

## **DEADLINE 9 SUBMISSION – A57 LINK ROADS PUBLIC EXAMINATION.**

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For the most part, this submission will concentrate on questioning various aspects of '*Derbyshire County Council's (DCC) written summary of oral submissions at hearing sessions and post-hearing written submissions requested by the ExA*' [REP8-023] and their lack of consistency on various issues.

### **TRAFFIC CALMING**

I will begin by referencing my own Deadline 4 post-hearing submission [REP4-029], requested by the ExA, entitled '*My concerns regarding the diversion of traffic in Glossopdale from the A57*'. On page one of this document, at point 2, I raised a contradictory position, or what I assumed to be a contradictory position between NH and the local highway authority, Derbyshire County Council.

On the one hand, we have NH, who want to view the '*Hadfield Alternative*' routes as an outlet for the A57, or as some kind of overflow. On the other, we have DCC, who have clearly spent a lot of time, effort and public money on protecting these very same routes, deterring rat-running and increasing public safety by slowing them down, through the use of road calming measures.

I also noted that local residents would not be supportive of NH encouraging rat-running through their communities.

However, as the Inquiry has developed, it has become quite clear that DCC, as purportedly represented by Mr. Blissett, far from wanting to protect these routes, (in line with the public expenditure that has been laid out over many years) rather, seem to be completely accepting, nay supportive, of allowing increases of, for example, 50% on Dinting Road.

In short, they appear to be totally compliant in accepting excessive rat-running across the whole of the largely residential '*Hadfield Alternative*' whilst offering no explanation for this contradictory state of affairs. I should also like to highlight and re-iterate their complete disregard for the very people who pay their wages and whose interests they are supposedly there to support, protect and represent.

The following may at first seem odd but I wish to paraphrase a passage from page 5 of DCC's report (as referenced above) which pertains to crossings - please bear with me, there is a point to this.

DCC note that *'Not all sites are suitable. Factors measured are number of people crossing the road, the amount of traffic, the safety record and local features such as schools and shops.'*

I mention this because similar (though not exactly the same) criteria are applied and a point scoring system is, or certainly was, used to determine whether or not road calming measures such as road humps and speed bumps should be laid down.

I know this because I once asked for humps on a road near me, where there were people doing silly speeds. I spoke to someone at DCC who told me in a polite way that the road didn't nearly merit enough points for any such scheme. A few years later a speeding motorist died on that very stretch of road.

The point I'm making here is that DCC must have used their own criteria to justify road-calming the entirety of Dinting Road, right through its length to Norfolk Street/Old Glossop both of which are also traffic-calmed throughout their length until they meet the A57. Ditto, parts of Hadfield Road.

Yet, all of a sudden, without any explanation, all the work, all the time and all the public expense put into these route restraint measures, appear now to have no merit or significance whatsoever. DCC now appear to embrace rat-running through residential areas, think it to be absolutely fine and raise no objection to this nullification of years of building-in restrictive measures. A complete and utter profligate waste of taxpayers hard earned money.

Consequently, I should like the ExA to please ask DCC to explain their apparent doublethink regarding this astonishing situation. They appear to support both route restraint measures and rat-running off the A57 at one and the same time. It is a completely untenable position and I think DCC need to be held to account and forced to explain this contradiction.

I should also like to suggest that Mr. Blissett and his colleagues spend some time doing site visits, especially during rush hour and school-run times, to see and to understand for themselves, the extent of the problems that motorists already experience on the roads of the *'Hadfield Alternative'* before any more collusion with NH is undertaken, to bring a further avalanche of traffic to the area. Better still, perhaps they could arrange a public meeting in Glossop, to justify their position to local residents.

## **RAT-RUNNING**

Next, I would like to refer you to page 3, paragraph 5 of the DCC report, where it states *"traffic will seek to meet the demand (for travel between, Glossop, Glossopdale and Manchester) by a number of alternative routes, particularly Charlesworth, Broadbottom and Gamesley, for example. **These are along routes which are not particularly suitable**"* (my emphasis).

I shall make no comment as to whether these routes are suitable or otherwise. I merely note that DCC and presumably, by extension, Mr. Blissett, consider and indeed state that "these routes are not particularly suitable".

No reasons are given for their unsuitability. For the sake of clarity and comparison, perhaps DCC would like to offer their reasoning for this statement, since this is an evidence-based inquiry and not one that is based on beliefs.

