Factual Note from East Suffolk Council on the Ipswich Northern Route for the Inspector for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Examination
25 July 2019

Working together, Suffolk County Council, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, East Suffolk Council and Ipswich Borough Council with support from West Suffolk Council are exploring options to create a new road to the north of Ipswich that would enable better journeys across Suffolk as well as enable future growth.

Three potential routes for a new east/west link between the A12 and A14 corridors have been identified – an inner corridor from Martlesham to Claydon, a middle corridor from Woodbridge to Claydon, and an outer corridor from Melton to the A140 near Needham Market. (see map below)

Consultation is currently taking place from Friday 5 July to Friday 13 September 2019. There are 11 consultation drop-in events taking place during July in and around Ipswich.

This project is needed to improve existing journeys, support the local economy, and provide capacity for future growth. By delivering more reliable journeys, additional cycling and walking facilities and a link to new houses and businesses, the project will enhance Suffolk as a great place to do business and an attractive place for people to live.

In 2016 an initial study was undertaken to look at transport conditions across the wider Ipswich area, both now and in the future. This work showed that the road network suffers from frequent and severe delays, constraining growth and reducing productivity. In particular, the work highlighted issues of congestion on the A14, supporting the No More A14 Delays campaign. It also identified problems relating to the Orwell Bridge crossing and traffic in Ipswich, impacting on nationally important assets such as the Port of Felixstowe.

Further work has since been undertaken to assess a wide range of options that could deliver the transport improvements needed for the wider Ipswich area. This work identified a new road as the most effective way to facilitate growth and deliver transport improvements.

This work has helped develop a set of project objectives to guide the work. They are:

**Improve businesses’ and people’s experience of using the A14 and provide additional route resilience.**

a) Positive impact on the A14; particularly for junctions with existing capacity issues and between Copdock roundabout, J55, and Seven Hills roundabout, J58
b) Improve connections for vehicles accessing the north of Suffolk and Norfolk from the A14 and A12

c) Reduce congestion and improve resilience of the road network when the Orwell Bridge is closed

**Support the existing local economy through improved connectivity, making Suffolk the best place to do business.**

a) Enable economic growth for wider Ipswich area and Suffolk by improving connectivity and accessibility

b) Support economic growth in Suffolk as set out in the Local Enterprise Partnership’s Economic Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk, including the Suffolk Energy Coast

c) Support the delivery of the economic opportunities identified in the Local Enterprise Partnership’s Local Industrial Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk

**Provide additional travel options, helping to optimise existing road capacity in Ipswich, leading to environmental improvements.**

a) Reduce congestion within Ipswich town centre and on the A1214 corridor

b) Improve opportunities for sustainable trips in the greater Ipswich area, including walking and cycling.

c) Improved air quality and reduce noise on existing roads

**Directly support new homes and jobs growth to ensure the future success of Suffolk.**

a) Provide additional transport capacity for planned and future residential and employment growth in the wider Ipswich area

b) Enable the delivery of around 10,000 to 15,000 additional homes across Suffolk, supporting Suffolk’s housing ambitions

c) Optimise the environmental benefits of the project and support low carbon development

**Next steps:**

Work is being done to calculate the costs benefit ratio for the project, which assesses the project’s value for money. This will be presented in the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC). The results of the consultation will also form part of the SOBC. Initial work on the economic benefits of the project suggests good value for money. This will be refined for the final SOBC.

The Strategic Outline Business Case will determine whether or not the project continues. If it does continue the steps will be as follows:

Preferred route selected
Outline business case
Planning/consents
Consultation
Full business case
Construction

The consultation material states that the earliest a new road could be delivered would be 2027.
Corridor Maps
Source: https://ipswichnorthernroute.org.uk

References in the Suffolk Coastal Final Draft Local Plan (Jan 2019):

The Ipswich Northern Route is referred to in Policy SCLP2.2: Strategic Infrastructure Priorities (page 20). Paragraph 2.16 provides the supporting text and includes the following:

‘The Council fully supports the ongoing work of Suffolk County Council in considering potential options for routes, and it is expected that the next review of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (along with other Local Plans in the Ipswich Strategic Planning Area) will examine route options in more detail, including the extent to which the options might support potential future scenarios for housing and employment growth beyond that which is being planned for within this Local Plan.’

The content of this text is also reflected in the Ipswich Strategic Planning Area (IPSA) Statement of Common Ground (Document A13 page 16) Section H Strategic Infrastructure Priorities and specifically Outcomes and Agreements H1 – H5.