

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

The Examining Authority's (ExA's) first written questions and requests

Response from Girton Parish Council - June 2015

Girton parish Council only became aware of this consultation stage through an individual member who had registered as an Interested Party in his own right. For some reason we do not appear to be so registered. This oversight may have arisen through a confusion of communications arising because our Chairman up to May 2015 is also a District Councillor and several previous communications on this issue may have been taken as coming from him as a District Councillor rather than as representing Girton Parish Council. We request that this situation be rectified as Girton is significantly affected by the A14 developments and we wish our opinion to be heard.

Our detailed responses to the questions are shown below and in particular we would draw attention to our request for a detailed evaluation of the effects of the development on traffic movements through Girton and a thorough justification of the proposed new local road over alternatives that have been suggested such as camera controlled variable speed limits throughout the Bar Hill to Milton section of the A14.

Question 1.1 Air Quality and Emissions

While Parish Councils are only listed against certain of the questions which we have addressed individually below, we feel that all the questions in this section are relevant to Girton residents.

Q1.1.5 Please explain when, how and where air quality would be monitored or why no monitoring is proposed with particular reference to NOx, NO2, CO, PM10 and PM2.5.

We would like to have this answered by the applicant.

Q1.1.8 Please explain how the assessment of air quality has taken into account the proximity of the proposed road scheme to sensitive receptors including housing and schools and the mitigation measures proposed during the operational phase in such locations? Where and how would these measures be secured?

We would like to have this answered by the applicant.

Q1.1.10 Table 8.12 of the ES concludes that during the operational phase the overall scheme would have no significant impacts on air quality. Can the applicant explain further how it has reached its conclusion of no significant air quality impacts??

We would like to have this answered by the applicant.

Q1.1.14 Have the results of the air quality assessment been agreed with Interested Parties and if so, by whom and if not, why not?

We would be interested to see these results.

Q1.5 Design and Engineering Standards

Q1.5.8 To what extent have the non-motorised user provisions suggested by the Cambridgeshire Local Access Forum in its relevant representation (130) been incorporated in the scheme and how has the extent of those incorporated been determined?

Q1.5.9 How would the future provision of connections to cater for the missing movements at Girton interchange, between the A428 and the A14 and M11, be accommodated within the scheme?

Q1.5.10 To what extent have the non-motorised user provisions suggested by the Cambridgeshire Local Access Forum in its relevant representation (130) been incorporated in the scheme and how has the extent of those incorporated been determined?

Q1.5.16 The Applicants letter (12 May 2015) suggests that amended layouts at some junctions would be required as a result of the Traffic Modelling Update Report. Will revised highway layout drawings be submitted to the examination? If so, when? If not, why not?

Answers to these questions would also be of interest to Girton PC

Q1.7 Economic and Social Effects

Q1.7.8 Table 16.14 of the ES summarises the effect of the proposed scheme on community severance. To what extent have local authorities and Parish Councils been involved in such an assessment and are they in agreement with the applicant over the effects of the proposal? If not, why not?

We are not aware of such assessments and would welcome them.

Q1.8.3 The ES indicates that the urbanisation of the landscape character through the interaction of noise, lighting and visual intrusion from new infrastructure would be a major cumulative effect. Para 18.72 indicates that mitigation to reduce the cumulative effect on landscape character could not be identified and the mitigation for each effect would not fully mitigate the overall impacts. Has the mitigation of cumulative impacts been discussed with local authorities and Parish councils and if so what was the outcome. If this has not been discussed, why not?

We are not aware of such discussions and would welcome them.

Q1.10 Noise and Vibration

These are all of relevance to Girton so we would be interested in the responses. In particular:

Q1.10.13 The construction and operational effects of noise on commercial and residential properties in the vicinity of the Cambridge Northern Bypass has been assessed as significantly adverse without mitigation. Have the proposed mitigation measures and their effectiveness been discussed with IPs and if so, what was the outcome? If no discussions have taken place, why not?

Q1.10.15 *What noise mitigation measures are proposed and where at the re-configured Girton interchange? Would these include acoustic fencing? If not, why not?*

Are of great interest to Girton residents

Q1.12 Transportation and Traffic

Q1.12.19 *Please provide in tabular format and by reference to relevant plans, the proposed measures which seek to address the needs of non-motorised users including equestrians, cyclists and pedestrians as part of the proposed scheme. Please identify clearly which measures are aimed at reducing community severance, correcting historic problems; enabling cyclists to use junctions easily and safely and improving accessibility for disabled people.*

This also is of great interest to Girton residents.

Additionally there does not seem to be any consideration of the effect of the scheme on traffic movements through Girton Village. We would like to see the results of such a study.

Furthermore it is not apparent to us that a detailed justification has been provided for the proposed local road over alternative solutions. Specifically has sufficient consideration been given to alternatives such as camera controlled variable speed limits throughout the Bar Hill to M11/Milton A14 junction? This alternative would allow safer use of the road by local traffic. We are not convinced that the local road solution with its spaghetti junction arrangement near Girton Corner provides a safe means of merging traffic from several roads. For example entering Cambridge along the Huntingdon road will require merging with higher speed traffic coming off the A14 presenting a potentially hazardous situation. It is likely that the new proposals will result in the need for reduced speed limits anyway, so the argument that such limits result in unjustifiable economic losses does not hold water. Variable speed limits have been introduced safely in a number of motorways in the UK to improve traffic flow and safety and are a proven solution to congestion. This argument was put to the Highways agency as long ago as June 2010 but did not receive a well reasoned response.

Q1.13 Water Issues

Q1.13.2 *Has the historic flooding in Girton, particularly from Washpit and Beck Brooks, been taken into account in the design of the scheme through the suggested floodplain compensation in the Environmental Statement and how? If not, why not?*

Historic data presented is not up to date and takes no account of flooding in Girton since 2001.

Q1.13.3 *Although there are 'few properties within the scheme's zone of influence' on Washpit and Beck Brooks, why are these watercourses given a low importance of attributes in terms of flood risk based on the guidance given in HD45/09.*

Flood risk from Washpit and Becks Brooks has been under stated, there are 12-15 properties that flood regularly and 80 in the Environment Agencies flood warning area.

Q1.13.13 *How would highway attenuation ponds discharge during a flood event that inundated Flood Zone 3? (Document 6.3 Appendix 17.01 Para 5.3.1)*

Girton residents would like to see these ponds designed so that the flood risk downstream is reduced rather than maintained at the current level or even increased.

Girton Parish Council - June 2015