

Department for  
**Transport**



Cambridgeshire  
County Council



**Suffolk**  
County Council



## **A14 CHALLENGE**

### **FINDING SOLUTIONS TOGETHER**

The Government is committed to improving travel conditions on the A14. We have announced a £20m programme of measures between Ellington and Fen Ditton that will improve the A14. That programme will be started immediately, with schemes delivered over the next two years.

These measures include improvements to junctions and to resilience. Congestion will be eased and delays caused by accidents reduced.

We are also committed to long term improvement for A14 travellers. We want to do this with the benefit of the views and expertise of the people affected by the current issues, and those with the means to deliver the needed improvements. This will increase the responsiveness of the solution to local needs, push the boundaries of conventional thinking to ensure solutions are based on a wide range of options, and deliver a scheme that has broad public support.

This is the A14 Challenge which is launched today - a challenge to come up with ideas that are deliverable and can be worked and shaped into comparable options, and so to the best solution overall.

One area where innovative ideas will be welcome is in financing major road improvements. We have no intention of charging motorists for an unimproved facility, but we would expect to consider both tolling for enhanced capacity, and other cost sharing arrangements (such as capturing land value increases). The engagement of the development industry, financiers, Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, as well as local businesses will be valuable in this, particularly those associated with the proposed developments at Northstowe and Alconbury, and potential future development at Waterbeach.

We need to design a solution that is deliverable, value for money, and at a price the country can afford. That cost will be considerably less than the £1.2bn price tag of the earlier now abandoned scheme. This document sets out how we propose going about this and what the A14 Challenge means for you.



## **The A14 Challenge process**

From launch to firm options the A14 Challenge will progress quickly, and be broad based and solution focussed. It will be unusual in a number of ways, not least that all views, and particularly those related to financing and different funding models, will go directly into Government at an early stage to help shape the solution. It is also very much a collaborative endeavour, with DfT, the local authorities, LEPs and the Highways Agency working as a joint team to find a way forward.

The challenge is to identify long term improvements that are affordable, good value for money, and most importantly support the economy of the country by making journeys more reliable and quicker. And of course achieve this within our carbon budget and with improvements to safety and value to local communities and the environment.

We know what the problems are – they have been studied before and are summarised in a report which is published alongside this document. It is no surprise to hear that traffic flows between Ellington and Fen Ditton are amongst the highest in the country for the type of road, and that a typical peak hour A14 journey is considerably slower than under free flow conditions, not to mention congestion and delay on adjoining local roads. The economic, social and environmental consequences of this level of performance are many, varied and almost always negative.

### **Steps in the challenge process.**

The first thing we are going to do is to ask people who use the A14, live in the area, or who can help with delivery what they think would work best.

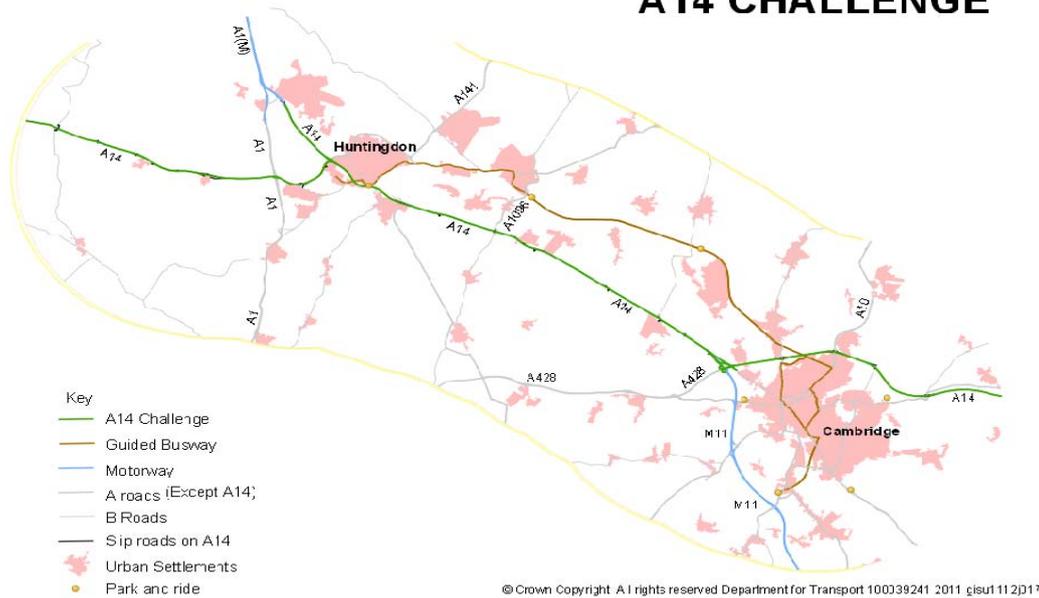
We'll gather views directly from a DfT email account and via a web-based survey that will run until the end of January. In addition Cambridgeshire County Council, Suffolk County Council and Northamptonshire County Council will be gathering views from key local stakeholders in January.

