

A47 Alliance Steering Group Meeting Note

11am-1pm Friday 19th October 2018.

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bridge St, Peterborough, PE1 1HQ.

In attendance:

David Cumming	Norfolk County Council
Naomi Chamberlain	Norfolk County Council
Claudia Wegener	Highways England
James Powis	Highways England
Peter Havlicek	Highways England
Cllr David Oliver	Fenland District Council
Christine Marshall	Breckland & South Holland District Council
Charlotte Palmer	Peterborough City Council
Cllr Roger Foulger	Broadland District Council
Hamish Melville	Broadland District Council
Nova Fairbank	Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
John Bridge	Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce
Cllr Richard Blunt	King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
Peter Jermany	King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
Michael Selfe	RAC Foundation
Simon Amor	Highways England
Tom Lawman	Highways England
Natalie Beal	Broads Authority
Luke Page	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority
Rowland Potter	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority
Helena Gilfedder	Senior Parliamentary Assistant Stephen Barclay MP
Mayor James Palmer	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority
Cllr Mick Castle	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Martin Wilby	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Graham Plant	Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Apologies:

Andy Tatt	Peterborough City Council
Anna Graves	Breckland & South Holland District Council
Brandon Lewis MP	Parliament
Carolyn Barnes	East Suffolk & Waveney District Council
Chris Starkie	New Anglia LEP
Cllr Chris Seaton	Fenland District Council
Cllr Ian Bates	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Mark Bee	Waveney District Council
Cllr Mary Evans	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Nick Worth	South Holland District Council

Cllr Peter Hiller	Peterborough City Council
Cllr Tim East	Norfolk County Council
Cllr William Richmond	Norfolk County Council
Doug Field	New Anglia LEP
Ellen Goodwin	New Anglia LEP
George Freeman MP	Parliament
Hannah Grimes	Norfolk County Council
Henry Bellingham MP	Parliament
Jack Eagle	Cambridgeshire County Council
Jonathan Cage	Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
Jonathan Donlevy	Highways England
Keith Simpson MP	Parliament
Marie- Pierre	Broads Authority
Nick Tupper	Norfolk County Council
Nina Cunningham	South Norfolk Council
Norman Lamb MP	Parliament
Paul Medd	Fenland District Council
Peter Aldous MP	Parliament
Richard Bacon MP	Parliament
Richard Perkins	Suffolk Chamber of Commerce
Shailesh Vara MP	Parliament
Sheila Oxtoby	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Simon Machen	Peterborough City Council
Stephen Barclay MP	Parliament
Susie Lockwood	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 note and matters arising from 11th May 2018

The meeting note from 11th May 2018 was agreed.

4. Roads Investment Strategy One (RIS 1) (2015- 2020)

RIS 1 Consultations

Claudia Wegener stated that the Wansford to Sutton Dualling consultation ends on the 12th November, some concern has been voiced by residents about the proposed scheme which is being considered and analysed. The Blofield to North Burlingham consultation events have been well attended with

mostly positive feedback. Blofield to North Burlingham site investigations have commenced but work on the scheme is not due until 2021/2022.

Nova Fairbank questioned the reasons for the Thickthorn delay and that the delay could have an increased cost implication. Highways England (HE) confirmed the delay in the consultation is until spring 2019. HE reassured the meeting that they are still committed to delivery of the scheme. Cllr Plant also questioned the reasons for the delay of the Thickthorn scheme and suggested that the delay to a RIS 1 scheme could impact on the Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS 2) schemes. HE stated that the delay was due to modelling the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) and internal issues with delivery partners. Cllr Castle stated he was disappointed to see the delay to the delivery of the RIS 1 schemes, especially the Thickthorn scheme. HE reiterated that they are committed to the schemes highlighting that the Development Consent Order and the statutory processes are very important to get these schemes right. James Powis from HE highlighted the need of staggering the schemes.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority

Roland Potter explained the Combined Authority have been investigating full dualling of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough section of the A47. Initially looking at 20 sections of road which was reduced to a list of 12 which had higher BCRs. Then four sections were considered; the A16 to Thorney, Thorney to Guyhirn, Guyhirn to Wisbech and Wisbech to Walton Highway. during their work, the CA decided to investigate dualling the entire scheme, which has a BCR of 1.3-1.5. An outline business case has been produced and will be reported to the CA Board at the end of October.

The Combined Authority met with the CEX of HE, which was constructive.

Cllr Plant acknowledged that since the campaign became joined up the A47 Alliance has had success with gaining funding for RIS 1. And that the A47 Alliance is about joining together and campaigning to the Minister to support the funding for dualling of the entirety of the A47. He sought assurance that the Mayor would be working with the Alliance.

