

A30 Chiverton to Carland Cross Scheme granted development consent

Today, Thursday 6 February 2020, the application for the A30 Chiverton to Carland Cross Scheme in Cornwall has been given development consent by the Secretary of State for the Department of Transport.

Development consent has been given to upgrade the road from a single to dual carriageway which includes construction of a 12.5 km new off line section and a new grade separated junctions at Chiverton and Carland Cross, and Chybucca. The majority of the existing A30 will be retained as a local route. The project is located at the A30 trunk road between Chiverton and Carland Cross junctions.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by Highways England on the 30 August 2018 and accepted for examination on 27 September 2018. Following an examination during which the public, statutory consultees and interested parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, a recommendation was made to the Secretary of State on 6 November 2019.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

"This is the 80th nationally significant infrastructure project to have been examined and decided within the timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008. The Planning Inspectorate is committed to giving local communities the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them. Local people, the local authority and other interested parties were able to participate in a 6-month long examination. The Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to local views before making their recommendation."

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation is publicly available on the [National Infrastructure Planning website](#).

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Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office, on: 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate, National Infrastructure Programme of Projects details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months. It can be viewed at <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

T Level providers to benefit from £110 million boost

T Level providers across the country will benefit from a multi-million pound package of support to ensure they are ready to deliver the pioneering new courses, Education Secretary Gavin Williamson has announced today (Friday 7 February).

The government is investing up to £95 million through the T Level Capital Fund so young people taking the new technical qualifications from 2021 will have access to industry standard equipment and high-quality facilities. The fund will be delivered in two parts – from today, eligible providers can bid for funding to refurbish existing buildings or create new spaces, while funding for specialist equipment such as digital and audio-visual kit, will be allocated to all providers in Spring next year.

Following a successful first phase, the government is also announcing the expansion of its innovative T Level Professional Development (TLPD), worth £15 million in 2020-21. The programme – which is being delivered by the Education and Training Foundation – provides tailored training and support to boost FE teachers and leader's skills, industry knowledge and expertise for students to benefit from.

TLPD was first launched in spring 2019 and has already supported thousands of teachers, managers, support staff and governors. The expansion will build on this success by delivering more training to an increased number of providers and across a wider range of T Level subject areas.

Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, said:

T Levels will play a vital role in our drive to unlock talent and level up skills across the country.

This cash injection will make sure more T Level providers and their staff are ready to teach the new qualifications, so young people have access to the high-quality teaching, first class facilities and industry standard equipment they need to succeed.

T Levels are high-quality technical alternatives to A Levels, combining classroom theory, practical learning and an industry placement to give students the skills they need to secure a great career and that will provide employers with the skilled workforce they need. The first T Levels in Childcare and Education, Construction and Digital will be first taught from September 2020, with a further seven available from 2021. The remaining 15 T Levels will be launched in 2022 and 2023.

The government has already invested £38 million through the T Level Capital Fund to support post-16 providers to be ready to deliver first three T Levels from this September. Providers including Barnsley College received £2.25 million to improve their SciTech Campus building and create a Digital Innovation Hub (DIH). Exeter College also received £2.5 million to help create a number of new facilities, including a dedicated space for students taking the Construction T Level.

David Russell, Chief Executive of the Education and Training Foundation, said:

The advent of the first T Levels in September is a major milestone heralding the government's intention to invest in the prestige and quality of technical education. It is crucial that professionals teaching the new qualifications are excellently equipped to do so from the very first day learners walk through the doors.

As England's expert body for professional development in post-16 education, the ETF is delighted to have secured this very significant contract. We are excited about working with teachers, trainers and leaders to meet their T Level professional development needs over the coming years. The partnership approach that we have previously taken on T Levels will continue, and we look forward to delivering this support in the wider context of investment in the professional development of those delivering Further and Technical Education and Training in England.

David Hughes, Chief Executive of the Association of Colleges, said:

I am delighted that the Department for Education has extended T Level Professional Development. It will provide invaluable support to teaching staff and managers as they adapt their skills and knowledge to delivering T Levels from September 2020.

Workforce support, development and networking/collaboration are key to the success of T Levels. The AoC is pleased to be working with the ETF to ensure the sector receives the support it needs.

John Laramy, Principal and Chief Executive of Exeter College said:

At Exeter College, we are absolutely delighted to work with the ETF, providers and individuals to support the development of professional practice for technical education. As the Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning (CAVTL) noted, outstanding, dual qualified staff (both teachers and industry professionals) are critical to the successful delivery of exceptional technical

education. We hope that this programme can help colleagues from across the sector to embrace the new opportunities that T Levels will bring.

The success of T Levels is fundamentally linked to the quality of staff who teach, assess and lead the provision; so it is fantastic that the Department for Education have provided continuing investment in professional development. As a College, we are passionate about T Levels and technical education, so we are very pleased to be able to support the revolution of technical education in England.

