

**Application by Highways England for an Order Granting
Development Consent for the A14 Cambridge to
Huntingdon Improvement Scheme**

**PUBLIC EXAMINATION
(May – November 2015)**

**Planning Act 2008 (as amended)
Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010
(as amended)**

**Written Representation on behalf of the
Homes and Communities Agency
Joint Promoter of the Proposed New Town at
Northstowe
(Ref No: 10030890)**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 This written representation has been submitted by Hyder Consulting (UK) Limited on behalf of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The representation sets out the role of the HCA in relation to the Northstowe new town, provides an overview of the Northstowe development and its relationship to the A14 improvements, and sets out the principal issues of the DCO examination on which the HCA is making a representation. Each of the issues are then set out in more detail for consideration by the Panel of Examining Inspectors.
- 1.02 The HCA has been working closely with the Highways Agency/ Highways England throughout the pre submission process to align these two major and inter-related investments being taken forward by Government agencies. Alongside the written representation, the HCA and Highways England are preparing a Statement of Common Ground which continues the on-going dialogue to address and agree the issues.

2.0 THE HCA ROLE IN NORTHSTOWE

- 2.01 The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the government's housing, land and regeneration agency, and the regulator of social housing providers in England. The HCA is joint promoter for the delivery of homes at Northstowe. The HCA has been involved in the new town since the formation of the agency, and previously brought forward the development as English Partnerships.
- 2.02 The HCA are joint promoters with Gallagher Longstanton Ltd. This is a separate company but related to JJ Gallagher Limited (Gallagher) which is privately owned and based in Warwick specialising in the identification, promotion and subsequent implementation of high quality major residential and mixed use development projects.
- 2.03 The HCA (and its predecessor English Partnerships) has promoted the concept of a new settlement at Northstowe through the planning system on land at Longstanton and at the former Oakington Barracks and Airfield site for a period of nine years and has assembled significant land controls through ownership and land option agreements which are necessary to deliver the development. Some of this land is directly affected by the A14 scheme and will be the subject of negotiations.
- 2.04 The HCA and Gallagher act jointly to take the lead role in the funding, delivery and co-ordination of development of Northstowe. They work closely with Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council to bring forward various elements of the Northstowe project.

3.0 NORTHSTOWE NEW TOWN

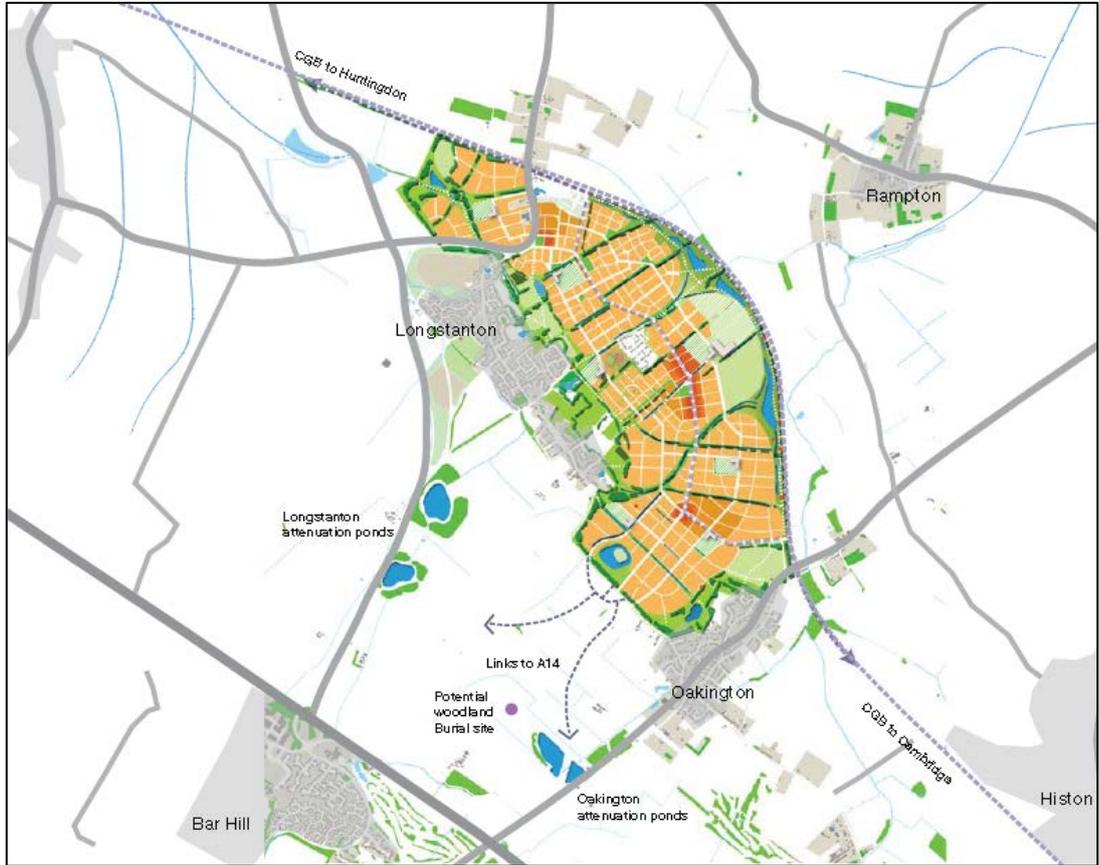
- 3.01 The site of the proposed new town at Northstowe is located in South Cambridgeshire District approximately 10 kilometres north west of Cambridge. Northstowe is promoted as a balanced community of up to 10,000 dwellings with employment, commercial, educational, recreational and community facilities. It is to be developed with high environmental quality and design standards and constitute an exemplar of sustainability that will make positive contributions to carbon reduction and water efficiency

