

A47 Alliance Steering Group Meeting Note

2-4pm Friday 15th February 2019

Council Chamber, Kings Lynn Town Hall, PE30 5DQ.

In attendance:

Nina Cunningham	South Norfolk Council
Peter Jermany	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Cllr Brian Long	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Cllr Margaret Dewsbury	South Norfolk Council
Cllr Mick Castle	Norfolk County Council
Alan Todd	Federation of Small Businesses
Henry Bellingham MP	Parliament
George Freeman MP	Parliament
Cllr Martin Wilby	Norfolk County Council
Christine Marshall	Breckland District Council
David Cumming	Norfolk County Council
Susie Lockwood	Norfolk County Council
Cllr David Harrison	Norfolk County Council
Cllr William Richmond	Norfolk County Council
Ellen Goodwin	New Anglia LEP
Tom Lawman	Highways England
Peter Havlicek	Highways England
Richard Perkins	Suffolk Chamber of Commerce
Mayor James Palmer	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
Cllr Chris Seaton	Fenland District Council
Cllr Ian Bates	Cambridgeshire County Council
Jack Eagle	Cambridgeshire County Council
Rowland Potter	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
Wendy Otter	Fenland District Council
Philip Scotney	Road Haulage Association
Cllr Paul Claussen	Breckland District Council
Nick Tupper	Norfolk County Council
Hannah Grimes	Norfolk County Council

Apologies:

Andrew Mower	Federation of Small Businesses
Andy Tatt	Peterborough City Council
Andy Watt	Norwich City Council
Charlotte Palmer	Peterborough City Council
Chris Starkie	New Anglia LEP
Cllr Graham Plant	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Cllr Mark Bee	Waveney District Council
Cllr Mary Evans	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Michael Ladd	Waveney District Council

Cllr Philip Cowen	Breckland District Council
Cllr Tim East	Norfolk County Council
Cllr William Nunn	Breckland District Council
David Glason	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Doug Field	New Anglia LEP
John Bridge	Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce
Jonathan Cage	Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
Keith Simpson MP	Parliament
Michael Selfe	RAC Foundation
Naomi Chamberlain	Norfolk County Council
Norman Lamb MP	Parliament
Nova Fairbank	Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
Paul Medd	Fenland District Council
Peter Aldous MP	Parliament
Stephen Greenhill	Highways England
Tom Cornwell	Road Haulage Association
Tom McCabe	Norfolk County Council
Lewis Banks	Peterborough City Council
Cllr Richard Blunt	Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Cllr Roger Foulger	Broadland District Council
Cllr Mark Kiddle- Morris	Norfolk County Council

1. Welcome and introductions

Cllr Wilby thanked everyone for attending and their ongoing support to the A47 Alliance.

2. Apologies for absence

Listed above.

3. Last meeting notes and matters arising from 19th October 2018

The notes from the meeting held on the 19th October 2018 were agreed.

4. Membership

It was agreed that the Federation of Small Businesses and Road Haulage Association become members of the A47 Alliance.

5. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority

Mayor James Palmer- Work is ongoing with Highways England. Continuing to press work on the A47 between Wisbech and Peterborough. Having meetings with Anglian Water and the Environment Agency due to flooding on the A47.

George Freeman MP- We need to keep momentum up in Westminster with clear messages. Purpose of this Group should be to keep pushing the delivery of current schemes and a positive announcement of funding for dualling additional schemes. There has been a clear steer from government that we need houses and growth. Helpful to put pressure on DfT and other agencies. There have been discussions with the treasury about raising a bond or looking at alternatives around growth such as private infrastructure investment.

Henry Bellingham MP- there is housing growth along the A47 and A10. Wisbech garden town will help the A47 case. I have applied for a debate on the A47 in Parliament to pin the Minister down.

6. Roads Investment Strategy One (2015-2020)

Cllr Brian Long- there is lots of growth around Wisbech and west Norfolk. Is a business case for upgrading that section of road being looked at? To develop we need improvements to infrastructure.

Mayor James Palmer- Business case for A47 is enhanced by potential of 10,000 homes around Wisbech. Using garden town to enhance the strategic business case for the A47.

