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DETAILED PLANS FOR DUALLING A46 BETWEEN NEWARK AND WIDMERPOOL PUBLISHED FOR FURTHER PUBLIC COMMENT

Detailed plans for dualling 17 miles of the A46 between Newark and Widmerpool are re-published today (Friday 26 January) and will be available for the public to make their comments.

The Highways Agency has re-published draft Orders and an Environmental Statement now that the scheme has been divided into two parts. They show in detail the line of the road, how much land will be taken up by the scheme and which side roads will be affected.

The scheme will see 17 miles (28km) of the existing road upgraded to dual carriageway with split-level junctions to separate A46 through traffic from local traffic and a bypass of East Stoke and Farndon.

Public exhibitions on the draft Orders will take place at Cotgrave Welfare on Thursday 8 February from 12 noon to 8pm and at The Bearings, Bowbridge Road, Newark on Saturday 10 February from 10am to 4pm.

The period for support, comment or objection from the public ends on 9 March 2007.

The work is planned to be carried out in two stages over five years with advanced works starting in 2011/12 and main works running from 2012/13 until 2016/17.

The first section between Newark and the A52 at Saxondale will be built and opened to traffic before work begins on the second section between the A52 and Widmerpool.

The scheme will complete the dual carriageway between Newark and the M1 and will include eight split-level junctions between the existing junction at Widmerpool and the roundabout at Farndon on the outskirts of Newark. Split-level junctions improve safety by using bridges to carry local roads over the main road.

Highways Agency Project manager Bill Birkett said:

“Now that the scheme has been divided into two we have to publish a revised Environmental Statement and associated draft Orders. This means that people have another chance to comment on the proposals. A public inquiry into the plans is due to be held in Summer 2007.”

“However, those people who have already made comments or registered objections to the original draft Orders published on 9 December 2005 do not need to write again as their previous comments or objections will still stand.

“The draft Orders published today replace those published in December 2005 which are now withdrawn.”

The draft Orders are available for public viewing from 26 January at a number of locations in the area:

- Nottinghamshire County Council – Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham. NG2 6BJ
- Newark & Sherwood District Council – Kelham Hall, Kelham, Newark. NG23 5QX
- Newark Town Council – Town Hall, Market Place, Newark. NG24 1DU
- Rushcliffe Borough Council – Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham. NG2 5FE
- Newark Library – Beaumont Gardens, Balderton Gate, Newark. NG24 1UW
- Bingham Library – Eaton Place, Bingham. NG12 5FF
- Cotgrave Library – Cotgrave Shopping Centre, Cotgrave. NG12 3JQ
- Keyworth Library – Church Drive (NB Closed Wednesdays), Keyworth. NG12 5FF
- Government Office of East Midlands – The Belgrave Centre, Stanley Place, Talbot Street, Nottingham. NG1 5GG
- Highways Agency, Reception, 5 Broadway, Broad Street, Birmingham B15 1BL

Anyone who wishes to comment on the proposals should write to The A46 Newark-Widmerpool Team, Highways Agency, 5 Broadway, Broad Street, Birmingham B15 1BL or Email: A46newarkwidmerpool@highways.gsi.gov.uk

Notes to editors

1. The Highways Agency is an executive agency of the Department for Transport and manages, maintains and improves the network of trunk roads and motorways in England on behalf of the Secretary of State.
2. Following re-publication of the draft Orders, the public now have the opportunity to support, comment, or formally object to the proposals.

Given the nature and weight of objections to the draft Orders published in December 2005 a Public Inquiry will be held in the summer before an independent Inspector to enable the Secretary of State to make his decision on the future of the scheme.

3. A contract for the scheme was awarded to Balfour Beatty (Civil Engineering Ltd) in March 2004, under the Highways Agency's Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) initiative. The contractor's designers are Scott Wilson of Chesterfield. ECI, developed by the Highways Agency, brings the contractor in at an early stage of design and development, which means the scheme can benefit from the contractor's expertise in construction methods, bringing reduced costs and improved value to the project. The initiative also allows for more scope in innovation, better planning for resource requirements and shorter construction periods.
4. The A46 between Newark and Widmerpool currently carries between 16,200 and 25,300 vehicles a day. This level of traffic, together with the high number of junctions and accesses along the route has resulted in an accident rate above the national average.
5. For general information about the Highways Agency and its work, visit the Highways Agency website www.highways.gov.uk , or telephone the Highways Agency information line on 08457 50 40 30 . (Calls from BT landlines to 0845 numbers will cost no more than 4p per minute; mobile calls usually cost more. Service operates: 08:00 - 20:00 weekdays, 09:00-17:00 weekends

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