignment but provide a deeper cutting or a combination of deeper cutting plus bunds. All three would require the re-publication of the draft Orders. Details of the alternative proposals will be made known to the affected parties who will be given an opportunity to voice their counter objection if they wish.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The proposed improvement has been appraised to record the degree to which the five Central Government objectives for transport (environment, safety, economy, accessibility and integration) would be achieved. At the heart of the appraisal process is the Appraisal Summary Table (AST) which is presented in the Appendix to my full proof of evidence. The A14 Haughley New Street to Stowmarket Improvement would serve all of these objectives.

8.2 The Highways Agency submits that the published proposals for the A14 Haughley New Street to Stowmarket Improvement are consistent with the Government's policy for transport in general and trunk roads in particular. The proposed scheme would be of significant benefit to both trunk road and local traffic.