Rowland Potter- Working closely with Highways England developing a full suite of products to the highest standards to enable fair assessment. Three routes published in October. Set criteria against known growth that is committed and looking beyond. Sensitivity testing of homes at Wisbech and additional 10,000 homes on top on that corridor. Highways England's strategy team have been supportive, adding additional data.

George Freeman MP- powerful to go to government using the East West branding. Extension into the east. Say to government this is key to the East.

David Cumming- Listed the schemes

RIS1 2015- 2020 (funded)

- Wansford to Sutton Dualling
- Guyhirn Junction Improvement
- North Tuddenham to Easton Dualling
- A47/A11 Thickthorn Junction Improvement
- Blofield to North Burlingham Dualling
- Great Yarmouth Junction Improvements

RIS2 2020- 2025 (current priorities)

- Peterborough to Wisbech Dualling
- Tilney to East Winch Dualling
- Acle Straight Dualling

RIS3 2025+

- East Winch to Swaffham Dualling
- Swaffham to Dereham Dualling
- Great Yarmouth to Lowestoft Dualling
- Full grade separation

Mayor James Palmer- Cambridgeshire Economic Review provides a clear evidence base stating what's necessary and identifies the A47 as a significant priority. Working hard with England's Economic Heartland Sub-national Transport Body. There is strong east west pressure. Working together on East West Rail.

Cllr Ian Bates- Need delivery in a timely manner.

Peter Havlicek- RIS1 schemes are fully committed. Last meeting discussed the implications due to issues with the supplier who was doing design work. Now have a new delivery partner who we will use for six years for design and construction. We are mitigating some delays by doing some work out in the field already. Some surveys are underway. Committed dates are in the Highways England Delivery Plan July 2018. Start of works Wansford to Sutton Dualling, Guyhirn Junction, Thickthorn Junction are planned to start in 2020/21, Blofield to North Burlingham Dualling and North Tuddenham to Easton Dualling are planned to start in 2021/22. There have been some concerns raised around Wansford to Sutton due to residents' concerns during consultation. Blofield to North Burlingham and Wansford to Sutton consultation reports are due back in the next couple of weeks. In Great Yarmouth the Third River Crossing has meant there is a change in the roads use and configurations. There have been discussions with DfT about the implications. Norfolk County Council have been undertaking some of the traffic analysis work. Possibility that other junctions may come into play.

ACTION: NCC to circulate a simple delivery chart to the A47 Alliance with all the schemes and known delivery dates and houses and jobs.

Richard Perkins- Suggestion to RAG rate delivery. Interested to hear from Highways England as to what slippage in Great Yarmouth means. Slipping into RIS2 is unhelpful to help achieve other RIS2 schemes. Need regular reporting on progress.

Cllr Mick Castle- The slippage on the roundabouts in Great Yarmouth is due to a specific reason as the junctions were funded before the Third River Crossing announcement. Need to research to make sure the money is spent on the best possible scheme. Vauxhall roundabout needs to be done whatever happens as it is the end of the Acle Straight and needs to be configured for potential dualling.

Cllr Brian Long- chart should add how much housing or development that each scheme could relate to. The scheme is stopping new homes or access. Adds to argument.

Rowland Potter- RIS1 covers 2015- 2020. Delivery is planned in RIS2 2020-2025. Where does the funding for the schemes come from? The first or second budget? The Great Yarmouth scheme was an unintended consequence. Guyhirn viability may be in question if RIS2 dualling scheme is approved, need further discussion with Highways England. May be the case on other RIS1 schemes. Potential overlap and consequences.

Peter Havlicek- money allocated in RIS1 is for RIS1. Not distracting from other RIS2 schemes.

Cllr Margaret Dewsbury- 900 houses agreed near Easton we do not want further slippage, need dualling badly.

Ellen Goodwin- New Anglia LEP Local Transport Board is writing to the Roads Minister happy to add the A47 Alliance and Mayor James Palmer to the list of signatures.

ACTION: EG to contact Cllr Martin Wilby and Mayor James Palmer for their support.

Cllr Ian Bates- old brochure had housing numbers.

Cllr Mick Castle- reassuring to hear money for RIS1 is for RIS1. Need to lobby hard for RIS2. Cross country east west access.

George Freeman MP- Henry and I need to state to the Minister that we have already had slippage and do not want more. Need to flag Sutton and Great Yarmouth issues.

