

cc George Osborne
C. Spelman
J. Greening
Jeremy Bloom (H.A.)

IPC

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REF:

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Kathryn Powell
Case Leader IPC
Temple Quay House
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN

PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR PROPOSED NEW A556

Dear Ms Powell,

I wish to register as an interested party in relation to the proposed construction of the new A556 road between Knutsford and Bowdon and would like to bring the following points to your notice.

I believe the scoping report produced by the Highways Agency to be insufficient, and the pre-application public consultation to be **flawed** and **unfair**. The summary Document they have produced is, at best, misleading and confusing to the lay reader and, at worst, contains omissions, misnomers and blatant errors. To call the scheme an "Environmental Improvement" seems to me an example of using biased and misleading terminology. On completion the scheme may indeed improve the lives of ONE community, but it will certainly DEVASTATE another and have a detrimental effect on FIVE other communities, not to mention the flora and fauna along the projected route.

When I challenged a member of the Highways Agency team on the omissions in the Summary Document she admitted that not everything appears in the Summary Document and that interested parties were expected to carry out their own additional research. The majority of residents in my village are elderly. They certainly do not have Internet access, would find it extremely difficult to attend any of the public exhibitions, and once there would struggle to plough through the "Preliminary Environmental Information" and "The Scheme Assessment Report". As clerk to the Parish of Little Bollington I believe that both the above reports should have been mailed to me. Also I would have thought it fair that residents could assume they could rely on the Summary Document to give them full, clear, unbiased and CORRECT information on which to base their opinions without needing to seek supplementary data elsewhere.

I concede the document does state, "All maps in the Summary Document are illustrative only and are not intended to show individual properties". Should this not have appeared in bold to alert readers that they were not being given a valid representation? Despite this caveat it beggars the question as to why some locations are clearly named and their full housing stock shown, whereas one village (strangely the one most adversely effected!) is neither named, nor is its housing stock shown bar ONE residence!!

Could I also bring to your attention the fact that a letter sent out by Stuart Southall's office (M.P. North Manchester) dated 23rd January and one sent out by the HA project manager Arun Hans Sahni dated 29th February were both **WRONGLY ADDRESSED** for all residents who live on Park View. The first contained the Public Consultation leaflet explaining pre-application consultation arrangements. The second contained errata to the Summary Document. The implication is that High View residents did not receive this information at all. I wonder how wide spread this error was in other surrounding villages?

One of the objectives of the scheme, apparently, is to improve road safety...why then has one agency on viewing the plans for the new intersection and junction joining the M56 stated " IF drivers observe the speed limit it **SHOULD** be safe". Is this not courting disaster? Also the present scheme will turn the narrow country lanes of Millington into rat runs. They cannot possibly accommodate the projected 2000-3000 vehicles which will exit at the Millington junction whenever the M56 backs up. It is inevitable that fatal accidents will occur in these lanes, particularly in the winter months when they are already treacherous enough.

As for minimising the environmental impacts during and after construction; no amount of cuttings, screening by planting or mounds of earth, or re-situating indigenous wildlife will prevent the inevitable increase in noise and air pollution created by this ill-conceived scheme.

On a procedural issue, may I point out that representatives from the Highways Agency turned up at Little Bollington School one Friday afternoon at the end of January and deposited boxes of consultation documents without making any prior arrangements with the school, the head or the caretaker. As clerk they had e-mailed me asking for a possible deposit location. In response I had suggested the school as a **POSSIBLE** venue, but made it very clear that they would have to liaise with the head-teacher and seek her approval. **THIS WAS NOT DONE**. Their assumption that they could go ahead anyway hardly reflects well on a major government agency.

My last observation is simply to make clear my horror and disbelief that at a time of deepest recession the Chancellor, the Secretary of State for Transport and the Secretary of State for the Environment see fit to spend £174 MILLION of public money on this scheme. Especially as they know this is only an initial outlay...according to the Summary Document, " on completion of the proposed new A556 road to improve traffic flows, we are also looking at possible improvements to the M6 to the South of junction 19 and to the M56 to the east of junction 7". How can this astronomical outlay possibly be justified when the present A556 could simply be improved by making it a dual-carriageway with a service road provided for the residents of Mere?

I await your response with keen interest.

Yours sincerely, S H Coxon (clerk to Little Bollington Parish)