All constructive views are welcome, and we will in particular be seeking views on the scope for improvements to both national and local road networks, to local public transport and to road and rail freight facilities.

We'll collate solutions emerging from the County Council events with those from the email inbox to help shape our thinking about the options. The most

promising options will be worked into packages that can be compared. The ultimate solution will be the best of those packages.

## A14 CHALLENGE



| Keystage   | When             |
|--|------------------|
| Launch A14 Challenge with open email box for views   | December 2011    |
| Councils discuss options with key local stakeholders | January 2012     |
| A14 Challenge email box closes                       | End January 2012 |
| Outline options identified                           | February 2012    |
| Strategic outline cases produced                     | Spring 2012      |
| Options refined and assessed                         | Spring 2012      |
| Recommendations published                            | Summer 2012      |

You input is welcomed. Please provide views and comments directly through the form on <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6F789WG>, alternatively by email to [A14Challenge@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:A14Challenge@dft.gsi.gov.uk), or in writing to A14 Challenge Team, Department for Transport, Zone 29 Floor 3, Great Minster House, 33 Horseferry Road London SW1P 4 DR.

## A14 Challenge

## Q and A

Q. What is this?

A. It is what we are calling the engagement process by which we will work with the views and talents of people interested in this scheme and in its delivery.

Q. Why are you doing this?

A. We need a fresh take on this as the previous solution turned out to be unaffordable, and we are looking for innovation, particularly on the funding side, and contribution from other modes, which we hope this Challenge will help with.

Q. It sounds like a consultation, are you giving us three months to consider options?

A. No, there are no options to consult on yet. This is a participation process. If deliverable solutions emerge formal consultation would follow.

Q. What are the timescales?

A. The email box and on-line input form are now open [A14Challenge@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:A14Challenge@dft.gsi.gov.uk). and <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6F789WG>. They will be closed at the end of January. The results will feed into the generation of options by Spring 2012.

Q. Won't this Challenge just slow things down – the solutions are pretty obvious really?

A. No. We are looking beyond the obvious solutions, which clearly were not deliverable. This Challenge runs in parallel with the consultant's technical work and should make little difference to the timetable.

Q. You mention £20m for immediate small measures. What are these?

A. They include improving the layout of the Girton and Spittals major junctions, and better information and messaging signs to reduce delays from incidents.

Q. Haven't you already decided that you will toll this road?

A. No, despite what you read in the papers. We have no intention of tolling an unimproved road, however, we expect to look at tolling new capacity as an option, alongside many other options.

Q. How do I get my ideas into construction?

A. Provide them to the A14 Challenge team – see the DfT website and the standardised form – where they will be looked at, assessed, and if of merit, passed to the consultants for action. There is of course no guarantee that your proposal will be built.