**CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**(A605 Peterborough Road Whittlesey)**

**SIDE ROADS ORDER 2018**

**The Highways Act 1980**

**Statement of Reasons**

# 1. Introduction

* 1. This document is the Statement of Reasons of Cambridgeshire County Council (“the Council”) for making the “Cambridgeshire County Council (A605 Peterborough Road Whittlesey) Side Roads Order 2018 (“the Order”).

1. **Statutory Provisions**

2.1 Section 14 of the Highways Act 1980 (“the Act”) authorises the Council in their capacity as the Highway Authority:

1. to stop up, divert, improve, raise, lower or otherwise alter a highway that crosses or enters the route of the road or is or will be otherwise affected by the construction or improvement of the road;
2. to construct a new highway for purposes concerned with any such alteration as aforesaid or for any other purpose connected with the road or its construction and to close after such period as may be specified in the Order any new highway so constructed for temporary purposes.

2.2 Section 125 of the Highways Act (1980) authorises the Council in their capacity as the Highway Authority to stop up any private means of access to premises adjoining or adjacent to land comprised in the route of the classified road, or forming the site of any works authorised by the Order and to provide a new means of access to any such premises.

1. **The Purpose of the Order**

3.1 The Order is intended to complement a wider scheme (“the Scheme”) to facilitate the movement of traffic on the A605 (Peterborough Road). The scheme will comprise of a new bypass around the settlement of Kings Dyke which will cross over the railway on a bridge and allow Network Rail to close f the existing railway level crossing to Vehicles and Pedestrians. .

3.2 The Scheme has been designed to reduce congestion on the A605 (Peterborough Road). The Scheme will create a 1.1km, single carriageway road south of the existing A605 (Peterborough Road) from a point 480 metres west to 435 metres east of the current King’s Dyke railway level crossing passing south of both commercial and private properties taking the new A605 road over the railway line on a bridge, also including two new roundabout junctions (one with Funtham’s Lane and one with the brickworks access).

3.3 The Order will designate as new highway a section of carriageway of the A605 from Funtham’s lane roundabout on a curve over the railway and south of the settlement to the roundabout accessing the brickworks site. At each end there are areas of existing Highway that are to be improved to tie in the existing highway network with the new carriageway. In addition private means of access will be closed this will avoid conflicts with traffic on the improved carriageway. In each case there are alternative means of access available. The detail of these works is set out below.

# Details of the Order

4.1 The proposed alterations to the local highway network are set out in the schedule attached to the Order and are shown on the Map referred to in the Order. The following paragraphs describe the proposals and should be read in conjunction with the Map:

* + 1. Routes of the new carriageway and footpaths:
* The new route of the A605 King’s Dyke will start after the western area of highway improvement at the new Funtham’s Lane roundabout. It will continue east for 664m on a curve passing over the Peterborough to Ely Railway Line to the eastern area of highway improvement at the new brickworks access roundabout.

4.1.2 Lengths of highway to be improved:

* A length of the A605 Kings Dyke From a point 69m west of the centreline of Funtham’s Lane and extends 195m east, as shown as an area of cross hatching.

* A length of the A605 Peterborough Road from a point 163m east of the network rail boundary of the level crossing and extends 304m east, as shown as an area of cross hatching.
* Funtham’s Lane is to be widened on the eastern side by 74 square metres at its junction with Kings Dyke to allow large vehicles to safely manoeuvre in and out of Funtham’s Lane without overrunning the kerbline.
* The nub of hatching shown in Inset A on the Map indicates an area of landscaping. The purpose of this landscaping is to provide a screen between the properties on the southern side of Kings Dyke and the headlights of vehicles using the western roundabout.
* The new roundabouts will be slightly raised to tie in with the increasing gradient leading to the bridge sections.
* The areas to the north of the western and eastern roundabouts are to be landscaped along with appropriate drainage measures.
* A southern arm is being provided on the western roundabout to provide access into potential development.
* The improved sections of highway will tie in with the existing widths and alignments of Kings Dyke at both ends of the scheme.

4.1.3 Length of highway to be stopped up:

* The length of the A605 Peterborough Road over the level crossing between the Network rail operational boundaries, a length of 22m, as shown by a black and white strip hatching.