targets. It is a 'flagship' project of high profile and status and has already attracted much interest at regional, national and international levels.

- 3.02 The development at Northstowe will therefore make a major contribution to the provision of market and affordable homes, employment floor space and jobs in the Cambridge sub-region and this is entirely consistent with national planning policy to deliver sustainable development and building a strong, competitive economy (National Planning Policy Framework Pages 6 and 7 at Paragraphs 18-21).
- 3.03 Northstowe will have the advantage of being served by direct connections to the A14 trunk road, part of the Trans European Transport Network connecting the West Midlands to the East Coast Ports, the improvement of which is subject to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme subject of the current Examination.
- 3.04 Northstowe is served by a dedicated public transport system, the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway which connects Northstowe to Cambridge City centre, key employment and service locations such as the Cambridge Science Park and Addenbrookes Hospital and to other market towns in the sub-region.
- 3.05 South Cambridgeshire District Council has adopted a series of Development Plan Documents that provide the local policy context for the new town. The Northstowe Area Action Plan Adopted in July 2007 (NAAP) in particular sets out specific social, environmental and other requirements against which planning applications are assessed.
- 3.06 Northstowe is therefore a confirmed location for a new town in the Cambridge sub-region and an important part of the formally approved and adopted Development Plan for South Cambridgeshire. The long term reserve of land at Northstowe is included in South Cambridgeshire's Submission Local Plan (July 2013) to be brought forward as a formal allocation for further residential development which will be an extension to the new town scheme of development. The Submission Local Plan is now currently subject to Local Plan Examination.
- 3.07 A Development Framework Document including a Framework Master Plan for the whole of Northstowe was approved by the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee (NJDCC) in July 2012.
- 3.08 Gallagher was granted planning permission in April 2014 for Northstowe Phase 1 development (1,500 homes, a local centre, a primary school and community and recreational facilities) and development of the site commenced in April 2015.
- 3.09 The Homes and Community Agency submitted a hybrid planning application in August 2014 for Northstowe Phase 2 development in outline for up to 3,500 homes, two primary schools, a secondary school, a town centre and associated facilities and in full for a Southern Access Road West to link the development to the B1050. The application is expected to be determined by the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee in June 2015.
- 3.10 Further phases of development at Northstowe are planned to complete the full development of up to 10,000 homes. Figure 1 is extracted from the

Northstowe Development Framework Document 2012, showing the Masterplan in the context of the A14.

