



8 June 2015

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10 JUN 2015

Dear Ms. Fernandes

Re.A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme

Following my registration as an interested party, ID ref.no.10030709, I am enclosing my observations and representations on the proposals for your consideration.

Yours Sincerely,



(Mr P.W. Landucci)

Ms. Frances Fernandes
Lead Member of the Panel of Examining Inspectors
The Planning Inspectorate
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A14 CAMBRIDGE TO HUNTINGDON IMPROVEMENT SCHEME REPRESENTATIONS FROM PATRICK LANDUCCI. REG.ID. 10030709

Introduction

My background is that I am a retired Architect who was a Partner with Building Design Partnership whose work included major infrastructure and town planning projects as well as a considerable variety of large building developments.

I am a resident of Hilton, which is a quintessentially English village dating back to at least Saxon times as well as having strong connections with Capability Brown. Most residents have chosen to live here for its charming rural setting and peaceful environment.

Whilst generally, people acknowledge that improvements are needed to the existing A14, the scheme which is being proposed will, as far as Hilton and other communities nearby, e.g. The Offords, Brampton, etc., be an environmental disaster. In fact HA/Jacobs have publicly stated that Hilton will be "a big loser".

Yet despite this, none of the very reasonable concerns which have been raised and well summarised in the Parish Council's submission, have resulted in any measures or revisions to respond to them, despite a 6 lane highway raised in places up to 3 metres above the existing ground level being routed barely 800 metres from the village, I believe that the so-called consultations by HA have so far turned out to be a box-ticking exercise akin to a charade. My reasons for saying this are:

1. The proposed scheme is basically very similar to one that was put forward 14 years ago and largely the same one which was cancelled by the Coalition Government in 2010. It fails to take account of changes in Government policies e.g. green/environmental strategy and EU legislation over the years.

2. In 2010 the Scheme was cancelled because it was unaffordable and clearing the country's financial deficit was the Government's aim. Yet seemingly miraculously in 2014, despite the deficit still being a long way from being cleared, the most expensive Scheme was authorised, currently estimated at nearly £1.5 billion, which works out at a staggering £60 million per mile. There are a number of much less costly options available, yet despite HA being directed by the Planning Inspector to cost and report on them at the Public Enquiry in May 2010, they have not done so. The most obvious proposal is to widen the existing A14, thus eliminating the Southern By-Pass and to use the money saved to complete the duelling of the A428 from Caxton Gibbet to St. Neots. In fact the A428 connects naturally to the A14 from both the east and the west.

3. Notwithstanding the enormous volume of paper put out by HA approaching nearly 800 documents, the information is deficient on vital issues such as traffic flow predictions, noise measurement, bridge design, demonstration of compliance with pollution legislation, etc. The public and indeed yourselves as an Inspectorate are being asked to examine flawed and partial data. In other words HA's submission is incomplete and should be rejected.

4. The appointment of an Atkins led consortium on 3 June 2015 to prepare the detail design for a Scheme yet to be approved by the Secretary of State, again putting at risk wasteful expenditure of public money, perhaps shows that they have already prepared

some of the design for the now resurrected "cancelled" Scheme, when they were HA's designers up to 2010.

5. In addition to Atkins, Contractors have also now been appointed for an unapproved Scheme, potentially putting substantial sums of public money at risk.

Is it any surprise therefore, that these actions being taken, there is little confidence that any meaningful changes will result from the consultation process. My representation to yourselves are made in the hope that the undoubted political pressure to press on with this flawed scheme regardless will be resisted by yourself as an independent Inspectorate.

Key Areas of Concern

However, should you conclude that the present Scheme should proceed, I am writing to reiterate requests for:

- A. Measures to alleviate noise, air, light and visual pollution.
- B. The establishment of a weight restriction 24 hours a day on traffic passing through Hilton on the B1040 as well as maintaining the present limits on the road from Fenstanton and on Graveley Way connecting Hilton with the A1198.
- C. A ban on construction traffic associated with the A14 work passing through Hilton.

With regard to Item A, these four forms of pollution have not been addressed. Noise is a particular concern. When it is transmitted across wide open landscape of the type which exists north of Hilton, it travels much further largely unattenuated, especially in quiet countryside at night when winds often fall light regardless of direction. HA have to date, brushed this concern aside, essentially concluding they are not required to address it because 800 m. is outside the usual distance parameters. However, as residents we can already hear the present 4 lane A14 2.8 km. away, so it stands to reason that a further 6 lane highway 800m. from the village with a bridge with its carriageway 11m. above present ground level for the B1040 to cross it will significantly worsen the position.

The visual impact of the road which HA propose building up to 3m. above existing ground level will be horrendous. The only concession being offered is a small amount of "screening" in the form of saplings, which could take 15 to 20 years to grow to an effective size.

Light pollution, especially during the hours of darkness is another major concern. Increasingly, HGVs have search lighting fitted above cab level, some 4 to 5 metres above carriageway level. With many HGV drivers preferring to drive at night, the effect will be a frequent intrusion of lights from these vehicles throughout the night and hours of darkness.


The only measure which HA are proposing to address the above concerns is to provide a limited and partial amount of bunding 2m. high. This may provide limited help in reducing noise but it will do nothing to combat light pollution and no effort is being made to address the adverse impact of traffic using the bridge. As a minimum 5m. high sound barriers should be installed to ameliorate the adverse environmental impact. The top of HGVs using the B1040 will be nearly 50 feet (15 m.) above existing ground level, visible for miles around.

Finally, but not least air pollution. The UK has failed to comply with EU directives and the Supreme Court has ruled that the UK must prepare plans to meet EU nitrous oxide limits by 2015. The effect of the Southern By-Pass means that traffic will have to travel a

further 5 miles between Bar Hill and Alconbury, which equates to a 33% increase in fuel burnt and pollutant emissions. HA quote the Government's aim to "where possible contribute to the health and quality of life" (Chapter 6.1, para 14.1.14) yet the impact on health appears to have been ignored by HA. They should be required to respond to the latest research in the BMJ journal "Occupational and Environmental Medicine".

The effect of building the Southern By-Pass will be to create an environmental disaster.

Turning now to concern B, HA are predicting that Hilton will experience less traffic as a result of the Southern By-Pass. This statement is disingenuous and illustrates the lack of joined-up thinking in HA's presentation of the proposals. They consider only the A14, claiming that it is for others to assess traffic implications on other local roads such as the B1040. While it is probably true that with no facility to join the new A14 off the B1040 there might be less direct traffic, however, in travelling from either north or south to/from St. Ives, the only practicable route available as a result of the Southern By-Pass will be the B1040. HA argue that St. Ives traffic will still be able to use the old A14. I believe traffic will take the shortest route, i.e. the B1040 resulting in a significant increase in HGV and other traffic with its attendant noise and air pollution. This situation will be a direct consequence of the new A14 proposals and it is for this reason that an enhanced traffic calming scheme coupled with a 24 hour a day ban on heavy good vehicles should be imposed with the help of the County Council.

Signed..........
Date.....08/06/2015.....