

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [A303 Sparkford to Ilchester](#)  
**Subject:** A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling – TR010036  
**Date:** 15 September 2020 19:31:37  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-ybxvzrx0.png](#)  
[A303 Comments by Long Hazel Park ref letter from Sec of State for Transport.odt](#)  
[GetAttachmentThumbnail-3.jpg](#)  
[GetAttachmentThumbnail.jpg](#)  
[GetAttachmentThumbnail-2.jpg](#)  
[GetAttachmentThumbnail-4.jpg](#)  
[GetAttachmentThumbnail-1.jpg](#)  
[GetAttachmentThumbnail-5.jpg](#)  
[Appendix 1 Reviews from Customers regarding traffic noise from the A303.pdf](#)

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The Planning Act 2008 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 Application by Highways England (“the Applicant”) for an Order granting Development Consent for the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling

Response to Secretary of State for Transport's call for Comments

Please find attached comments on behalf of Long Hazel Park and Appendices

1. Further customer reviews since lockdown mentioning traffic noise, and
2. Photographs (6) Long Hazel boundary fence, (1,2,4 and 5) stile responsibility of Applicant (3) steps and handrail leading down to A303 responsibility of Applicant (1) close up photograph of rotten cross rail of stile responsibility of the Applicant.

Kind regards

Alan and Pamela Walton

[www.longhazelpark.co.uk](http://www.longhazelpark.co.uk)  
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Long Hazel Park, High Street, Sparkford, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 7JH

A303SparkfordtoIlchester@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

### **A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling – TR010036**

#### **The Planning Act 2008 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 Application by Highways England (“the Applicant”) for an Order granting Development Consent for the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling**

#### **Response to Secretary of State for Transport's call for Comments**

**Mr A R & Mrs P M K Walton, Long Hazel Park, High Street, Sparkford, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7JH make the following comments:**

1. We are very grateful to the Learned Planning Inspectors for their patience and understanding and for listening and acting upon our concerns. We support their findings. We do take great umbridge from the Applicant's misguided and destructive approach to our concerns about traffic noise. Living next to the A303 and trying to run a long-established tourism business on our Park, we are likely to be more aware of the day to day noise than the Applicant. We have suffered considerably from the fall out of COVID-19, especially being a small rural tourism business. Following lockdown, we have obtained COVID-19 safety approvals and have attracted many staycation tourists to Sparkford. Sadly, we are, as always, dogged by traffic noise from the A303. Otherwise happy customers continue to hold the noise against us and are still repeatedly mentioning the noise from the A303 in their online reviews, often stating they will not return due to this and, in any event, causing bad publicity for our business. We append as Annex 1 a sample of such reviews since the last enquiry. We are continuing to suffer from increasing volumes of traffic and associated traffic noise which we submit is clearly the responsibility of the Applicant to address. We have expressed our concerns with traffic noise from the A303 as it affects our holiday touring park business and the long-term effects the new road scheme (if approved) without intervention would have on our business. We have lived here for 23 years. Our aspirations to slowly evolve our business in part as a holiday lodge development for older and mobility impaired people as well as part being used as a residential mobile home lodge park for the over 50's will undoubtedly be impacted by increased traffic noise. We obtained a change of use to provide low market affordable housing for older and disabled people with priority to the local community, which we submit is a benevolent act on our part and we do not stand to gain financially in the same way as if we were to sell the land for open market housing development. We will retain ownership of the land to comply with an existing Section 106 Agreement and derive our future income from an extended holiday season. In the long term our income would be underpinned by annual pitch fees from mobile home occupancy. We are also still concerned about increased traffic flow in Sparkford High Street and still wish to see traffic control measures in place.

2. We have already spoken at the Open Floor Hearings 2 and 3 which were recorded and we fully explained our situation. During these, we produced a financial forecast of what

is achievable from tourism spending in the local community if the traffic noise was suppressed, so we could attract more visitors without the negative reviews. We hope the Secretary of State has heard this recording of the evidence by Mr A R Walton as it is very important to our local economy. The A303 traffic noise is driving down the potential tax revenue and deterring the financial recovery of the local community. The recorded evidence given at Open Floor Hearing 2 by Mr Alan Walton was read out from the following:

A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Project (TR010036)

Your reference: 20014098 Long Hazel Park, Sparkford

Estimated financial contribution to local economy for year 2018/19 based on findings of Economic Benefit Report Holiday Parks and Campsites England dated February 2019.