4.1.4 Private means of access to be stopped up:

* Access to the field opposite No 272 Peterborough road as shown. This access covers a length of approximately 14m. An alternative existing access to this land is available 194m east of this access to be stopped up, no additional Private Means of Access is proposed to be provided.
* Access to the field opposite 72m north east of the junction with Funtham’s Lane as shown. This access covers a length of approximately 12m. An alternative existing access to this land is available 141m east of this access to be stopped up, no additional Private Means of Access is proposed to be provided.

**5. Background to the Scheme**

* 1. Whittlesey is one of the four market towns of the Fenland District of Cambridgeshire and is approximately 5 miles east of the City of Peterborough, and retains its railway station. The A605 between Whittlesey and Peterborough intersects at-grade (on the same level) with the Ely to Peterborough railway line at the King’s Dyke level crossing.
  2. The railway level crossing itself is a full barrier type controlled by an on-site Network Rail employee. The A605 is part of the Strategic Advisory Freight Route and HGVs are encouraged to use this route as opposed to less suitable minor routes. Between Whittlesey and Peterborough the A605 carries over 12,000 vehicles per day. Currently there are some 120 train movements across the level crossing per day of which 90 are passenger trains and 30 are freight trains. The result is an overall level crossing barrier downtime of between 8 and 25 minutes in each hour. This causes significant delay to traffic travelling to and from Peterborough, with a typical average delay of 45 seconds per vehicle and a typical maximum delay of over 7 minutes per vehicle.
  3. North Bank provides an alternative route between Whittlesey and Peterborough, and carries approximately 5,000 vehicles per day. Drivers often choose this route to avoid the congestion and delays on the A605 at Kings Dyke Level Crossing. However this route is on the Nene Washes, which can flood throughout the year but especially in the winter months, which results in the road being closed and traffic forced onto the A605, which can exacerbate the queues and congestion at the crossing. The period of time North Bank was completely closed to traffic can vary from year to year. Between 1st April 2012 and 1st April 2013 the route was closed on 11 separate occasions and for 55 days representing 15% of overall time. In 2014, the route was closed for 37 days representing 10% of overall time. The majority of closures were between October and February.
  4. The A605 suffers from unreliable journey times due to the uncertainty/variability of queue length and barrier down time, resulting in driver frustration. The ‘Kings Dyke Level Crossing Replacement – Initial Investigation Report’ prepared in June 2013 by Atkins calculated the average delay per vehicle at Kings Dyke Level Crossing. The average delay per vehicle at Kings Dyke Level Crossing is 41 seconds per vehicle. If North Bank is closed, the average delay per vehicle can increase by 3-4 minutes in the peak period.
  5. Rail industry plans suggest that train movements on the Peterborough to Ely line will increase significantly in the future. The number of passenger trains is likely to increase to around 130 per day. Improvements to the Felixstowe to Nuneaton freight route will also raise capacity for freight trains on the line to 112 each day. Consequently, by 2031 there could be 242 trains using the crossing each day – an increase of 150%. Additional trains will result in more frequent and longer level crossing closures, increasing congestion and delays. The implications for the road traffic congestion of an increase in barrier down time to between 27-38 minutes in each hour would severely hamper economic growth in the area.
  6. Although the number of personal injury accidents recorded within the vicinity of the scheme is not significantly high, all of them have occurred close to the existing priority junctions at Funtham’s Lane and the Hanson Brick Works Access, the provision of roundabouts with associated pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities, as well as street lighting will help minimise the risk of future accidents occurring.
  7. High traffic flows and queued traffic make the environment along the A605 unpleasant and intimidating and results in poor noise and air quality for those working and residing in the vicinity.
  8. There is currently a national campaign to improve the safety of level crossings or promote closures where alternatives exist. Benefits include a reduction in ongoing maintenance costs, and a reduction in delays caused by failures or bridge strikes. Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies support closure of the crossing, providing that the alternative would not worsen access to the station.
  9. Rail traffic is set to increase. More passenger services are expected. Nationally, Network Rail is planning for a doubling of freight traffic over the next 30 years. The impact on Whittlesey will be significant due to its location on the network. Many additional trains will run outside the peak periods, but there will still be an increase in barrier down time. In addition, the Fenland District Core Strategy identifies Whittlesey as a Market Town and a focus for housing and employment growth, which may exacerbate congestion in the local area, and also employment growth is identified for Peterborough, as part of its Core Strategy, which may increase the number of residents from Whittlesey commuting to Peterborough. Overall, the level crossing causes significant journey time unreliability, which is constraining the planned growth of Whittlesey in terms of being an attractive place to live and work.
  10. Alongside the proposed housing and employment growth in the area, a Regional Freight Terminal is proposed with employment opportunities for in excess of 3000 people. The majority of it is located west of the level crossing at Stanground on the eastern outskirts of Peterborough City Council area, but with a part of the site is located within Fenland District.
  11. The environmental benefits of rail freight are significant. Each freight train takes about 60 lorries off the road, and rail freight generates 6 times less CO2 than road freight per tonne moved.

