

Our ref: CRS 733,799
Your ref:

Second Floor
Woodlands
Manton Lane
Bedford MK41 7LW

Direct Line:

17 February 2016

Dear

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST
A14 ROOKERY CROSSROADS AND U6321 SOW LANE**

Thank you for your email of 27 January. I am writing to confirm that we have now completed our search for information requested.

You are concerned about the proposed Bury St Edmunds Relief Road ("ERR") and its impact on the A14 trunk road and especially the capacity of Junction 45 if not adequately improved. Planning permission for the ERR was given to Churchmanor Estates under reference DC/14/0328/FUL by St Edmundsbury District Council. An application has now been made for the discharge of conditions, including detailed design.

You ask for information we hold relating to the granting of this planning application. Our responses are set out below your requests as follows:

1. *Given predicted traffic flows from the ERR and the development it will support, what is the reason for Highways England not requiring a full TD22 grade separated junction design for the Rookery Crossroads junction 45?*

The proposed junction arrangement is fully grade separated in accordance with TD22 and is a significant improvement on the current layout.

2. *Has Highways England now agreed to accept a lesser standard of improvement to junction 45 than envisaged in the St Edmundsbury officer report on application DC/14/0328/FUL (attached) and if so, on what basis?*

The layout shown in the discharge of conditions application is in general conformity with and not to a lesser standard than the layout of the approved application. The detailed design will be approved as part of the process of drafting a Section 6 agreement, which is nearing completion. This will allow Suffolk County Council to undertake the necessary works on the A14 at junction 45.

3. *Has Highways England been supplied with revised predicted traffic flows for the ERR as regards its connection with the A14 at junction 45, which justify the detailed design now being promoted by Churchmanor Estates and/or Suffolk County Council? If so, what are they?*

4. *If the answer to the first question in 3 is in the affirmative, has Highways England obtained any independent assessment of the planning assumptions which lead to the predicted traffic flows for the ERR and in particular, as to the land uses anticipated by St Edmundsbury Borough Council (which is both an interested landowner and local planning authority)?*

The proposed junction layout was independently assessed by transport consultants, AECOM, who were employed by us before outline planning permission was granted. Their assessment confirmed that the layout would cope satisfactorily with the predicted traffic flows.

Technical note No.07, ref. 60295882 DS013.005 is available via the West Suffolk planning application website <https://planning.westsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/> in relation to application DC/14/0328/FUL.

We have received no traffic flow updates since outline planning permission was granted. The layout of the proposed Sow Lane roundabout that forms part of the proposal remains unchanged, so we have no cause to reassess its capacity.

5. *Will the Highways Agency be commenting on the application for discharge of conditions, 7, 9 and 12 of DC/14/0328/FUL and if so when? And when might I have a copy of such comments (bearing in mind this application is due to be considered in mid-February)?*

We have been consulted on the application to which you refer (reference DCON(E)/14/0328). We formally responded today, 17 February, and it will be published on the West Suffolk Planning application website. Discussions regarding the Section 6 agreement will cover the implications (if any) of any minor design changes that inevitably arise during the detailed design stage.

6. *Has Highways England agreed to enter into a S278 or other agreement for works on the A14 trunk road at or in the vicinity of junction 45, Rookery Crossroads (or on land in the ownership of Highways England, whether or not acquired for the purposes of the last improvement scheme completed in 2006)? If so, at what stages are negotiations or drafting of such an agreement and when it is expected to be completed and when may I have a copy?*
7. *Has Highways England otherwise had discussions on or agreed with Suffolk County Council for construction/improvement works on or affecting the A14 trunk road (or on Highways England owned land as in questions 6) under Section 6 Highways Act 1980 or otherwise under statutory powers and if so has an agreement been completed or at what stage is negotiation or drafting and may I have a copy when completed? Please supply copies of relevant correspondence relating to such in the last 9 months.*

An agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 is not required in this case as a Section 6 agreement is the appropriate method. As Suffolk County Council are leading on the delivery of the Eastern Relief Road, this agreement will provide them with the legal powers to carry out the necessary work on the strategic road network. Subject to commercial confidentiality, it would be more appropriate for Suffolk County Council to provide copies of relevant correspondence, including the completed Section 6 agreement.

8. *Has Highways England been consulted on a proposal to let a contract for construction of any part of the ERR? If so, please supply a copy of the notification and any response by Highways England.*

We have not been party to contract negotiations or award, as this is a matter for Suffolk County Council.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review. Our internal review process is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or email info@highwaysengland.co.uk. You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number 733,799 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Business Management Team Leader
Network Delivery and Development (East)
Email: