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Your ref: TR010018

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Dear Nicholas,

Draft A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme Development Consent Order

A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme – Traffic Modelling and Assessment Update

I am writing to inform you of some additional traffic modelling and assessment work we have undertaken since the Development Consent Order (DCO) application was submitted. I also set out in this letter further work that we intend to undertake and how we suggest that you might take account of this during the Examination.

Additional modelling work

In November 2014, after the traffic model we used for the Development Consent Order (DCO) application had been completed, the Department for Transport published revised economic parameters. We have incorporated these parameters into our traffic model along with some refinements to network coding and to 'external to external' growth factors.

Having updated the traffic model in this way, we considered its effects on the application. We considered the capacity of the application design to deal with the adjusted predicted flows. On environmental impacts, we undertook detailed modelling of the air quality and noise impacts of the adjusted flows. We focused on these topics because they are the environmental topics that are most sensitive to changes in predicted traffic. Other environmental topics underwent a high level review. We also considered the impact of the adjusted flows on the economic case for the scheme.

This data analysis has recently been completed and is in the course of being written up. We intend shortly to submit a report to the Examination explaining the conclusions of this work and providing assessment results, but in the meantime we wish to inform the Examining Authority of the conclusions reached.

In summary, they are as follows:

Predicted traffic growth: The revised forecasts predict reduced traffic growth overall although there are some areas where predicted traffic growth has increased.

Highway layout design: Alterations of layout at some junctions are required to deal with some adjusted predicted flows, for example widening and lengthening of approach lanes, but these

are all minor and can be carried out within the limits of deviation and other constraints of the draft Order without any change to the description of the scheme.

Environmental impacts: The general topic review and detailed air quality and noise modelling work described above confirms that no new likely significant effects result from the adjusted predicted flows and therefore the environmental mitigation proposals and the conclusions of the Environmental Statement (ES) submitted with the application are unchanged.

Business case: while the initial benefit to cost ratio (BCR) for the scheme reduces to 1.2, the adjusted BCR (in line with the standard Department for Transport Value for Money guidance) is still greater than 2.0 and therefore the scheme remains high value for money.

Additional modelling has also been undertaken in response to ongoing engagement with local authorities. Following submission of the application in December last year, Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridge City Council requested that further work was done regarding the impacts of the scheme on the local road network (i.e. local traffic impacts). We have been working with them on these points and have addressed some of them in the updated modelling referred to above. We have agreed with the Councils that further local traffic impact testing, including sensitivity testing of relevant environmental impacts, will continue with the intention of the Councils being able to confirm their position on these issues in advance of the Issue Specific Hearings currently timetabled for September 2015.

Road Traffic Forecasts 2015

You refer in the Rule 6 letter to the Department for Transport's Road Traffic Forecasts 2015 (RTF 2015), which were issued in March. We have undertaken an initial assessment of the implications of this new information on the application. There is a decrease in HGV trips and total trips across the study area as a result of adopting the new growth forecasts. This reduction results in some small changes to forecast flows but not to the extent that it would be reasonable to expect any changes to be required to the DCO or to the conclusions of the ES.

Timescale for submission of information and suggested timetable for consideration in the Examination

Reporting of work to date will be completed by 15 June 2015 and will detail:

- the effect on the application of the November 2014 DfT economic data and the refinements to network coding and to the external to external growth factors set out above; and
- the effect on the application of the March 2015 DfT forecasts.

This report, in the form of a Traffic Modelling Update Report, will include revised operational assessment tables for the Transport Assessment (TA). The report will be available to be submitted to the Examining Authority at Deadline 2 of the draft examination timetable (15 June). A three week period should then give sufficient time for consideration of and response to the Traffic Modelling Update Report. I would suggest, therefore, that Interested Parties are requested to comment on the documentation by Deadline 3 (7 July).

As mentioned above, we are working with Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridge City Council regarding local traffic impacts in order to reach agreement as to those impacts so that the Councils may confirm their position on them in advance of the Issue Specific Hearings in September. The work required to achieve this has been planned with the Councils in order that

the Councils, together with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council, may submit in relation to local traffic impacts at Deadline 6 (2 September): (1) Supplementary Written Representations; (2) a Supplementary Local Impact Report; and (3) a Supplementary Statement of Common Ground. Those documents could be subject to discussion as required at the relevant Issue Specific Hearing two weeks later in September. Deadline 7, ten days later, could then require, in addition to the written summary of oral submissions at the hearing, written representations from Interested Parties on this local traffic impacts work and any matters arising out of it.

For ease of reference and to aid interested parties' understanding of and clarity of the TA, we would also intend to provide a fully updated TA, reflecting the Traffic Modelling Update Report, by Deadline 8. Final comments on the updated TA could then be requested by Deadline 9.

I trust the above update is useful for your consideration in advance of the Preliminary Meeting. If you have any questions in the meantime please let me know.

Yours sincerely



pp **John Rowland**
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