1. **The Bypass Scheme**

6.1 The proposed Scheme is to create an off-line route to the south of the existing Peterborough Road around the southern boundary of a group of mainly commercial properties. It will extend from near Funtham’s Lane approximately 400 metres west of the King’s Dyke level crossing, to near the brickworks access road which is approximately 205 metres east of the level crossing. At each end, the realigned A605 Peterborough Road will reconnect to the existing highway by a proposed new roundabout.

6.2 Embankments will be used to achieve access to the new bridge over the railway line, which will have a total height of approximately 9.5 metres (including the parapets). A shared footway/cycleway will be provided on the northern side of the carriageway. Underpasses are also being provided to maintain private access to land south of the new road. The total application site is 8.86 hectares.

6.3 The design speed of the road is 40mph. Low noise surfacing will be used to minimise tyre noise. Lighting will be provided along the full alignment and the lighting design will minimise light pollution.

* 1. The existing level crossing will be closed once the construction of the bypass is complete and it is fully open to the public.
  2. Access from the highway to the brickworks at the eastern end of the scheme will be maintained throughout the construction phase. A new temporary access will be constructed for this purpose until the time when the new permanent access to the brickworks is complete.
  3. Surface water drainage is to be discharged into a ditch to the west of the rail bridge and then into the Internal Drainage Board (IDB) system via pollution control devices and attenuated as necessary to meet Environment Agency / IDB requirements or by a piped network to the east of the network rail bridge to outfalls into attenuation/ infiltration ponds. The continuity of the existing drainage network will be maintained by providing culverts under the road.
  4. The overall length of the bridge deck span is 32m span, 13m wide bridge, over the railway with a 1.7m high parapet; consisting of two equal spans about a central support.
  5. The land purchase for the proposed scheme is being acquired by agreement.

**7. Benefits of the Scheme**

* 1. One of the major factors promoting and driving the proposals forward is the potential benefit to traffic flows and congestion in and around Peterborough Road and Whittlesey. The Transport Assessment concludes that the new bypass will significantly reduce congestion and remove delays at the level crossing.
  2. The new A605 Peterborough Road Whittlesey Order and the accompanying scheme will improve travelling in and around Whittlesey and East of Peterborough for local and non local residents by:
* Reductions in journey times and congestion on the A605 reducing costs for travelers and businesses in and around Whittlesey.
* The accessibility of Whittlesey from the west will be improved, increasing its attractiveness as a place to live, work and do business.
* Accessibility to employment premises to the north and south of the railway on Funtham’s Lane will be significantly improved.
* The reliability of rail services on the route between Ely and Peterborough will be improved with the removal of incidents of level crossing strikes.
* The safety of both the road and rail networks will be improved with the removal of the level crossing.
* Reduced congestion on the A605.
* Enable proposed housing and economic growth to be accommodated in Whittlesey and beyond.
* Support the delivery of increased levels of freight and passenger rail services.
* Improve the resilience of the route and address the existing and long standing congestion issues.
* Reducing the risk of vehicle strikes at level crossing.
* Improved pedestrian and cycle access over the project area.
* The listed benefits will be realised by the majority of local businesses and residents and the proposal to close the level crossing and provide a replacement bridge/bypass route was supported by 95% of respondents to the public consultation.

**8. Planning Position**

* 1. An application for full planning permission for the Scheme was submitted to Cambridgeshire County Council under of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 – Regulation 3.
  2. The application was supported by;
* Planning Drawings
* Non-Technical Summary
* Environmental Statement
* Planning Statement
* Design and Access Statement
* Statement of Community & Stakeholder Involvement
* Transport Assessment
* Flood Risk Assessment
  1. Planning Permission was granted on the 7th April 2016 subject to 20 planning conditions.