

District Councillor Tom Bygott

A14 upgrade – good news?

The long-awaited announcement on proposals for the A14 upgrade has been published – www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/a14-cambridge-to-huntingdon-improvement-scheme.

A series of local public exhibitions has also been organised, including:

- Bar Hill Village Hall, The Spinney, Bar Hill, CB23 8SU (staffed) – Tuesday 1 to Wednesday 2 October 2013, 11.00am to 8.00pm.
- A14 Cambridge Services CB23 4W (staffed) – Tuesday 1 to Saturday 5 October 2013, 11.00am to 8.00pm.

Please do your best to go to one of these exhibitions and give your comments.

Although these are part of an informal consultation period, don't be deceived by the word 'informal' – the proposals could still be changed before they go to 'formal' consultation. And your input really matters! There are changes which will have considerable impact on communities west of Girton who rely on the A14 – so it really is important to get your feedback in.

The website explains that the project 'has involved a value-engineering exercise, which has helped the Highways Agency to identify technical solutions that can provide a similar level of benefits at a lower capital cost'. That at least sounds good. Swavesey to Milton will also be dual three lanes, with an extra lane (not in the original proposal) added between Bar Hill and Girton. The Ellington to Swavesey section will be tolled, but no tolls will apply east of Swavesey. Tolling will be via numberplate recognition cameras and will cost £1 to £1.50 for cars, £2 to £3 for HGVs. This is the biggest change contained in this new A14 upgrade proposal. The other concerns the local access road arrangements.

The original proposal was for the local access roads to be two lanes wide in each direction. This has now been reduced to one lane wide between Fen Drayton and Girton. The Highways Agency is proposing to close the A14 Dry Drayton intersection, but there is no mention of whether the local access road will still connect to it. Apparently a scheme to widen the Girton to Histon section to dual three-lane has already been approved – and it is proposed to extend that as far as Milton, but not to Fen Ditton as under the earlier proposal.

I hope you share my concerns about these proposals – and whether you agree or are only curious, please do go to one of the A14 exhibitions and have your say: every opinion counts.

If I can be of help please contact me.

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