A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme

What’s happening in Huntingdon?

August 2019
The A14 provides a vital road corridor between the West Midlands and East Anglia and is of local, regional, national and international significance. Work to improve the section between Cambridge and Huntingdon officially started in November 2016 and the new A14 bypass is expected to open to traffic by the end of 2019.

Work in Huntingdon is expected to complete by early 2022, dependant on the completion of the new A14 bypass.
The A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme

The section of the road between Cambridge and Huntingdon carries a high level of commuter as well as long-distance traffic and provides a strategic link from the A1(M) to the North of England and the M11 motorway to London and the South East.

It carries around 85,000 vehicles per day, 26% of this is HGV traffic (against the national average of 10%). It is frequently congested and traffic is often disrupted by breakdowns, accidents and roadworks.

To address this, we are:
- Building a major new 12 mile bypass to the south of Huntingdon between Swavesey and Brampton
- Widening the A1 between Brampton and Alconbury
- Widening the existing A14 between Swavesey and Milton
- Improving junctions at Bar Hill, Swavesey, Girton, Histon and Milton
- Removing the A14 viaduct in Huntingdon
- Building new access roads for local traffic

Once complete, the scheme will:
- Relieve congestion, cutting up to 20 minutes off journeys
- Unlock local and national economic growth
- Connect communities
- Improve the environment in Huntingdon
- Help to create a positive legacy for the region
What’s happening in Huntingdon?

Completed in 1975, the A14 road and viaduct dominates the centre of Huntingdon. The removal of the viaduct and construction of link roads are an important part of the A14 scheme and will benefit Huntingdon and its residents.

This is because:

- The traffic that uses the A14 is a major contributor to noise and air quality impacts within Huntingdon.
- The viaduct constrains access and development to properties and land nearby.
- The viaduct requires ongoing and costly maintenance, which is not an efficient use of public money.
- The removal of the viaduct will improve some views of Huntingdon, particularly from the Huntingdon Conservation Area, some listed buildings and public rights of way.

Once the new A14 is built, the viaduct will become redundant. The option to retain the viaduct was considered during the development of the scheme, but as this would significantly reduce the scheme benefits for Huntingdon and its residents, this was discounted.

This is where the changes will take place.

For more detail see page 8.
The work in Huntingdon includes:

- A new Mill Common Link Road
- Removal of the A14 viaduct and work around the station
- A new Views Common Link Road
- A new station car park
- A new Pathfinder Link Road

Views Common Link Road
For more detail see pages 14 and 15.

Pathfinder and Mill Common Link Roads
For more detail see page 10 and 11.

Around Huntingdon station
For more detail see page 12 and 13.
Pathfinder and Mill Common Link Roads

**Pathfinder Link Road** - A new link road will tie the Huntingdon ring road to the existing A14 in the area west of the Mill Common underpass.

**Mill Common Link Road** - A new link road will join the Edison Bell Way junction to the new Pathfinder Link Road. This will follow the line of the A14, but at a lower level.
Around Huntingdon train station

Existing layout

Proposed new layout

Huntingdon train station (this work is subject to approval by Network Rail)

We're proposing a new public transport hub and station forecourt area, which we’re discussing with Network Rail. We will also construct a new access from the Mill Common Link Road to the train station car park.

Removal of the A14 viaduct

The new A14 bypass will open to traffic by the end of 2019. Once the new road is open, we will be able to remove the viaduct that crosses the East Coast Main Line and Brampton Road. The remaining sections of the old A14 will be detrunked (handed over to become part of the Cambridgeshire County Council local road network).
Views Common Link Road

A new link road will connect Hinchingbrooke Park Road to the current A14 (via a roundabout) to the north of the police and fire headquarters and emergency services buildings, where it will connect to Spittals junction.

We'll also be installing an attenuation pond in Hinchingbrooke loop. Attenuation ponds help to absorb run-off water from roads and reduce flooding risk.
The removal of the A14 viaduct over the East Coast Main Line and Brampton Road bridge is a complex engineering challenge.

We are working closely with Network Rail, Cambridgeshire County Council and Huntingdonshire District Council to ensure the work is planned as efficiently and safely as possible while minimising disruption.

A detailed programme is still being developed with Network Rail and our delivery team, but we expect the removal to follow these steps:

1. **Installation of a protection deck**
   This will be installed underneath the viaduct as a safety measure to protect the East Coast Main Line and Brampton Road while we are preparing this part of the viaduct for removal.

2. **Preparation work and installation of the lifting system**
   Once the new A14 is complete, the old A14 will be closed between Godmanchester (junction 24) and Spittals (junction 23) and preparation work, such as removing the central reserve barriers, will start. At this point, we will also install the system needed to lift and remove sections of the viaduct.

3. **Removal of first section**
   The first section of the viaduct to be removed will be the section over the East Coast Main Line and Brampton Road. This section will be removed over a number of Saturday nights to allow the trains to run as normal. A more detailed programme will be shared as soon as it is available.

4. **Removal of second section**
   The second section of the viaduct to be removed will be the section over the Landro car park, next to the water tower.