1. Visitors for the year 6 April 2018 until April 2019 to our Park are likely to peak at 3000. Assuming they all have spent £100.00 during their stay this equates to £300,000 going into the local community from tourism.
2. Potential accommodation available peak season 1 May until 30 September. Using 50 pitches x 153 days x 2 people: 15,300 visitor nights available x £100.00 local spend gives a total of £1,530,000 spend in the local community if all the pitches were taken up. There is a black hole of £1,230,000 annually.
3. Turning to the 6 proposed self-catering holiday lodges closest to the A303 each lodge could accommodate up to 4 adults per night. Taking the peak season of 153 days the lodges would be let for a minimum of £100.00 per night. Based on two adults sharing a lodge, the potential income for Long Hazel Park would be 12 x 153 x £100.00 : £183,600 per annum. Assuming the lodges were let as above then the spend to the local community would include extra for transport, eating out and visiting attractions by the holidaymakers. Thus a further sum for spending in the local community per head could be as much again - £183,600.
4. Visitors and reviews consistently say traffic noise is a negative factor for their stay, not wishing to stay, or departing earlier than planned from Long Hazel Park because of traffic noise. The facilities and customer service at the Park are not an issue.
5. It is submitted that traffic noise has a negative impact on visitors staying at Long Hazel Park, Sparkford which results in less income to the owners and to the local economy. Traffic noise mitigation could help improve the local economy. More traffic noise will continue to depress it.

We sincerely hoped that the scheme if proceeded with would once and for all address the traffic noise issues as it affects us and our local community. We will certainly not benefit as the Applicant claims because the new road will accelerate the movement of tourists past us as a destination to break their journey to preferred sites further west taking with

them their tourism spending power. Therefore, this road scheme for Sparkford will be a negative activity.

3. In response to the Applicant's assumptions that the traffic noise generated by the scheme (if approved) would be de minimus, no proposals are forthcoming from the Applicant to include noise mitigation in the proposed scheme for Long Hazel Park, we still request such scheme. Any increase in noise, however small, will be adverse both now and in the future. It will continue to impact upon the quality of the lives of people visiting or residing in Sparkford and in particular at Long Hazel Park. It remains the case that amenity areas within the Park will be adversely affected as supported by the Learned Inspectors.

**4. Comments to the Applicant's specific unacceptable concerns over our alleged planning gain and the criticism of our self help traffic noise mitigation still stands.**

5. We have complied with all planning conditions following our successful Appeal in 2017 for a change of use to residential mobile homes for part of the Park. This decision was made over three years ago. Times have moved on and traffic volumes have increased and so has the noise.

6. We have permitted the Applicant to visit our Park and we acted upon the advice given. We blocked up the gaps on the bund below the new fence section where the bank had settled. We also repaired the fence damaged by winter storms and blocked the gaps and odd hole with timber boards. This repair work would have been seen at the Planning Inspector's site visit. As for the existing planning permissions in place, we have complied with all conditions on noise mitigation as things stand. We are restricted to siting prefabricated lodges built to BS3632 (full residential standard for mobile homes which fall within the legal definition of a caravan). These lodges can be used for holiday or residential use. Holiday guests can stay for prolonged periods up to one year at a time. Furthermore there is a Permanent Residential Caravan Site Licence E/90 issued by South Somerset District Council covering the whole block of our land nearest to the A303. The Council gave us this type of Licence because they concluded that persons would be staying in these lodges over prolonged periods of time akin to a residency.

7. Any future proposed planning application for change of use would be limited to just six small 6m x 6m lodges to be sited nearest to the A303 boundary where the external amenity space would be the most severely affected. These lodges were not included in the Planning Appeal decision. However, planning permission for these six lodges permits all year round holiday use. The same BS3632 condition applies as per the Fully Residential Caravan Site Licence E/90. The passage of time, the year on year increase in traffic volumes and associated noise from the A303 is bound to impact on the Park. The outside amenity areas would be the worst affected.

8. On the contrary, the financial gain for us from changing the use of these six 6m x 6m square lodge plots would be negligible. Nevertheless, our health and wellbeing, and that of our tourists and residents needs to be protected from existing and future traffic noise



which is the responsibility of the Applicant. The Applicant still remains in denial of the WHO and the top combined scientific approach to traffic noise as it affects the health and wellbeing of those suffering from it. It is all too easy to hide behind out of date construction regulations which are not in tune with modern times and modern thinking.

