

xxxx

[By email: xxxx]

xxxx
Roads Policy Division
Department for Transport
Zone 5/23
Great Minster House
76 Marsham St
London
SW1P 4DR

Web Site: www.dft.gov.uk

Our Ref: F0007666

Date: 24th May 2011

Freedom of Information Request – F0007666

Dear xxxx,

I am writing to confirm that the Department has now completed its search for the information which you requested on 6th April 2011. In your request you asked for information on what is happening with the A1 Gateshead & Newcastle bypass, specifically which options are being looked into and when a decision will be made on the project.

On 21st April 2011 the Highways Agency completed a Local Network Management Scheme (LNMS) to increase the A1 northbound carriageway at Dunston Interchange in Gateshead from two to three lanes; drivers now benefit from three northbound lanes on the A1 Gateshead and Newcastle Western Bypass from Askew Road through to the Metro Centre. This work was possible following the introduction of a reduced 50mph speed limit on the A1 between Birtley Interchange and Blaydon Viaduct, increasing safety on this section of the Bypass.

Following the Government's 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review, the Department for Transport published in October 2010 details of its investment decisions for major road projects on the strategic road network. *Investment in Highways Transport Schemes*, set out proposals for the delivery of 14 major road schemes before 2015, and a further 18 proposals to be developed in preparation for future spending review periods. The document can be found on the Department's website at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/network/strategic/highwaystransportschemes/?view=Standard>

The Department is committed to improving Britain's transport infrastructure, but wants to ensure that investment is targeted where it offers the best value for public money. In developing the proposals for the roads programme, the Department looked to identify those schemes which offer the best investment and are able to be delivered in the foreseeable future. Proposals for a major road scheme on the A1 Newcastle and Gateshead bypass have not been included amongst the schemes identified because its development was not sufficiently advanced, and the Department is therefore not currently looking into specific options with regards to this scheme.

In identifying proposals for possible future construction, the Department is committed to continuing to evaluate stress points on the network but has been clear that it will not rely solely on expensive new projects, but will look first to make the most of our existing transport assets: road, rail and local public transport. We are also committed to work with local partners, including the emerging Local Enterprise Partnerships, to develop lower cost, innovative solutions, and consider whether there is potential for local and private sector investment to tackle congestion, poor reliability, air quality problems and carbon emissions.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. A copy of this response and the information provided may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

If you are unhappy with the way the Department has handled your request or with the decisions made in relation to your request you may complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter by writing to the Department's Information Rights Unit at:

Zone D/04
Ashdown House
Sedlescombe Road North
Hastings
East Sussex TN37 7GA
E-mail: FOI-Advice-Team-DFT@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Please see attached details of DfT's complaints procedure and your right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

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

Yours sincerely,

xxxx

Roads Policy Division

Your right to complain to DfT and the Information Commissioner

You have the right to complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter about the way in which your request for information was handled and/or about the decision not to disclose all or part of the information requested. In addition a complaint can be made that DfT has not complied with its FOI publication scheme.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and you will be advised of a target date by which to expect a response. Initially your complaint will be re-considered by the official who dealt with your request for information. If, after careful consideration, that official decides that his/her decision was correct, your complaint will automatically be referred to a senior independent official who will conduct a further review. You will be advised of the outcome of your complaint and if a decision is taken to disclose information originally withheld this will be done as soon as possible.

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