

A1 Peterborough to Blyth Junction Improvements - Markham Moor Preferred Route Statement of the Secretary of State's decision following Public Consultation

Background

The A1 Trunk Road is a busy north-south route of strategic importance connecting the two sections of the A1(M) at Peterborough in the south and Blyth in the north. Most of this length is of a satisfactory standard but there are localised problems at six roundabouts.

One of these is Markham Moor junction, which is a six-arm roundabout giving access from the A1 to Markham Moor via the A638, to Lincoln via the A57, to Sibthorpe via the B1164 and to Service Areas adjacent to the roundabout.

The Highways Agency, on behalf of the Department for Transport, proposes to improve this junction by constructing a new two level junction.

The most important reasons for improving this junction are to improve safety and reduce congestion:

- Nearly 39,000 vehicles per day use this junction, up to 25% of these being heavy goods vehicles. At certain times of the day this results in substantial delays and congestion.
- The delays caused at this roundabout make local access movements difficult.
- There is inadequate provision for pedestrians and cyclists which makes it difficult for these users to cross the A1.
- Between 1999 and 2003 there were 75 personal injury accidents in the vicinity of the existing junction.

Public consultation

We held a public consultation exhibition on 7th and 8th March 2003 and the consultation period ran until 16th May 2003.

By the end of the consultation period, we received a total of 44 responses from the public in the form of completed exhibition comment forms, letters or emails. Most of those who expressed a preference were in favour of the proposals and several asked for the implementation of the works to be brought forward. There were some adverse comments relating to the possible increase in noise pollution and visual intrusion that would be created by taking the A1 over the junction.

Responses were also received from the local authorities, statutory and non-statutory environmental bodies and others with an interest in the route.

As a result of the comments received during the consultation, the layout has been modified and is described below.

The proposals

Our objectives are to improve safety and reduce congestion. We would do this by providing a new two level junction. We would remove the existing embankment at the south end and construct the new A1 carriageway at a similar level to the existing road. We would replace the existing roundabout with two new roundabouts, one on either side of the current junction. A link road carried over the A1 on a new bridge would connect these roundabouts. Entry and exit slip roads would connect the westbound and eastbound carriageways of the A1 to the new roundabouts.

The existing Little Chef building would be retained, and access to it and to the other Service Areas would be modified to improve traffic flow into these facilities.

Decision of the Secretary of State

The Secretary of State has considered the views expressed and noted the support for the option presented at the public consultation exhibition. However, he has accepted the need to reduce the local impact of the proposals by modifying the junction layout.

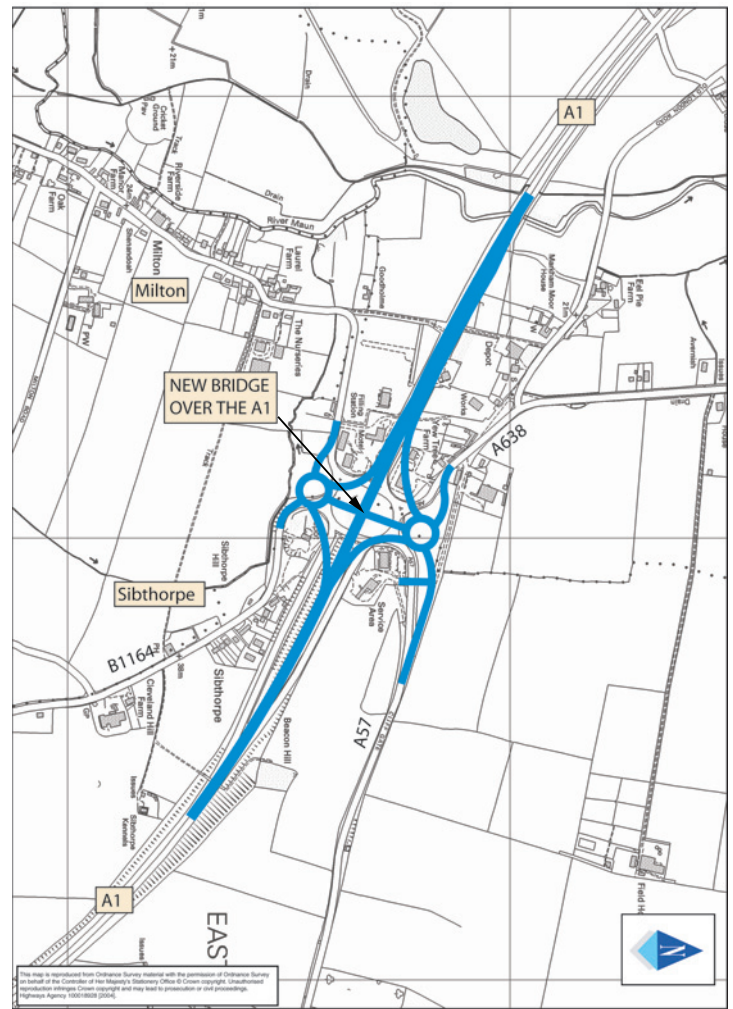
He agrees that the proposals shown on the enclosed plan should be the Preferred Route for the A1 Markham Moor Junction Improvement.

What happens next?

The Preferred Route for the A1 Markham Moor Junction Improvement will be protected from development. We will shortly publish Draft Statutory Orders under the Highways Act 1980, the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 and an Environmental Statement will also be published.

At that stage there will be a further opportunity for people to support, comment or object. A Public Inquiry before an independent Inspector could follow, depending on the weight and nature of any objections.

All elements of the scheme will be reviewed as the proposals are developed in more detail. A copy of the scheme plan will be issued to Local Planning Authorities for planning purposes.



Road Safety

Stay Safe on the Roads this Winter

The Highways Agency and the Department for Transport's Think road safety campaign advise drivers to follow six key messages about driving safely in wintry weather. These are:

- The British winter is unpredictable. If you must drive, make sure you are prepared for the bad weather conditions.
- Check local and national weather forecasts. Listen to travel information on radio.
- Make sure you're equipped with warm clothes, food, water, boots, de-icer, a torch and spade.
- Take care around winter service vehicles. Don't be tempted to overtake snowploughs by squeezing into partially cleared lanes.
- It can take ten times longer to stop in icy conditions. Allow extra room to slow down and stop.
- Use the highest gear possible to avoid wheel spin. Manoeuvre gently and avoid harsh braking and acceleration.

Remember that tiredness kills. Take regular breaks from driving.

Further information

For all queries about major trunk roads and motorways, real time travel information and roadworks, please dial

The Highways Agency Information Line:

08457 50 40 30

(Calls are charged at local rate)

HAIL (Highways Agency Information Line) Service

8am - 8pm Weekdays

9am - 5pm Weekends and public holidays

365 days a year or visit

The Highways Agency Website:

www.highways.gov.uk