If we can establish the criteria behind the statement that *'these roads are not particularly suitable'* then the question can be put as to why DCC do regard Shaw Lane (which is narrow and effectively single-file) to be perfectly suitable?

We can also ask the question as to why DCC do consider the increasingly residential Dinting Road with its school crossing, road-calming measures and Stop Junction to be equally suitable? Or why indeed they would consider Hadfield Rd, with double-parking along its length, pinch points and a school crossing to be a similarly suitable route?

I think we really need to know what criteria, if any, DCC are using at this Inquiry, to determine that some routes are *'not particularly suitable'* whilst other routes in the heavily residential and calmed *'Hadfield Alternative'* area appear to be absolutely suitable!

As both a local resident and motorist I cannot make any sense of DCC's position and see no reasoning behind any of it. Perhaps the ExA could ask Mr. Blissett to explain what appears to be another massive and inexplicable contradiction?

### **BELIEFS VERSUS FACTS**

Whilst the ExA have constantly reminded us that this is a fact-based inquiry, DCC make constant reference to their 'beliefs' which appear to be rooted in preference rather than empirical evidence.

For instance, the opening paragraph of page 4 begins *'Derbyshire County Council does not believe that the changes in traffic flow on the local roads in Glossop arise from people from elsewhere deciding to descend on Glossop purely and simply as a consequence of the scheme but changes in the travel behaviour of local people who currently reside in the town'*.

Quite frankly, it doesn't matter what DCC or anyone else believes, what matter are facts and evidence. In answer to this nugget, it is a fact, according to the modelling, that in a Do-Nothing scenario there will be 50% less traffic on Dinting Road, 11% less at Norfolk St, etc. Increased amounts of traffic across the entire area only exist **after** the scheme is implemented,

DCC are simply wrong because facts and evidence trump beliefs. They do not have evidence because they have consistently argued against modelling the whole of the *'Hadfield Alternative'* area and for fairly obvious reasons. This report or belief system is not grounded in reality and does a great disservice to the residents of the area who pay people like Mr. Blissett to work for them and not the NH.

### **OPTIMIZATION OPTIMISM**

On page 4 of the report under the heading *'Question u) Impacts on Shaw Lane at its Junction with the A57'* DCC's solution to the acknowledged *'additional queuing and future congestion of the junction'* is a system of linked signaling arrangements at the proposed new junction at Woolley Lane (presumably this is Brookfield not Woolley Lane) in order to manage the traffic entering Glossop on the A57.

However, question 'y' (original question to be found on page 6 of ISH 3 Agenda) states explicitly that *'the traffic modelling has assumed optimization of the traffic signals at Shaw Lane Junction'*.

Presumably therefore, if optimization is already assumed, DCC's optimizing solution is already redundant as any kind of resolution at all.

Therefore, the second part of question 'y' *'Does DCC envisage works beyond optimization to this issue'?* has not been answered.

What concrete proposals, not in the 'fulness of time' but right here, right now, before the Inquiry winds up in May, if any, do DCC intend for the junction? Or do they accept that it is an intractable problem that they cannot resolve?

If it was resolved, wouldn't this simply lead to even more traffic rat-running through Shaw Lane, Dinting Road or even past the new school on New Shaw Lane? This leads us back to the beginning of this submission. Would this be acceptable and how does it sit with DCC's long-standing efforts to traffic calm that entire area? The authority has left itself in a conundrum of its own making.

### **GLOSSOP GHOSTWAY**

I will finish with an ad hoc point regarding the mysterious Glossop Gateway since I raised the matter at the hearing on April 6th.

This ghostly document that nobody has ever seen but which purportedly exists, perhaps in a desk drawer, has been incorrectly referenced at the Inquiry several times. I say incorrectly because as Mr. James of High Peak Borough Council himself has stated (and is on record as such) it is only a draft document.

In other words, it is not and never has been in the public domain, except when produced at the ExA's request, nor has it ever been consulted upon. Nor is it ready for publication. As such, its somewhat grand title, the Glossop Gateway Masterplan, at this particular point, misleads, since it has no adopted planning policy status whatsoever.

Therefore, it would be appropriate that no further mention of it should be made at the Inquiry. All previous references to it should be expunged from the record, deleted, struck out or simply ignored and it should be accorded no weight or merit whatsoever. It appears to be nothing more than a red herring which is something the Inquiry could well do without.