Government to cut the cost of new homes by a third

- Housing Secretary announces plans to cut costs of a proportion of new homes by a third for first-time buyers – turning the dial on affordability
- The First Homes scheme will give people the opportunity to buy a home in their local area – saving eligible first-time buyers on average around £100,000
- The discount will be prioritised for veterans and key workers such as nurses, police officers and firefighters

A new generation of homeowners will be able to take their first step on to the housing ladder thanks to a scheme cutting the cost of some new homes by a third, Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick has announced today (7 February 2020).

First Homes will see a discount locked into the property to ensure more first-time buyers benefit in years to come. Local people unable to afford a home will be able to buy in their area, rather than be forced to look elsewhere by rising prices.

The scheme will lower deposit and mortgage requirements for local first-time buyers in England – shaking up the housing market and making the dream of home ownership a reality. The discount will apply to a proportion of new homes, with the government consulting on how this will be delivered.

Veterans will be prioritised as part of Armed Forces Covenant and councils will also be able to use the scheme for front-line workers in their area such as police, nurses, prison officers and teachers.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

First Homes will be genuinely life-changing for people all over the country looking to buy their first home.

I know that many who are seeking to buy their own home in their local areas have been forced out due to rising prices. A proportion of new homes will be made available at a 30% market discount rate – turning the dial on the dream of home ownership.

The discount will be passed on with the sale of the property to future first-time buyers, helping thousands more people in years to come and ensuring local communities can stick together.

The average price of a newly-built home in England is £314,000. Under First Homes, a property sold with 30% off this price would deliver a £94,000 saving and enable first-time buyers to get on the ladder faster by taking more than £18,000 off a 20% deposit.

The average newly-built home in Cornwall costs £246,000, meaning a 30% discount delivers a saving worth more than £73,000. Areas with particular affordability pressures will see even greater savings with a 30% discount.

The government is committed to delivering more than one million new homes over the next 5 years to further improve the affordability of housing.

The proposals published today, which could see tens of thousands of First Homes being built, include measures to help release more land.

More than 240,000 new homes were delivered in 2018-19 – more new homes than at any point in the last 30 years.

And the latest figures show more than 250,000 energy performance certificates being issued to new homes in 2019 – the highest number ever, suggesting further progress being made.

The government is determined to rebalance the housing market to support homeownership through new schemes such as First Homes, building on existing support including Help to Buy equity loans which have helped more than 190,000 people take their first step on the property ladder.

The latest figures show the number of first-time buyers reaching 357,090 – an 11-year annual high and an increase of 84% since 2010 – and the percentage of home owning 25 to 34-year-olds has grown from 36% to 41% over the last 5 years.

Paula Higgins, Chief Executive of the Homeowners Alliance, said:

We know that first-time buyers will welcome the opportunity to buy a good quality home at a discount in their local area.

We look forward to contributing to the consultation and working with the government to ensure that the scheme does what it says on the tin – more high quality and affordable local homes for current and future first-time buyers.

The scheme will apply the discount in perpetuity, so when the home is sold in years to come the new local buyer will be able to purchase it at a discount as well.

The measures build on action from the government to make it easier for people across the country to take their first step on the property ladder, including:

- Consulting on a new national model for shared ownership enabling more people to take their first step on to the housing ladder by reducing the initial share that has to be bought, and then enabling them to take further steps in 1% increments. Instead of having to purchase chunks of 10%. A consultation on these new measures was published in August and the Government will respond in due course with further details.
- Extending the Help to Buy: equity loan scheme to 2023 and ensuring that developers who work with us meet the standards and quality that customers expect and deserve.

The government has today launched a consultation on the design of the new First Homes scheme.

To ensure the scheme helps those who would benefit the most, the government is consulting on a price cap on properties available through the scheme, as it has done for Stamp Duty cuts and the new Help to Buy equity loan scheme.

The consultation proposes that current and recent Armed Forces personnel will be taken to have met the local eligibility criteria for First Homes in any local area under any circumstances.

The discount will be paid for through the contributions that housing developers routinely provide through the planning system. These contributions are an established mechanism for ensuring that new developments deliver benefits for local communities. This means that the First Homes scheme will not result in extra building costs.

[Rape victims to benefit from](#)

government funding boost

- rape support centres across England and Wales awarded 50 per cent funding uplift
- funding increase totalling £32 million over 3 years
- more victims than ever to receive government funded support

The move will increase the money available – up from £8 million to £12 million per year – to total £32 million over three years for a range of services including tailored face-to-face support and counselling.

Nationally more than 160,000 sexual offences were recorded by police last year, and this funding will ensure help for victims is available in all 42 of the country's Police and Crime Commissioner areas.