Figure 1 – Extract from Northstowe Development Framework Document 2012



4.0 PRINCIPAL ISSUES

4.01 The HCA is making representations relating to the following principal issues (as listed by the Inspectorate in the Article 6 letter Annex C):

- Economic and social effects
- Traffic and transport
- Design and engineering; and
- Compulsory acquisition.

5.0 ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CASE

The Need for the Scheme

5.01 The HCA is fully in support of the A14 Improvement Scheme going ahead as it will enable the delivery of Phase 2 and beyond of Northstowe and thus have significant benefits for the growth of the local and wider economy.

5.02 The scheme improvements will provide additional capacity for increased traffic flows, which will include those arising from the Northstowe development within the A14 corridor, which is the largest single

development. As such the business case for the A14 improvements is partly predicated on the Northstowe development.

- 5.03 The scheme will address existing congestion issues and will give the confidence required for future investment in home building, employment growth, jobs and associated facilities which will be required to develop a successful new town.
- 5.04 The Phase 2 outline planning permission (which is subject to consideration by the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee in June 2015) is anticipated to have a condition restricting occupation of Northstowe Phase 2 beyond sub phase B until the A14 improvements in the vicinity of Northstowe have been delivered. As such the A14 improvements are not just desirable but essential to the future development of Northstowe.
- 5.05 It is important that Northstowe should not be deterred or inhibited in coming forward for development. The market and affordable housing, employment, retail, commercial and leisure facilities to be provided at the new town will make a significant contribution to the growth and economy of the wider Cambridge area.
- 5.06 Therefore should there be any delay in the approval of the Development Consent Order or the approval not be forthcoming, this would have very serious consequences for the further development of Northstowe and generally inhibit the promotion of economic growth which would be contrary to the planning strategy for the area.

The Need to Accommodate the Full 10,000 Development

- 5.07 The HCA has worked with Highways England and the Local Authorities to agree common land use and economic assumptions for Northstowe and the region. The A14 'Do Something' scheme 2035 includes the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Northstowe development.
- 5.08 The full 10,000 home new town has been tested in the transport assessment as a sensitivity analysis which is welcomed. However, it is important to ensure that the design of the A14 improvements will accommodate future traffic from Northstowe including for the long term beyond Phases 1 and 2. In this respect the detailed design of the A14 Bar Hill and Drayton Road junctions and the local access roads will need to be designed to meet this requirement. There is commentary on these aspects in the submission but the HCA are seeking clarification as to how this is achieved, as further discussed in Section 6.0.

6.0 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

- 6.01 Whilst in principle the HCA welcomes the A14 improvement scheme, the HCA wish to fully understand the traffic impact of the A14 proposals on existing local roads in the vicinity of the Northstowe development as this will influence the capacity and acceptability of future development.
- 6.02 The traffic modelling for Northstowe Phase 2 has been undertaken largely in parallel. Both schemes have used the Cambridge Sub Regional Model (CSRM) with benchmarking and updates made in spring 2014.

