

[News story: Update on the Secretary of State's consideration of the proposed merger between 21st Century Fox Inc. and Sky Plc.](#)

Following the Secretary of State's request for advice and clarification in light of representations received in relation to the proposed merger between 21st Century Fox and Sky, Ofcom have, today, submitted additional advice to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will now carefully consider that advice before making her decision on referral on the basis of all the evidence before her, and will do so as soon as is reasonably practicable. The Secretary of State's request to Ofcom will be published in due course. Ofcom intends to publish its advice at the same time.

[Press release: A2 junction upgrades win backing](#)

Plans to upgrade the Bean and Ebbsfleet junctions on the A2 were put to the public between January and March this year, and today Highways England has announced the preferred route. Both junctions will have their capacity increased by adding new lanes to their existing roundabouts and slip roads. At Bean, a new bridge will be built over the A2 dual carriageway.

The upgraded junctions will help to support the creation of more than 30,000 new jobs and 15,000 new homes in Kent.

The announcement has been welcomed by the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, who today confirmed a £45m funding contribution for the project.

Highways England Project Manager Hugh Coakley said:

It's great to see that there is clear backing for improvements to the junctions at Bean and Ebbsfleet, and I would like to thank everyone who took part in our consultation. There will be another opportunity for anyone interested in the scheme to have their say next year, when we put the final designs to people for their views.

Paul Spooner, Interim Chief Executive of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, said:

This is a major commitment by us to ensure the A2 continues to move. With up to 15,000 new homes in Ebbsfleet Garden City, we are well aware the strain that could place on local traffic, particularly at these two junctions, and this money enables that work to now go-ahead.

With these improvements and a commitment from us to improve public transport in the area with a new upgraded Fastrack service, we are helping address those concerns and ensure traffic continues to flow as we see 5,100 homes completed here by 2021.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation will recover its investment from developer contributions established in planning agreements for the development sites in the Garden City.

The proposed Bean junction improvements will broadly follow the existing road layout but include an additional bridge over the A2 next to the existing bridge, and a new slip road onto the A2 for eastbound traffic. The current roundabouts will be enlarged and converted to traffic signal control. A new bridge over the A2 for southbound traffic will be provided to the east of the existing Bean Lane overbridge, which will be retained for northbound traffic.

The improvements which have been proposed for the Ebbsfleet junction will again closely follow the existing road layout, with the existing roundabouts being enlarged and controlled by traffic signals. The link road between the roundabouts will be widened to a dual carriageway. The eastbound and westbound slip roads to the A2 will also be widened.

The scheme will help to increase capacity on the road network to accommodate future growth, improve journey times and smooth traffic through the junctions, as well as provide better facilities to non-motorised users, such as pedestrians, cyclists and horses.

A public consultation on the options was held from Wednesday 18 January 2017 to Wednesday 1 March 2017. A total of 169 responses were received during this consultation. A copy of the consultation report can be found on the Highways England website and copies of the announcement flyer are available online or at a variety of locations in the local area.

Anyone interested in the scheme can sign up to receive updates [via the project page](#) on the Highways England website where they can also find an animated visualisation outlining the preferred route.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448

and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[News story: Nine gold safety awards for Sellafield Ltd](#)

The RoSPA Health and Safety Awards are among the world's most prestigious safety accolades. They recognise our safety performance in 2016/17, a year in which we made significant progress in the clean-up of four of the most hazardous buildings in Europe.

Retrievals Director, John Oliver, said: "We have installed the first retrievals machine that will remove waste from the Magnox Swarf Storage Silo, removed more than 50 tonnes of nuclear fuel from the First Generation Magnox Storage Pond and removed the first drum of radioactive sludge from the Pile Fuel Storage Pond.

"Completing this technically difficult work while maintaining an unrelenting focus on safety is a credit to our teams and the supply chain".

Safety Director, Euan Hutton, said: "We take these awards as a badge of pride in our safety performance and, while we want to improve our safety performance, we are proud of the work our people have done to deserve these awards.

RoSPA judges consider entrants' overarching occupational health and safety management systems, including practices such as leadership and workforce involvement.

Julia Small, RoSPA's head of awards and events, said: "The RoSPA Awards are the most prestigious in the world of occupational health and safety, and held in high regard around the world, as winning one demonstrates an organisation's commitment to maintaining an excellent health and safety record. Achieving the standard required is no mean feat."

Find out more about the [RoSPA Health and Safety Awards](#)

[News story: Startect Dual Active Oral Solution for Sheep: change of](#)

distribution category

The VMD has agreed to a request from the Marketing Authorisation Holder Zoetis UK Limited to change the legal distribution category of this anthelmintic (i.e. wormer) for sheep.