5. **Removal of third section**
   The third section of the viaduct, over the Network Rail car park, will follow. To do this, we will need to close the station access from Brampton Road; the new station southern access will be in place by this time.
We’ve prepared traffic forecasts for an opening year of 2020 and 15 years beyond this date (2035), allowing for scenarios without the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme and with the scheme.

Results show that, on the whole, traffic flows are expected to decrease in Huntingdon town centre as a result of the new A14, with a significant reduction in flows through Godmanchester, on the B1514 through Brampton and on the Huntingdon Inner Ring Road. There is a small increase on part of the A141 Huntingdon Northern Bypass. The removal of the old A14 viaduct and subsequent changes to the road network in Huntingdon will cause some increase in traffic on Brampton Road between the new Views Common Link Road and the new Mill Common Link Road.

This is because these new roads will now carry town centre traffic. Elsewhere, traffic will be reduced.
Traffic flow - Huntingdon town centre

Key

- One Way Link

Green numbers decrease in traffic
Red numbers increase in traffic

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Benefits to Huntingdon

The traffic from the A14 contributes to the issues of noise and air pollution within Huntingdon.

Removal of the viaduct and building new link roads should see:

- **A reduction in noise**
  Areas of Huntingdon are classed as ‘Noise Important Areas’. This means that parts of Huntingdon suffer from some of the worst road traffic noise in the country as a result of the A14 passing over the town. The removal of the A14 and its traffic should see noise levels reduce to the extent that Huntingdon is no longer designated as a Noise Important Area.

- **A reduction in air pollution**
  Areas of Huntingdon are also classed as an ‘Air Quality Management Area’. This means that parts of Huntingdon exceed the relevant air quality objectives. An air quality management area is designated as such by the Local Authority, in this case Huntingdonshire District Council. The reduction in traffic through the removal of the A14 should see pollution reduce to the extent that Huntingdon is no longer designated as an Air Quality Management Area.

- **An improved town centre**
  The viaduct currently acts as a dividing wall through Huntingdon. Its removal will open up development opportunities and improve connectivity. The current weight restriction will remain through Huntingdon.

- **Improved station facilities**
  Once the viaduct is removed, a new public transport hub and pedestrianised station forecourt will be built, improving access to the station and public transport links, and creating an improved gateway to Huntingdon for those visiting by train. This is subject to discussions with Network Rail.
Timeline of work

In 2018, we started a number of preparatory activities ahead of the main work starting. These included:

- Archaeology. Mill Common is known to be of archaeological value. We’ve carried out archaeological investigations to help us understand previous uses of the land.
- Utility diversions (such as gas, electric and water). There are extensive utilities in Huntingdon and we need to divert these before we start building work.

We’ve completed archaeological field work and continue work to divert utilities. Completion of the road improvements in Huntingdon are dependent on the removal of the viaduct. We can only remove this once the new A14 bypass is complete, but construction of the Views Common and Pathfinder Link Roads will begin in summer 2019.

Preparing and installing the mobile protection deck, to remove the viaduct, is an extensive piece of work and will begin in winter 2019, with actual removal to start following the completion of the new A14 bypass. We expect work to complete the link roads and work around Huntingdon station to finish in spring 2022, with the viaduct removal completing in autumn 2021.

Removal of the viaduct is a challenging piece of engineering, crossing both an existing road (Brampton Road) and the East Coast Main Line. We will minimise the effect on train travel by working outside of scheduled timetables. We are currently in discussions with Network Rail to determine how and when the viaduct removal takes place.
During construction

We will do our very best to minimise any impacts while work is carried out.

Code of construction practice

We have worked with local authorities to produce a code of construction practice.

Compliance to the code is a requirement of the Development Consent Order and helps ensure that impacts on the local environment and those living close to the scheme are kept to a minimum during construction. It includes how we manage things such as air quality, vibration and drainage.

Where reasonably practical, site operating hours will be:

- 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday
- 8am to 4pm, Saturday

Due to the constraints of working over the East Coast Main Line and Brampton Road, night work will be necessary to remove the viaduct and connect the new roads into the existing road network.

We are working hard to ensure the impact of this work is minimised as far as reasonably practical.

Construction noise

We will make every effort possible to keep construction noise to a minimum, especially where we are working close to properties.

To ensure the noise generated from site machinery is kept to a minimum, the equipment used will be modern and as efficient as possible.

For safety reasons many of the site vehicles have to be fitted with an audible reversing alarm, which cannot be switched off. Wherever possible we will plan activities to avoid reversing manoeuvres.

We will be working with the local authority environmental health teams to submit Control of Pollution Act (Section 61) applications. These contain agreed management for items such as:

- Working hours
- Permitted noise and vibration levels from construction activities

These are reviewed regularly throughout the duration of the work.

Air Quality

Some of our work has the potential to cause dust and we have made commitments within the Development Consent Order (DCO) to monitor air quality.

To reduce this risk we will use a number of methods, including:

- Planting or covering over topsoil storage areas
- Using cutting equipment fitted with dust extraction and water suppression
- Installing wheel wash facilities and road brushes to minimise the deposit of debris from our vehicles to the local road network
If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call 0300 123 5000* and we will help you.

For further information on this scheme:

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