9. We would like to emphasise that during the consultation process the Applicant red-lined the area of our Park. This included our boundary fence with the A303, the said six 6m x 6m square lodge plots, an existing holiday hire lodge and 3 x 1 tonne underground LPG tanks and sewers, water mains and drains which serve the whole development! This act would have destroyed our entire business. Perhaps the Applicant perceived the noise issue and wanted to gain control of the land to erect a sound barrier. It would be interesting to know what they intended to do with the land. It was through the great efforts of our member of Parliament Mr David Warburton that the Applicant eventually dropped our land from the scheme. During the whole of this harrowing experience, the Applicant continued to criticise us in relation to our maintenance of the fence. Not only this, we were also excluded from further investment and marketing our lodges much to our financial loss. We note that the Applicant mentions the red line being 17 metres from our boundary. The land in between the red line and the boundary is under the control of the Applicant. We see no reason why the red line could not be moved up to our boundary to accommodate a sound barrier within the scheme. The relevant section of boundary is only about 150 metres long.

10. We now append as Annex 2 some photographs of the public footpath style at the boundary with the A303. We are given to understand by the Somerset County Council Footpaths Officer that this is the responsibility of the Applicant. The Long Hazel boundary fence can also be seen in photograph 1. The hand rail down the steep steps to the A303 is also unsafe and wobbles when gripped. The Applicant should not be critical of others when it is allowing its own infrastructure to fall into disrepair.

### **11. Comments in relation to traffic calming in Sparkford High Street**

The Applicant is again shying away from this issue. The works recently carried out are as a direct result of planning conditions imposed on the developers of Long Hazel Farm and centres around that entrance. There are many more entrances from established and approved developments emerging on to the High Street. No more traffic calming has been done in relation to those developments and much of the High Street remains unchanged. With these numerous feeder roads on to the High Street, which is only 400 metres long, the population is going to explode. In line with Government policy on road safety especially for the protection of non-vehicle road users in built up areas we urge that a 20mph speed limit should be imposed and if possible policed by average speed cameras sited in the High Street from the railway/bridge junction to the Hazlegrove Junction. This section of road should be kept clear of parked vehicles except for loading and unloading and bus stops. Traffic flow will be maintained to cope with the future massive increase of up to 7,500 vehicles per day. Pedestrians need a clear view (without parked cars) when crossing

the road and vehicles emerging on to the High Street need clear sight lines to do so safely. From personal experience, parked cars in the High Street are holding up through traffic and reducing visibility.

## **12. Comments relating to proposed road signage showing Haynes Motor Museum and Camping as a single item**

We object to directions for the Haynes International Motor Museum being put on the same sign as Long Hazel Park. This is because drivers will immediately associate the museum with camping at the museum which is at least a half mile away from Long Hazel Park. The present illustration would encourage motorists looking for camping to first drive to the museum for a non-existent facility at that site.

13. All potential traffic destined for the Haynes International Motor Museum travelling from Podimore towards Sparkford (eastbound) should be directed by traffic signage on the A303 to continue along the A303 Sparkford by-pass and exit at the A359 junction to the museum which is only a few hundred meters north from this junction. This would considerably mitigate the museum traffic entering the Sparkford High Street in particular super cars and classic cars. The museum hosts monthly breakfast meets for car owners and separate monthly meets for motor cycles, as well as lots of other gatherings throughout the year. There could be a convoy of over one hundred such cars using the High Street for the monthly Haynes breakfast car meet and a similar number of motorcycles for their monthly breakfast meet. The correct signage could keep these vehicles out of the High Street.

## **14. Comments in relation to proposed new traffic signage for local businesses**

We strongly object to losing our direction sign on the A303 Eastbound side should the new road be built. We do need such a sign to direct passing trade in to the High Street for both ourselves and the local services as before. It is a simple matter to include our caravan and camping sign alongside the local services sign on the approach to the Sparkford sliproad from the direction of Podimore. On the contrary, we see no need for a Haynes International Motor Museum sign to be sited at the proposed Eastbound slip road into Sparkford village. An alternative would be a stand alone sign (without any reference to the Caravan Park) directing museum traffic straight ahead on the A303 to the next sliproad for Frome/A359 north because the museum is outside the village and on this road. There has been controversy over linking the museum for camping with Long Hazel Park over the years which has resulted in confusion for caravanners. We are entirely separate venues and the museum does not host camping. Long Hazel Park is a half a mile from the museum and our park entrance is midway along the High Street. Proper clear signage will avert caravanners and motorhomers travelling unnecessarily, going on a wild goose chase for camping at the museum when there is none and will keep potential museum traffic out of the village High Street.

