

Lincoln Eastern Bypass Environmental Statement

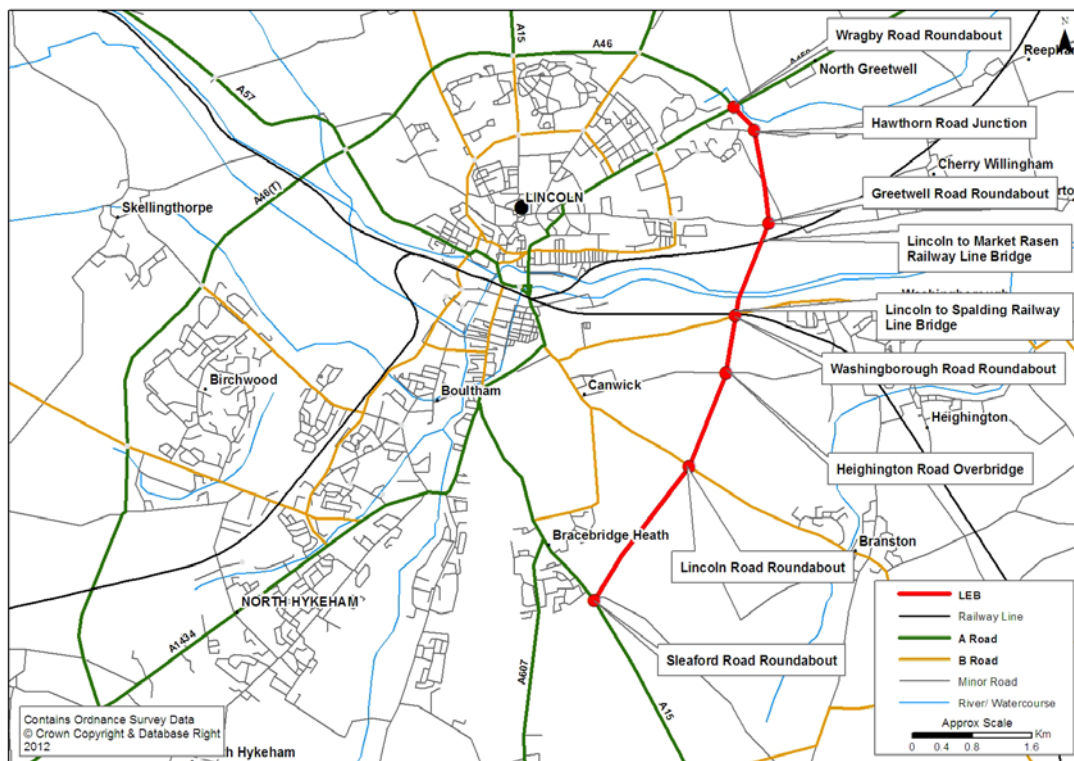
Non Technical Summary

Introduction

Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) is working in partnership with the City of Lincoln, North Kesteven District and West Lindsey District Councils to deliver a major project called the Lincoln Eastern Bypass (LEB). This project is part of the joint vision to make Lincoln and the surrounding communities better places in which to work and live, and is an essential component of the Council's strategy to encourage growth and regeneration.

The bypass will be a single carriageway road linking the existing Northern Relief Road to the A15 to the south, running through an area of predominantly arable farmland to the east of the city of and the villages of Canwick and Bracebridge Heath, and to the west of the outlying villages of North Greetwell, Cherry Willingham, Washingborough and Branston.

It will also provide a crossing of the River Witham, Lincoln to Market Rasen railway line and the Lincoln to Spalding railway Line. A separate 3m wide combined cycle and pedestrian right of way (located on the western side of the carriageway) will be provided along the full length of the scheme to link up with existing public rights of way.



Plan showing the location of Lincoln Eastern Bypass

Environmental Statement

The Environmental Statement, which describes potential impacts of the Lincoln Eastern Bypass on the environment, will be submitted to support the Planning Application.

The Environmental Statement is presented in three volumes:

- Volume 1 – Environmental Statement (including this Non Technical Summary which is also available separately)
- Volume 2 – Supporting Information
- Volume 3 – Technical Appendices

Consultation

In 2008 Lincolnshire County Council undertook a public consultation exercise to capture the views of elected members, stakeholders and the public on three alternative routes for the Dual Carriageway LEB scheme. The aim was to help inform which route would be the subject of the 2009 planning application.

As the single carriageway option now being assessed follows the route of the 2009 scheme, it was considered by the Department of Transport, that Lincolnshire County Council should conduct a limited, but focused, consultation exercise to ensure that it remains relevant to the development plans of local stakeholders and represented a good use of limited funds.

Further consultation was held with statutory and non-statutory consultees both as part of the Scoping and Assessment stages of the Environmental Impact Assessment. Consultees included local councils, the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage.

Environmental Impact Assessment

Flooding and Drainage

Most of the scheme is located in an area at low risk of flooding however the new bridge and associated embankments over the Witham Valley, partially sit within the River Witham floodplain. To ensure there is no increased risk of flooding due to the presence of the new road, measures such as compensatory flood storage will be introduced.

The road will have a comprehensive drainage system to remove surface water from the carriageway. This will drain into holding ponds to ensure too much flow doesn't reach the local watercourses. Measures will also be put in place to ensure that any pollutants such as oil from the road surface do not effect the local water environment.

With various protection measures in place the impacts on the water environment will either be neutral or slight adverse.

