

A39 TRUNK ROAD
ALLINS TO SOUTH PENLEAN
ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT
NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

10. NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

10.1 INTRODUCTION

The A39 is part of an important traffic route serving the County of Cornwall and North Devon. It runs from the M5 motorway across the north of the peninsular to Barnstaple in North Devon and on into Cornwall. It follows the north coast as far as Fraddon, joining the A30 Trunk Road running down the centre of the county. It is the most important route connecting the centres of population and resorts of North Devon and North Cornwall with the remainder of Cornwall south of Fraddon, which includes the majority of the county's main centres of population, industry and holiday resorts. The A39 is also the main route serving the local communities in North Cornwall and connecting them with the main commercial centres.

The stretch between Allins and South Penlean lies approximately 10km south of Bude in Cornwall. The scheme comprises approximately 1.6km of single carriageway road effectively bypassing a very substandard stretch of the A39 Trunk Road. The scheme in its regional context shown on the Key Plan (Appendix 1) and lies immediately south of, and 2km north of previously improved sections of road.

The scheme was the subject of a Public Consultation exercise in April 1992, and subsequently a preferred route was announced by the Department of Transport in November 1992. This route is now the subject of this Environmental Statement, the purpose of which is to report the assessment of the effects of the proposals on the environment, possible mitigating measures, and to give the public the opportunity to comment on the environmental issues before the project is initiated.

This Environmental statement is published by the Department of Transport and issued in accordance with E.C. Directive 85/337 as applied by sub section 105A of the Highways Act, 1980.

The Statement is divided into two parts as follows:

Volume 1 - a comprehensive document drawing together all the relevant information about the scheme.

Non Technical Summary (NTS) - a brief report summarising the principal sections of Volume 1 in terms which are readily understandable by members of the public. The NTS is bound into this report but is also available as a free standing document.

This Environmental Statement is associated with the following draft highway Orders:

The A39 Trunk Road - Allins to South Penlean Improvement (line) Order, 1993

The A39 Trunk Road - Allins to South Penlean Improvement (Side Roads) Order, 1993

The A39 Trunk Road - Allins to South Penlean Improvement (Detrunking) Order, 1993

Comments on the Statement should be made to the following address by no later than 8th November 1993.

Director (Network Management)
Department of Transport
South West Network Management Division
Falcon Road,
Exeter
DEVON EX2 7LB

10.2 EXISTING PROBLEMS

The A39 Trunk Road is the main route linking Cornwall and North Devon. The road connects the north coast holiday resorts and has a significant effect on the economy of the area. The stretch of road between Allins and South Penlean is substandard, being narrow with sharp bends and poor sightlines. It is used by local traffic and agricultural vehicles as well as through traffic. Overtaking opportunities are severely limited. These factors lead to driver frustration, delays and a poor accident record. Problems are increased in the summer months, when traffic flows are much greater due to tourist traffic.

10.3 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF AREA

The area is entirely rural in nature. Several farms of varying sizes farm the land with a mixture of arable and livestock farming.

The existing A39 Trunk Road roughly follows a north-east to south-west direction across this landscape. Several private dwellings and two farms (Meads and South Penlean) i.e. adjacent to or near the existing Trunk Road. One Farm lies approximately 150 metres to the east of it (Dimma) and is reached via an access lane.

The land is extremely undulating and generally slopes from higher ground to the west of the existing road to a deep valley in the east with the River Bude flowing in a northerly direction. A number of smaller valleys run in a south easterly direction to the larger valley, each with a small watercourse. All valleys are generally wooded.

10.4 PROPOSED SCHEME

The scheme would provide approximately 1.6km of single carriageway following a near straight alignment from immediately south of Allins to approximately 250 metres north of South Penlean Farm. The carriageway width would be 7.3m with 1.0m hardstrips and 2.5m verges either side. (Verge width increasing to provide adequate visibility at junctions). The new road would be a maximum of 200m away from the existing A39.

The new road would cross over the access lane to Dimma Farm 60 metres from its junction with the existing A39 with a bridge. The existing A39 would be retained for access to Dimma Farm and the roadside properties using two junctions with the new road near Allins and Meads Farm.

The new road crosses undulating ground and therefore would either be on an embankment over the valleys or in a cutting through the higher ground. The material excavated for the cuttings would form the embankments.

10.5 EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS

10.5.1 Air Quality

Due to the surrounding rural landscape and close proximity of the coast the air is of good quality with very little build up of exhaust emissions.

A new road scheme will change traffic flows in a locality in a number of ways with corresponding impacts on air quality. In this case the scheme will have an overall beneficial effect as it will relieve residents of properties adjacent to the existing highway of the increasing traffic volumes.

10.5.2 Cultural Heritage

There are no Ancient Monuments, Sites of Archaeological Interest, Historic Settlements or Areas of Great Historical Value in the vicinity of the route corridor. Week St. Mary Historic Settlement lies approximately 4km to the east of the scheme.

10.5.3 Disruption due to Construction

The construction of the improvement would be predominantly off-line, away from the existing A39, and this will help to minimise disruption. The construction of the junctions, and works where the new and existing roads coincide are likely to cause a small amount of disruption.

No traffic diversions away from the A39 Trunk Road would be in operation.