Today's (7 February 2020) announcement will also see a £1 million investment to recruit more Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) across the country, who provide advice and support for victims, acting as the link between police, support services and criminal justice agencies.

After a commitment to the investment was made in September, rape support centres across the country have now been offered the 50 per cent uplift in funding. This is guaranteed over a 3 year period, providing centres with stability and security so that they can focus on delivering services that victims so desperately need.

Victims Minister Wendy Morton MP said:

Rape and sexual violence are devastating crimes and victims must have the confidence that support will be there when they need it.

That is why we have increased funding twice already to ensure no victim is left to suffer alone.

We know there is more to do, but through the Government's Victims' Strategy we are continuing to improve the support on offer at every stage of the justice system.

Katie Russell, spokesperson for Rape Crisis England & Wales, said:

Rape Crisis England & Wales is pleased the Ministry of Justice has increased its Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund.

With demand for Rape Crisis support, counselling and advocacy services continuing to rise, this gratefully received funding increase is a welcome contribution to the increasing need for specialist services among victims and survivors of child sexual abuse, rape and all forms of sexual violence.

This lift is the second time we have increased funding in the last year to the Rape Support Fund, bringing it to £12 million per year from April. The increase will allow our local services to plan for the future – offering them stability and security so that they can focus on delivering services that victims so desperately need.

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The move builds on new laws brought in by this government that will ensure serious violent and sexual offenders spend longer behind bars – ensuring the public and victims are protected from these heinous crimes.

Notes to editors

- MOJ funding for victim support services has almost doubled since 2012/13. This year we awarded about £92 million on these services. In previous years this has been £96 million due to a £4 million MOJ contribution to the Home Office's modern slavery contract – this funding has now been directly transferred to the Home Office.
- The government directly funds 76 rape support services and a further 18 via Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs).
- MOJ provides a contribution to rape support services across England and Wales and the level of grant funding varies. In 2018/19 we allocated around £7.2 million to these centres to provide independent, specialist support to female and male victims of sexual violence, including victims of child sexual abuse. This increased to £8 million in 2019/20 and will further increase to £12 million p.a. for 2020 -2022.
- In 2019/20 we allocated Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) around £68 million funding to locally commission emotional and practical support services for victims of crime, including victims of sexual violence, as they are best placed to respond to local need.
- The Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that 20% of women and 4% of men have experienced some type of sexual assault since the age of 16, equivalent to an estimated 3.4 million female victims and 631,000 male victims.
- In September 2018 we published the first cross-government Victims' Strategy which outlined how we will improve the support on offer for victims at every stage of the justice system.

[Further UK assistance to fight Australian bushfires announced as](#)

Foreign Secretary visits worst-hit state

The UK's support to fight the destructive Australian bushfires was strengthened today (6 February) in a further demonstration of the deepening relationship between the two countries.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab and Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne announced a package of UK support, including assistance from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew to support emergency seed collecting in areas affected by the bushfires, and collaboration between the UK and Australian space agencies on preparedness, response and mitigation measures. A team of UK experts visited Australia last month to scope how the UK can best contribute to the response.

The Foreign Secretary and Foreign Minister Payne will also travel to the New South Wales Rural Fire Service headquarters tomorrow (7 February) to meet those involved in the response to the bushfires.

The package of UK support builds on the long-standing relationship between Kew and the Australian Seed Bank Partnership (ASBP), to conserve Australia's incredible biodiversity through seed banking.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

This further collaboration between the Australian Seed Bank Partnership and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew will help protect Australia's precious biodiversity following the terrible bushfires.

We stand shoulder to shoulder with the Australian people in the face of this challenge.

Kew has worked in collaboration with Australian seed banks since 2000, sharing expertise on seed collection processes, conservation and research so that the seeds of plant species considered rare or threatened can be banked and conserved for the future.

So far, 12,450 seed collections representing 8,900 Australian species, all of which are saved in local seed banks, have been duplicated and stored in Kew's Millennium Seed Bank (MSB) in Wakehurst, Sussex, as a safe back-up to in-country storage. Banked seeds offer future possibilities for both research and conservation and can be used to grow a new generation of plants in years to come.

Dr Elinor Breman, Senior Researcher at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew's Millennium Seed Bank:

The Royal Botanic Gardens Kew has a long-standing and productive relationship with the Australian Seed Bank Partnership (ASBP), with whom we have worked with for 15 years. We offered our assistance with the emergency response to the bushfires and are pleased to be able to support their efforts, as part of our ongoing partnership to address biodiversity loss through seed-banking in Australia.

Kew's scientists will work with the ASBP to conduct emergency seed collecting in areas devastated by the bushfires and longer-term germination research, which will hopefully aid the international effort to restore habitats more quickly in this precious and biodiverse region.

Further information