



• Easing congestion and reducing delays in Hertfordshire

Improvements on the A602



Client: Hertfordshire County Council
Location: A602, Hertfordshire, United Kingdom
Completion Date: 2020

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) is in the midst of developing a new Transport Vision that will set the transport agenda in the county to 2050.

Housing growth and economic development are putting a strain on the existing infrastructure. New major transport projects are likely to emerge from the Transport Vision, prioritised in the new Local Transport Plan and funded through the Strategic Economic Plan of the county's Local Enterprise Partnership.

At the heart of developing and delivering major transport projects in Hertfordshire is the Highways Major Projects Group. Opus staff are part of a unique alliance in Hertfordshire - the Whole Client Service - which sees Opus staff and HCC staff working alongside each other in County Hall and Hatfield. This symbolic relationship between HCC and Opus staff brings a greater understanding of what the client needs, quickens decision making, eliminates unnecessary work and reduces the risk of the client being unhappy. The A602 Improvements project is a good example of how this works in practice.

The A602 is a major east-west route in Hertfordshire. The scarcity of east-west routes has increased the pressure on the A602 which is of a poor standard, with tight bends, poor visibility and inadequate junctions.

Early proposals included the replacement of a roundabout with a major traffic signalled layout. While this design worked operationally, Opus had the local knowledge to understand that it was likely to receive political and local opposition in this rural area. This local knowledge meant the team could pre-empt this conflict and developed an alternative design, more sensitive to the local environment and used the opportunity to also replace a currently intrusive lighting high mast with shorter, more efficient lamp columns.

The Opus team was also able to save the client money by keeping consultation costs low with a new approach to publicity, which reduced reliance on leaflet drops and maximised reach by promoting the consultation via temporary road signs. Traditional notices and letter drops would not reach everyday users of the route and the temporary road signs promoting the consultation, a new method to Hertfordshire, proved very successful and will be used on future projects.

Two planning applications have been submitted and a further two will be submitted later this year. If planning permission is granted, the aim is to start work on certain sections in early 2017, with the whole project being completed in 2020.

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