We strongly object to sharing any direction sign with the Haynes Museum.

Presumably our direction sign on the Westbound A303 at Chapel Cross will remain to afford our customers the option to leave the A303 for Sparkford at the earliest opportunity but we will still need a direction sign at the new Westbound sliproad in to Hazlegrove roundabout and smaller directions signs at that roundabout as before.

We did pay for most of these signs and have to insure them against damage or theft. We qualified for approval for siting because we are an established quality VisitEngland inspected establishment. We hope to see like for like stand alone signage for the benefit of Long Hazel Park as part of the new road signage.

**15. Comments in relation to the Applicant's refusal to entertain a parallel road in relation to the proposed parallel road**

We continue to support this request put forward by our three local Parishes who have continued to be ignored and put down by the Applicant as it has done throughout the Public Examination process. We stand to lose our local bakery so we must place on record the dedication and support given to the local community by the West Camel Bakery both before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bakery is a local treasure and asset has relentlessly continued to operate and distribute food throughout the community. As a business, we welcome daily deliveries for our tourists who can buy over the telephone and we are all delighted with the quality and service. Our local pubs and restaurants in particular Mattia and the Mildmay Arms at Queen Camel have strived to cook and deliver takeaway meals throughout the community during COVID-19.

Since the Public Examination closed the A303 at Camel Hill has been blocked several times due to accidents as well as the road closed for night time works with long diversions put in place. This has resulted in traffic jams and traffic chaos. The argument for a parallel road is still a cogent one. Summer traffic volumes at the weekends especially on a Friday afternoon results in gridlock throughout the area because of the seasonal dramatic increase in traffic descending on Sparkford. A parallel road would ease congestion and provide direct access for many hundreds of local people employed at RNAS Yeovilton and to access the Bakery and Mattia's.

Further oral evidence given at the Open Floor Hearing 3 by Mr A R Walton supports the issues and comments raised above.

Dated

Signed.....

on behalf of Long Hazel Park

APPENDIX 1

Sample of reviews mentioning traffic noise following lockdown.

## APPENDIX 2

Photographs of the style and handrail believed to be the responsibility of the Applicant.



Small, tidy site. Adult only. 25/08/2020

 Confirmed 



Electric hardstanding and grass motorhome pitch



Recommend to friends



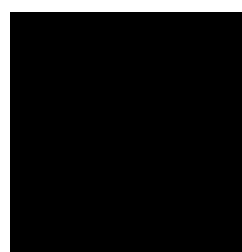
Visit again

**Liked:** Small, tidy site. Adult only.

**Disliked:** Noisy road nearby.

Very few facilities open due to COVID-19.

Nowhere to put general waste.



5 months ago on  Google

Lovely little campsite. Ideal location for Fleet air arm museum and Haynes car museum. Owners are very friendly and very helpful. Unfortunately the only downside is the traffic noise from the nearby a303.

4/5



Lovely spacious site. Very clean and tidy. Picnic tables. 31/07/2020

 Confirmed 



Electric hardstanding and grass motorhome pitch



Recommend to friends



Visit again

**Liked:** Size and location of pitch. Adult only site. Relaxed feel. Good free WiFi.


**Disliked:** Traffic noise from nearby dual carriageway. For that reason we wouldn't choose this site again, but otherwise it's lovely and just the sort of site we like.



I found this helpful


**Overall** 

Location 

Value for money 

Accommodation (No rating)

Facilities/activities (No rating)

Customer service 

Child friendliness (No rating)

Cleanliness 

Wifi 

Really well thought out, clean spacious facilities with lovely people!

17/08/2019

Confirmed ?



Electric hardstanding and grass motorhome pitch



Recommend to friends



Visit again

**Liked:** Upon arrival we were greeted by Alan, who pointed out where everything was and where we could pitch up. He was lovely, the showers were awesome, the block was clean and spacious. There was a reception selling chilli plants, great recycling system, big tubs of 'help yourself' herbs for your gourmet meal preparation!

**Disliked:** When we left super early in the morning, the chilli plants weren't out so I couldn't buy one.

Traffic, as it's near a main road we could hear cars and lorries all night.



I found this helpful



A pleasant welcome and all the information you could need. ...

01/09/2019

Confirmed ?