Geology and Soils

The historical maps indicate that apart from a disused landfill site near the Washingborough Road junction, the route chosen for the Proposed Scheme has generally been occupied by agricultural land and farms with no significant industrial uses being identified and therefore no other source of contamination are likely to be encountered. Once further studies of the disused landfill have been undertaken, measures will be agreed with LCC to ensure there will be no impact on the environment from construction close to this site

The route of the road does require construction across a small section of Greetwell Hollow Quarry, although now disused the rock layers exposed by the quarry workings contain important geological features so the area has been designated as a Geological Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). About 18% of the rock outcrop will be covered by the road and its embankment. However, to help mitigate for this loss improved access to the remaining geological features will be provided making future scientific investigation easier and safer.

Landscape and Visual Impact

The road passes through a number of Local Landscape Character Areas from the Upland Plateau to the north, through the Valley Slopes of the Witham Gap to the Fenland to the south. The road will have an impact on the landscape but for much of it the use of measures such as earth bunds and landscape planting means that this impact will be minimal, with the exception of the actual crossing of the Witham Valley. Here it will not be possible mitigate the impact of the bridge on the wider landscape.



Mitigation measures for the Proposed Scheme will include Landscape Planting and Habitat Creation.

An assessment was undertaken of the visual impact of the road on views from houses, local footpaths and the city of Lincoln. The impact on people's views will be most significant during the construction phase and the few years immediately after its completion. By the time of the Design Year (15 years after scheme opening) all impacts on receptors will be reduced to neutral or only slight adverse with the exception of 3 of those receptors and 6 footpaths which will experience a moderate or large adverse impact.

Noise and Vibration

The impacts from noise and vibration will be felt both during the construction phase and operational phase once the road is open to traffic.

The contractor will liaise with the council to agree working hours and working practices prior to construction. These measures will help to minimise noise impact at properties in the study area as a result of construction activities although some temporary disturbance will be experienced during this construction phase.

A detailed assessment has revealed that there are likely to be noise impacts as a result of the traffic using the new road based on using a standard tarmac surface.

In the short term, by 2017, after opening the road only 1% of the identified sensitive receptors, mainly residential houses, will experience a major adverse impact from noise (an increase of over 5d decibels (db)), while for 91% of receptors the impact will be negligible and in a high number of cases, beneficial as traffic volumes reduce on surrounding roads. In the long term, by 2032, it is expected that still only 1% would experience major adverse impacts.

To mitigate for the expected traffic noise, specialist Low Noise Surfacing will be used on sections of the road which will reduce the noise level to the extent that most properties in the 1% will have the impact reduced to moderate (an increase of between 5 and 9.9 db) rather than major.

Air Quality

Similarly to noise, there will be an impact on air quality during both the construction and operational phases of the road.

The construction phase of the scheme is likely to give rise to dust and so minimise this impact, the contractor will liaise with the council to agree working practices and dust control measures prior to construction.

During the operational phase dust will be less of an issue but smaller particles and pollutants such as Nitrogen Oxides may cause an impact. A detailed assessment has concluded that air quality impacts from traffic will be negligible for those receptors close to the road and beneficial for those close to surrounding roads, such as in Lincoln city centre, where congestion will be greatly reduced by the new road.

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

Lincoln and the surrounding area are rich in archaeological features and important cultural heritage assets. Extensive studies have identified many of these but unknown archaeological features may be present under the ground.

To mitigate for those archaeological features that will be destroyed or damaged by the road construction, an extensive programme of investigation and recording will be undertaken.



The Proposed Scheme will be only visible from the very top of Lincoln Castle Tower.

The impact of the new road on the historic landscape and setting of important heritage buildings will be mitigated with the use of landscape planting. However, despite this mitigation the road will still be visible within the landscape from some historic buildings both in adjacent villages and from some prominent features such as the Lincoln Castle tower.

Nature Conservation

The area through which the road will pass is largely arable farmland with little ecological value. However, a number of small areas of habitat such as woodland and hedgerows will be impacted by the new road and the River Witham will be crossed by a new bridge. There is only one statutory designated site which is affected by the road and that is the Greetwell Hollow Quarry SSSI. Although this is designated for its geological features it used by bats.

Impacts on species and habitats during construction will be controlled and minimised through adherence to a Construction Environmental Management Plan. The residual impact of the road on the bats and designated sites will be negligible. Where impacts on protected species have been assessed as likely, mitigation plans and the required consents will be agreed with Natural England to ensure the impact on these species is minimised. The mitigation will include the relocation of some species and the creation of additional habitats including bat boxes (Hibernacula) for the bats.

Land Use, Community and Private Assets

During construction there will be some temporary impact in the form of severance and disturbance to local communities. There will also be some loss of agricultural land to accommodate the road and the impact of this varies from negligible to major, depending on the percentage of the land holding lost.

Overall the impact on land use, community and private assets is assessed to be negligible.

Effects on all Travellers

The new road will have an impact on travellers using existing roads and public rights of way. During the construction phase this will result in some frustration and stress as congestion may increase and roads and paths are temporarily closed. This will be mitigated with the use of a Traffic Management Plan.

Once operational, the road will still cause some delays to user of local roads that will cross the new bypass, but user of the existing A15 and other city centre roads will greatly benefit from a reduction in congestion and therefore frustration and stress.

The incorporation of the foot/cycle way into the scheme will provide benefits to pedestrians and cyclists.

Interactions and Cumulative impacts

No significant cumulative impacts are anticipated for the scheme, provided that all the environmental commitments are followed.