

# A47 Wansford to Sutton

## Newsletter – June 2018



### **Better and safer journeys**

We are proposing a new dual carriageway on the A47 between the A1 junction and the roundabout at Nene Way.

Our proposals will reduce congestion at the junction with the A1, which is particularly busy at peak times on the southbound slip road. There is also a history of fatal and serious collisions along this stretch of road. This is associated with right turns and access at the junction.

### **Scheme design update**

#### **Junction design**

We are currently developing the preliminary design for public consultation later this year. We have identified the preferred junction layout which aims to reduce congestion at the Wansford eastern roundabout, while further testing is taking place to the proposed A1 southbound to A47 slip road and the Wansford western roundabout.

Following feedback from stakeholders, we are looking to further reduce the impact on the River Nene by improving the preferred route so it runs closer to the scheduled monument site.

#### **Walking, cycling and equestrian design**

Surveys of walkers, cyclists and equestrians started on 26 May 2018. The results will give us a better understanding of how people use existing routes at different times and locations. The results will enable us to tailor the scheme for the everyone.

In addition, we have applied for extra funds (through the Designated Funds scheme) to improve the Nene Way and the Wansford picnic area. If approved, the initiative will improve the path through the picnic area, enhance the appeal of the route, improve safety and security, and discourage antisocial behaviour.

## Environment and archaeology

Making sure we take care to protect the environment is an important part of what we do. Surveys help us to understand the local area.

During May the following surveys took place:

- Dusk and dawn bat surveys in wooded areas along the route and along the disused railway
- Static bat detectors and camera traps were used at Sacrewell Farm and under the A1 bridge
- Mapping of archaeological features at Sacrewell Farm fields and on other private land
- Noise surveys at key locations adjacent to the A1 / A47 junction
- Surveys regarding aquatic invertebrates such as dragonfly larvae and molluscs along the River Nene and the nearby brooks
- Habitat surveys for protected species across the route
- Vegetation surveys across the Site of Special Scientific Interest and County Wildlife sites
- Otter inspections along the River Nene and the Wittering Brook. Camera traps were also placed at certain locations to provide evidence of activity
- Badger camera trap placements were placed at the identified badger setts along the route

## Stakeholder meetings

### Meetings taken place this month

The first set of working group meetings took place on 4 May 2018 in Wansford. This meeting updated representatives of Parish Council and other local groups on the scheme. The groups focused on 3 main aspects: (1) walking, cycling and equestrians, (2) environment and archaeology and (3) junction design and modelling.

Following concerns raised in these meetings, Highways England met with Historic England on 16 May 2018 and Environment Agency on 24 May 2018.

On 29 May, we met with Sacrewell Farm to update them on the progress of the scheme.

### Upcoming meetings

Following our meeting with Historic England on 16 May 2018, we are meeting with Working Group members on Monday 11 June 2018 to focus on how Historic England's requirements will impact the design of the scheme.

## Current challenges

### Land Interest questionnaires

Wansford and Sutton Parish Council raised that the recent Land Interest questionnaires created concerns in the area, as some residents thought that their homes were at risk of being compulsory purchased. This is not the case and we would like to apologise for any Confusion caused.

In a reminder letter sent out on 18 March 2018, a paragraph we explained why we were contacting residents. We are also investigating how we can improve our letters to reduce the risk of this happening again in the future.