- 6.03 In relation to baseline traffic data, the A14 scheme Transport Assessment (TA) identifies the approach in Section 3.4. Traffic count data was collected in February 2014 to update the A14 scheme base model. This data included the turning movement counts undertaken for the Northstowe Phase 2 Transport Assessment. The local network baseline traffic data is therefore the same for the A14 scheme as that used in the Northstowe assessment for benchmarking the CSRM base year and for validation of base year junction models.
- 6.04 The A14 pre submission consultation in autumn 2013 was undertaken using the CHARM1 version of the CSRM. The Northstowe Phase 2 assignments were a later version including the CHARM1 changes to CSRM as well as benchmarking work undertaken for Northstowe.
- 6.05 Further analysis by the Highways Agency identified that CHARM1 did not fully validate against WebTAG calibration and validation criteria for the purposes of the scheme assessment and the A14 scheme model has been updated to CHARM2 for the DCO submission. This updated model uses additional data collected to update to a 2014 base year including number plate surveys and aggregated mobile phone signal data to give a better understanding of the routes that traffic currently uses. It also takes account of the benchmarking work undertaken for Northstowe Phase 2, which was not in CHARM1. The A14 scheme modelling for the submission is therefore an updated version of the highway assignment model for Northstowe Phase 2.
- 6.06 The land use modelling aspects of CSRM are the same as those used for Northstowe Phase 2. Paragraph 3.5.33 of the A14 TA identifies that the latest set of development and infrastructure proposals were agreed with the planning authorities in April 2014, as agreed and used for Northstowe.
- 6.07 The 'with scheme' scenario for the A14 scheme includes Phase 2 of Northstowe and uses the same assumptions regarding the provision of Northstowe highway infrastructure (dual carriageway Southern Access Road in Phase 2, link to Dry Drayton Road 'Oakington Link' in Phase 3).
- 6.08 The model years are 2020 and 2035. This differs from the Northstowe Phase 2 submission which assesses 2031 in line with the end of the Phase 2 development and the Local Plan period. The model years were interpolated from CSRM model runs of 2031 and 2041. As such in any comparison of traffic flows presented for the two schemes the A14 scheme forecast network traffic flows would be expected to be higher than those for Northstowe Phase 2 given that it is for a future year of 2035 rather than 2031 (with additional background traffic growth).
- 6.09 Traffic forecasts have been made available in the Transport Assessment report. This provides peak hour junction turning movements at the proposed junctions at Bar Hill and the Local Access Road, as well as AADT flows in some locations in the vicinity of Northstowe.
- 6.10 In order to fully understand the compatibility of the traffic modelling results in the Northstowe local area, and the impacts on the local road network to the Northstowe development, the HCA wish to obtain more detail regarding the traffic flows and turning movements on the B1050, Bar Hill junction and the Local Access Road.

- 6.11 It is understood that updated traffic reporting is to be made available on the 15th June 2015 and this may assist in providing clarity on these issues.

7.0 DESIGN AND ENGINEERING

- 7.01 Whilst in principle the HCA welcome the A14 improvement scheme, the HCA wish to ensure that the design of the improvements appropriately accommodates the Northstowe proposals, including the long term beyond Phase 2. The particular areas of interest are the changes to the Bar Hill and Lower Drayton Road junctions, the local access roads and the connection along the B1050 northwards linking to the HCA improvements as part of Northstowe Phase 2.

Bar Hill Junction

- 7.02 The Bar Hill junction includes a new signalised junction from the B1050 to the local access road. The LinSig modelling results are presented showing the junction operates at capacity in the 2035 do something scenario. Queuing from the junction appears to be accommodated without blocking back to the B1050/ Southern Access Road roundabout or the main Bar Hill roundabout. Whilst this is the case in 2035 with Phase 2 of Northstowe, the situation beyond this phase requires clarification.
- 7.03 The TA states that “the Do-Something scenario has been designed as necessary until Phase 3 of the Bar Hill improvements have been undertaken”. The means of increasing capacity at this signalised junction with Northstowe Phase 3 is not clear although it may include widening to provide extra lanes at the junction. As a result of the above, the HCA is seeking clarification from Highways England to confirm these aspects of the traffic assessment and junction arrangements.

B1050 north of Bar Hill

- 7.04 The B1050 north of the Bar Hill ‘jug handle’ junction with the local access road is proposed to be a dual carriageway with central reservation and a segregated cycleway on the east side. The proposals align with those of the HCA based on a review of a pdf drawing however the HCA will review the alignment between the design drawings in more detail.

Delivery and Construction Timing

- 7.05 The HCA need post DCO certainty as to the timing of the construction works. The HCA will seek to construct the highway improvements to the B1050 in parallel with the A14 improvements to the B1050 and Bar Hill and wishes to explore initiatives with Highways England to deliver efficiencies across the two projects.

8.0 COMPULSORY ACQUISITION

- 8.01 The HCA has interests in land adjacent to the A14 affected by the scheme and as such wishes to be included in any discussions regarding acquisition.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.01 The HCA welcomes and supports the A14 Improvement Scheme proposals and requests that the Application by Highways England for an Order Granting Development Consent be recommended for approval by the Panel of Examining Inspectors and subsequently confirmed by the Secretary of State for Transport.

- 9.02 The HCA requests that the traffic and design issues raised in this written representation are considered by the Panel in order to ensure that the A14 Improvement Scheme fully facilitates the successful delivery of the Northstowe new town.

Second Draft 12/06/15