Startect Dual Active Oral Solution is authorised for the treatment and control of mixed gastro-intestinal nematode infections and associated diseases of sheep.

The legal distribution category of this product was changed from POM-V to POM-VPS on 24 August 2017. This means that pharmacists and suitably qualified persons (SQPs), as well as vets, are now legally permitted to prescribe this anthelmintic.

Increasing the availability of this anthelmintic should help it to be incorporated into strategic worm control programmes on farms in line with best practice guidance on worm control. This could result in long term health benefits for sheep, for example by reducing the development and spread of anthelmintic resistance, thereby prolonging the effective use of anthelmintics.

Prescribers should contact Zoetis UK Limited if they require more information regarding the availability of this product.

Making sure anthelmintics are used properly

Making sure anthelmintics continue to be effective is essential for the long term health, welfare and productivity of animals. The volume and appropriateness of use of all anthelmintics significantly influences the rate of development of anthelmintic resistance in the target parasites. Anthelmintics must therefore be used appropriately to minimise further development of resistance.

Farm animal SQPs will have additional training to ensure they are sufficiently familiar with Startect and how to prescribe it effectively and responsibly so that it is used appropriately. A new compulsory training module is being implemented by The Animal Medicines Training Regulatory Authority (AMTRA) to augment the skills of all AMTRA-registered SQPs permitted to prescribe farm animal products. New SQPs will be required to undertake a revised and extended module before gaining their farm animal registration with AMTRA.

Monitoring anthelmintic resistance

Farmers and prescribers should report any suspected adverse events or lack of efficacy to any anthelmintic to the VMD. This is essential in order to understand the prevalence and nature of anthelmintic resistance and to inform prescribing decisions.

Press release: CMA provisionally clears Cardtronics and DirectCash Payments merger

Both companies supply pay-to-use and free-to-use cashpoints (ATMs) at sites across the UK.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) began investigating the merger in January, referring it for a phase 2 inquiry by an independent group of panel members in May.

This group considered whether the merger would reduce competition and result in higher surcharges at pay-to-use cashpoints.

In their [provisional findings](#), published today, the inquiry group found that the presence of free-to-use ATMs, and the availability of alternative non-cash payment methods, are likely to constrain such surcharges at pay-to-use machines.

The group also provisionally found that contracts and relationships with the owners of sites at which ATMs are installed would limit the merged company's incentives to increase surcharges.

There was also evidence that ATM surcharges are not set according to local competition and that the merger would be unlikely to change this.

Alasdair Smith, CMA Inquiry Chair, said:

We've looked carefully at the scope for the merger to result in cashpoint users paying higher charges at pay-to-use ATMs. As part of our in-depth inquiry, we surveyed consumers and spoke to the owners of a wide range of premises at which these machines are installed.

We've provisionally found that the merger does not provide the merged company with an incentive to increase surcharges for people using pay-to-use ATMs, not least because of the increasing use of non-cash payment methods and the decline in the use of pay-to-use ATMs relative to free-to-use ATMs.

We're now asking for views on these provisional findings and will assess all the evidence before making a final decision.

All information relating to this merger inquiry can be found on the [case page](#).

Anyone wishing to respond to the provisional findings should do so in writing, by no later than 5:00pm on Friday 15 September 2017.

Please email cardtronics.directcash@cma.gsi.gov.uk or write to:

Project Manager
Cardtronics/DCP Merger
Competition and Markets Authority
Victoria House
Southampton Row
London
WC1B 4AD

Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law.
2. The summary of provisional findings can be found on the [case page](#). The full provisional findings report will be published shortly.
3. The CMA referred the case for in-depth investigation on 15 May 2017.
4. The members of the inquiry group are: [Alasdair Smith](#) (Chair), [Rosalind Hedley-Miller](#) and [Gavin Robert](#).
5. All the CMA's functions in phase 2 merger inquiries are performed by independent inquiry groups chosen from the CMA's panel members. The appointed inquiry group are the decision-makers on phase 2 inquiries.
6. The CMA's panel members come from a variety of backgrounds, including economics, law, accountancy and business; the membership of an inquiry group usually reflects a mix of expertise and experience.
7. For more information on the CMA see our homepage or follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Flickr](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and like our [Facebook page](#). Sign up to our [email alerts](#) to receive updates on mergers cases.
8. Media enquiries should be directed to press@cma.gsi.gov.uk or 020 3738 6798.