

Environmental Information Regulations – Response - 27910

My request concerns the stretch of the A14 between Bury St Edmunds and Newmarket, and specifically unplanned closures — i.e. closures resulting from accidents, breakdowns, debris, collisions, or other incidents — as distinct from planned/scheduled roadworks or maintenance closures.

Please could you provide:

1. All documents, reports, correspondence, and data held by or shared with Suffolk County Council concerning the impact of unplanned A14 closures on the local road network in this stretch, including but not limited to impacts on:

o A143, A1101, and other classified roads

o Unclassified/rural roads and villages used as informal diversion routes

o Any villages or settlements (including Higham, Gazeley, Kentford, Tuddenham) known to experience diverted or "rat-run" traffic during A14 incidents

Suffolk County Council Transport Strategy do not hold information on this topic, as the A14 road is managed by National Highways, not Suffolk County Council.

2. Data on the frequency of such unplanned closures on this stretch of the A14 over the last 5 years (or the longest period for which data is held), including, where available:

o Number of incidents/closures per year

o Average and total duration of closures

o Any recorded traffic volume or diversion data resulting from these closures

National Highways publishes information from its own traffic counters on the A14, which can be viewed here:

<https://tris.highwaysengland.co.uk/>

The data is by junction, and the area you have identified is between A14 junctions 37 (A142 Newmarket) and 42 (Westley).

3. Any traffic modelling, assessments, or correspondence (with National Highways, Suffolk Highways, developers, or others) relating to the cumulative or compounding effect of unplanned A14 closures on local road capacity and resilience in this area.

Suffolk County Council has a new traffic model, based on the VISUM platform with a 2023 baseline and a 2045 future year. This will be used to test the impacts of projected traffic from the emerging West Suffolk Council Local Plan, and wider growth arising across Suffolk, in due course. This analysis will be based on neutral months and assume the Strategic Road Network is free from closures and exceptional disruption events, in line with standard Department for Transport modelling methodology. We have not used this model to test the impacts of closures to the A14 in this area, although we have previously tested the impact of closures on the Orwell Bridge, near Ipswich.

4. Any plans, strategies, mitigation measures, or conditions — whether adopted, proposed, or under discussion — to address or mitigate the impact of unplanned A14 closures on the local road network, specifically in the context of proposals for new large

settlements/development on or near the A14:

o Any transport assessments, traffic impact studies, or resilience/contingency plans submitted by developers or produced internally

o Any correspondence between Suffolk County Council and National Highways, the developer, West Suffolk Council, or other bodies on this specific issue

Specific transport assessments for specific developments are held by West Suffolk Council, not Suffolk County Council as they are the local planning authority. If you know the planning reference, you can look them up here:

<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/vieworcommentonplanningapplications.cfm>

As set out above, generally traffic modelling for development sites would be based upon standard traffic flows for a neutral month, assuming the Strategic Road Network is free from closures and exceptional disruption events, in line with standard Department for Transport modelling methodology. Generally, a neutral month is a month without Bank Holidays, avoiding seasonal variation you get in peak winter and peak summer traffic conditions.

Suffolk County Council Transport Strategy do not hold any correspondence with the organisations listed for the areas of the A14 highlighted above.