7. Roads Investment Strategy Two (2020-2025)

Just Dual It Campaign and Economic case for dualling

David Cumming- We have agreed the priorities. Have been refreshing figures and brochure. Need to ramp up activity. Working on a Parliamentary Reception. A14 brochure contains some metrics around jobs and GVA. What additional benefits are there in addition to the transport benefits. What housing and jobs will come over and above or wouldn't come forward without improvements. Intention to complete work before meeting Minister.

George Freeman- what are the costs for the current priorities?

Rowland Potter- A16 to Wisbech dualling, contractor proposed £350m for either of the three routes. More likely £600m due to ground conditions. There have also been suggestions that it could be up to £1.4billion. Decision expected around end of April for RIS2 scheme costs. Could learn lessons from colleagues elsewhere, Cornwall have delivered independently a route on behalf of Highways England and DfT and it was delivered cheaper and then went back into the strategic road network.

Mayor James Palmer- With the garden town there may be special measures. Peterborough is a unitary and pro-growth, one of the fastest growing urban areas. Fenland is also pro-growth, putting forward housing. Putting funding in east is as good as the north.

George Freeman MP- Minister if you want growth, need A47 improvements to help new town. Push delivery of RIS1, push RIS2 and consider a special case for Peterborough dualling.

Peter Havlicek - any scheme over £500m is considered a tier 1 scheme which has a more stringent process and is harder to get schemes through.

Rowland Potter- developing scheme to tier 1 standard and further.

Cllr Brian Long- if it makes it too big is it worth breaking it up?

Rowland Potter- Highways England did split the scheme into four sections but couldn't get a high enough benefit. As a one route strategic solution we get a BCR of 1.5, adding 10-12k homes sensitivity well over 2 and even higher under various scenarios.

George Freeman MP- we need to update the brochure.

David Cumming- aim to have the updated brochure and extra piece of work for May.

Susie Lockwood- the Just Dual It campaign began last March, and we have received lots of public and business support. We need to make use of the information received to help build up the case.

Snails relocation

Tom Lawman- Acle Straight road has several rare species either side which are a European protected species. Currently undertaking a translocation study which would allow the snails removal from ditches. Pilot studies have been positive. There is a five-year monitoring period which would finish in 2023. The study is not a blocker to the scheme.

Cllr Mick Castle- It is positive to hear this is not an obstacle to the Acle Straight being in RIS2. Anything you can share with Norfolk County Council will help them with their desktop study looking into the Acle Straight. Any successful dualling is best located between the current road and rail line taking account of various landmarks.

ACTION: Communicate to the public that the snails study on the Acle Straight would not be a block to any funding announcement.

8. Other updates

LEP

The New Anglia LEP Local Transport Board is writing a letter to the Roads Minister. The Local Industrial Strategy is focusing on Clean Energy, Agri-food, Digital and ICT.

Chambers of Commerce

Richard Perkins- declared an interest as he works for the company involved in work on the Food Hub and in Fenland. Need improvements to both A14 and A47 as both are fundamental. Have offered services to Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Chamber to help any campaigns.

Local Authorities

Cllr Chris Seaton- committed to A47 East West Economic Corridor.

Cllr Ian Bates- need to link routes to agri tech in Norwich and business opportunities for agriculture. East West rail and road links are important.

Nina Cunningham- A47 dualling is important to the Food Enterprise as it is important for access. A47 is holding back the Food Hub.

9. Any other business

Rowland Potter- There was a report on Ports. It missed Ports down to Felixstowe, there was no mention of King's Lynn or Great Yarmouth. This is a strategic route and improvements would improve resilience. There have been 50-mile diversions when certain areas of the road have been closed. The route is poor for freight and has flooding issues. There are also implications for Norwich Airport and East Midlands Airport. The strategic route has a wider global international argument.

Nick Tupper- We need to identify slippage and the start and finish dates of schemes. Benefits of the route link to other schemes. Norwich Western Link aligns to the road.

George Freeman MP- there is a huge opportunity with growth slipping from 3% to 1.2%. Government needs to encourage growth and build houses. We need to tell the Chancellor we can deliver you that growth.

10. Future meetings

Friday in June 2019 in Norwich.