Mayor James Palmer met with Philip Hammond and MPs to discuss East Anglian projects. Stating that Government's focus is on housing growth so if schemes were closely linked to the delivery of housing it would make a stronger case. Also, opportunities for growth along the A47 to enhance the BCR viability in areas of lower viability. Highlighting the benefits dualling can bring to boost housing growth.

Nova Fairbank emphasised the importance of working as one voice and one team. Which Cllr Wilby seconded. Nova also stressed the importance of making sure we remained as one shared voice and do not splinter off. This was also supported by Michael Selfe who stated that a larger length of route benefits from a wider influence.

5. Roads Investment Strategy Two (2020-2025)

Cllr Wilby read the following statement from George Freeman MP:

“I am sorry that I can’t be with you all in person today, but I am delighted that we are continuing to work hard together on this key issue. We have already made good progress in securing the money to dual the Dereham to Norwich section, but as we all know, we can’t wait another 8 years – and risk more fatalities – before we dual the next section. We must get a plan for the whole A47 to be dualled as soon as possible. That’s why our campaign to raise awareness and make the case for full dualling is so important, and why I am actively looking to secure a debate in Westminster so that my parliamentary colleagues in the East and I can really emphasise to Ministers at the Department for Transport the need to get this done. I hope to have a date for this debate in the next few weeks, and Martin Wilby and I intend to take an A47 Alliance delegation to Westminster on that date to present the “Wish we were dualled” postcards to the Roads Minister and maximise publicity for our campaign. I look forward to continuing our work together, and to ensuring the DfT and Treasury recognise that this is a key priority for the East.”

Simon Amor emphasised that the main message coming from DfT was a strong support for schemes that enable the delivery of housing.

David Cumming – presentation key points

David Cumming highlighted the importance of acting as one voice.

The A47 Alliance voted and agreed on the inclusion of the Peterborough to Wisbech dualling to the RIS 2 A47 Alliance priorities in place of the previous ones in that area.

2,000+ postcards returned, and the Chamber of Commerce has received 70+ supporting letters from businesses.

The A47 Alliance will be attending a Westminster delegation and will update the Alliance once a date is agreed. David did note that unfortunately there is likely to be very short notice for the delegation. An updated brochure has been produced.

Action: DC to keep the A47 Alliance informed about the Westminster Delegation.

Cllr Plant congratulated the Alliance and Chamber of Commerce for gaining the support of businesses. Also asking if housing numbers are included in the updated business case. David Cumming stated that housing numbers are included in the updated brochure and that Norfolk County Council has commenced discussions with consultants on a new business case to provide updated jobs and housing figures.

Cllr Castle stressed the importance of the Lowestoft sub region, with the funding allocation for the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing (TRC) and the Lake Lothing Third Crossing. Highlighting that the requirement of a dualled Acle Straight is even greater with these two bridges being built in the future. Cllr Wilby stated that Suffolk Authorities support the A47 Alliance.

Acle Straight update

Simon Amor reminded the group that the RIS 2 announcement is expected in spring 2019. Simon Amor also stated that there are a number of substantial schemes which will be lobbying for funding too.

Simon Amor updated on the Acle Straight snail relocation trial which has been successful, a large scale investigation will be active until 2023 to make sure the snails can be relocated. Simon assured that the snails would not stop the scheme being developed if it were to receive funding.

Cllr Castle stated that the Acle Straight is an accident hot spot and that the snail study timescale is long. Emphasising that the Acle Straight is not fit for purpose as it is built on willow and is serving the third biggest holiday resort in the country.

Cllr Plant seconded Cllr Castle's concern over the snail study taking a considerable amount of time. Cllr Plant also supported Cllr Castle's point that Great Yarmouth's potential links to the Midlands is dependent on dualling.

Nova Fairbank reiterated Cllr Plant and Castle's point emphasising the importance of the east to the UK economy with job growth, housing and offshore renewables. Nova highlighted that the A47 Alliance's message has got to be positive back to government.

Mayor James Palmer stated that another way of looking at the A47 is focussing on the cost to the economy of the poor road network. By focussing on how much the UK economy is losing out on due to the poor road network in the East. Highlighting the A47 Alliance must maintain pressure on government until the road is fully dualled.

6. Other updates

Chamber of Commerce

Nova Fairbank stated that an A47 delegation went to the Royal Norfolk Show to gain business support. The Chamber of Commerce has gained a broad range of support for the dualling of the A47 from large and small businesses.

Highways England

Cllr Plant asked if the Vauxhall Roundabout improvement scheme is on schedule. A representative from HE stated that it is still on schedule to be delivered in the early 2020s. They are currently working with NCC on the Vauxhall Roundabout scheme and looking to 2037 to ensure the scheme is future proofed which will consider the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing and dualling of the Acle Straight.

7. Any other business

None

8. Future meetings

Suggested schedule (dates to be agreed):

- Friday 15th February 2019 in King's Lynn
- Friday in June 2019 in Norwich
- Friday in September 2019 in Great Yarmouth