10.5.4 Ecology and Nature Conservation

An Ecological Survey has been undertaken by the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service (ADAS) Other consultations have taken place with English Nature, Cornwall Trust for Nature Conservation (CTNC) and the Forestry Commission.

There are no sites in the area of national or regional nature conservation interest. Some lengths of Cornish Hedge would be lost as result of the scheme, and care would be required to minimise disruption to a small pond.

10.5.5 Landscape Effects

The A39 Trunk Road between Allins and South Penlean lies on the boundary between an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the west and the Week St. Mary Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) to the east. The Trunk Road is also the boundary of a Heritage Coast.

The proposed scheme impinges for a short length into the AONB/Heritage Coast in deep cutting. For the remainder of its length the scheme would be in the AGLV to the south-east of the existing Trunk Road.

10.5.6 Land Use

The area is almost entirely devoted to agriculture, both arable and livestock farming. There is no Grade 1 or Grade 2 land, the area being predominantly Grade 3 agricultural land.

The scheme would take land from five forms and a total area of approximately 5.45 Ha, of which approximately 4.15 Ha lies within the Area of Great Landscape Value, and 1.1 Ha lies within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

10.5.7 Traffic Noise and Vibration

A noise report has been prepared by the Cornwall County Highways Laboratory (Site Investigation Section). This report assesses and calculates how each of the properties between the scheme limits will be affected by the scheme, and whether they would qualify for noise insulation measures.

Future traffic growth figures were taken into consideration when making the assessments.

A total of nine properties adjacent to the existing road were assessed. Of these six properties would experience a decrease in noise levels and three properties would experience an increase, although not enough to qualify for noise insulation measures.

10.5.8 Pedestrians, Cyclists, Equestrians and Community Severance

The scheme would provide adequate facilities for this group of users by the provision of 1.0 metre wide hardstrips and 2.5 metre wide verges either side of the new carriageway. The existing road would be relieved of all but local traffic.

Changes to local travel patterns journey lengths or changes in amenity would be insignificant. There would be no severance to the local community, but relief from existing severance caused by the existing Trunk Road.

10.5.9 Vehicle Travellers

The scheme would help relieve driver stress due to much improved standards, enabling higher speeds and with the provision of overtaking opportunities.

View would be available from the embankments over approximately half the length of the scheme.

10.5.1 Water Quality and Drainage

Three valleys along the route corridor are the source of streams flowing in an easterly direction. Surface water from the new road would discharge into these streams.

Petrol Interceptors will be located where the surface water run-off from the carriageway outfalls to a watercourse. This will have the affect of minimising the level of pollutants from the carriageway entering the watercourse.

10.5.11 Geology and Soils

Generally, the bedrock encountered throughout the route was a series of interbedded sandstones and mudstones which are typical of the North Cornish geology.

A site investigation has been undertaken by Cornwall County Council Highways Laboratory, and Site Investigation Reports produced. The findings of these reports will be taken into account in the detailed design of the scheme.

10.5.12 Policies and Plans

The Department of Transport have published policies arrived at providing, maintaining and managing a network of roads to cater for through traffic. In addition assist economic growth by reducing transport costs, removing traffic from towns and villages and enhancing road safety.

Cornwall Structure Plan includes policies aimed at the provision of an adequate road network whilst giving full consideration to effects on the countryside, nature conservation, architectural, archaeological and sites of historical value. With due regard to the above policies the most feasible and economic route was selected.

10.6. MITIGATION

The proposed route has the effect of moving the A39 away from all of the existing properties between Allins and South Penlean except for one. This would reduce noise levels, improve air quality and improve safety for local residents.

Extensive and careful landscaping will reduce the adverse effects of the large scale embankments and cuttings. Native trees and shrubs would be used to be used to provide screening for properties and enhance the view from the road. The use of native species would allow rapid integration of new planting with the surrounding landscaping and promote the creation of a variety of wildlife habitats within the road corridor.

Other mitigating measures include the use of oil interceptors to avoid pollution of watercourses, the use of Cornish hedges to maintain the character of the local field boundaries, and the provision of new field accesses to help reduce the impact on the farms.

10.7 ROUTE OPTIONS

During the initial stages of development of the scheme after routes were investigated. The selected route had many advantages, including greater environmental advantages, and was thus the route selected to be developed further.

10.8 CONSULTANTS

A Public Consultation was held in March 1992, where members of the Public were invited to an exhibition held locally to view, discuss and comment on the proposals. Twenty-three other relevant bodies and organisations were consulted. All views were taken into account in the development of the scheme.

10.9 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT TABLES

The proposed scheme would provide 1.6km of single 7.3m wide carriageway up to 200m away from the existing A39. Approximately 5.45 hectares of agricultural land would be required for construction and landscaping (approximately 1.3 ha of AONB and 4.15 ha of AGLV), this being the minimum commensurate with an adequate standard of new road and level of safety.

Over 103 accident could be saved over a 30 year period as a result of the scheme.

Pedestrian amenity would be greatly improved for local residents. One public footpath would require a local diversion.

Seven properties would experience a significant decrease in noise levels and air pollution whilst only one would experience an increase.

Four properties would experience a degree of visual intrusion, ameliorated by the landscaping proposals.

No properties need to be demolished. There are no listed buildings, schedule monuments or conservation areas, or any sites of national or County nature conservation importance.

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ENVIRONMENT & LANDSCAPE
Environmental Statement

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