Electric hardstanding and grass motorhome pitch



Recommend to friends



Visit again

**Liked:** A pleasant welcome and all the information you could need. Our pitch was level and fine for our unit. The site is well kept throughout with clean facilities. Full recycling facilities are set up to cater for virtually everything. Friday night is Pizza night and very tasty. There were only a few pitch's occupied during our visit so no noise or other issues.

**Disliked:** If you listen hard enough you can hear traffic on the 303 but to be honest it didn't affect us. Dog owners be aware there is no dog area on site and local walks are mainly on lanes. Not the sites fault and not a big issue just for information.

Overall

8

Location



Value for money



Accommodation

(No rating)

Facilities/activities



Customer service



Child friendliness

(No rating)

Cleanliness



Wifi

(No rating)

Overall

8

Location



Value for money



Accommodation



Facilities/activities



Customer service



Child friendliness

(No rating)

Cleanliness



Wifi







Would happily come to stay again 23/03/2020

Confirmed ?

Electric hardstanding and grass motorhome pitch

Recommend to friends Visit again

**Liked:** Very helpful and friendly owners.  
Pleasant level site, close to several attractions.  
Spotless toilet and washing facilities.  
Good TV.  
Excellent WiFi.

**Disliked:** A bit of noise from the A303.

3 weeks ago on Google

Nice little site, well kept. However, there is a constant noisy drone of traffic from the nearby bypass.

We couldn't judge the facilities as very little was open due to the Covid 19 pandemic. There was nowhere to put general waste, so we had to take it home.

Overall 10

Location

Value for money

Accommodation

Facilities/activities

Customer service

Child friendliness

Cleanliness

Wifi

3/5

Date of Visit: July 2020



Unit: Motorhome

Rating: 5 stars

Nights stayed: 5

Travelling as: Mature couple

Reviewer

2 reviews from this member

“ We telephoned Tuesday morning

We were at a site backed on 303 very noisy road and night in sparkford showers and toilets not opened

We moved to ashcombe farm

Peaceful and the owner was very nice

We have booked again in August for six days

Toilet and showers opened ”

Date of Visit: July 2020

Unit: Motorhome

Rating: 

Nights stayed: 1


Travelling as: Mature couple

Reviewer: 

[2 reviews from this member](#)

“ We arrived on Monday 20th July for six nights

It was our first time to Somerset

I have got a  and after been not able to go out for sometime

I was so looking forward as we only had our Motorhome since Sep 2019

On arrival the owner told us as the three people running the site were vulnerable

There would be no showers and other amenities

I did not sleep all night due to the very noisy road

I did mention this as we had to leave

We were not aware of the 303 busy road

I think busy and noisy road should be on website

If we had known about the road we would not have booked

I also feel if amenities were not available we should not have paid full price just for a pitch

The site is very nice and clean

We love the people in the pub and was looking to going the next night

This is a true and honest review

 ”

[Check Availability or Enquire](#)





## Not ideal as a holiday, over night stops only as close to major route 25/08/2019

Confirmed

Electric grass tent or trailer tent pitch

Recommend to friends Visit again

**Liked:** Very attentive owners, toilets were clean, site was spotless, liked the detailed recycling idea

**Disliked:** Size of pitch, was very small and crammed in, very close to the A303, road noise was constant and loud, 2nd night the site was too busy and overcrowded for the small site size, not enough showers (2) and toilets (4) for the amount of people crammed in

I found this helpful

### From the manager...

Thank you very much for taking the time to leave a review.

We are very disheartened to see your comments, especially in light of the fantastic 10/10 reviews we have received below, which overlapped with your stay. The review below entitled "Well worth a visit" was from your immediate neighbour! We are particularly pleased that you found us to be very attentive, which is why it makes it so strange that you didn't mention any concerns to us during your stay. We live on site and are available at any time to deal with any problems. In light of this, it's rather frustrating to see you only marked us 3/5 for customer service.

We are very pleased to see you found our site to be spotless and we will pass your kind comments on to our cleaner, who we hired over the Bank Holiday as Alan has broken his foot and was unable to fulfil his usual cleaning duties. We're a little confused why this isn't reflected in your individual marking for cleanliness. We truly pride ourselves on being spotless and our annual Visit England report was completed last week, giving us 100% for cleanliness once again.

You stayed over the August Bank Holiday weekend, which is notoriously busy in the whole of the West Country, especially with the stunning weather. When you arrived on the Thursday, you were one of only two tents on the whole site and you expressed you were very happy with your pitch. You were not at all crammed in, nor were you overcrowded and your pitch was far in excess of your 4m x 4m tent. We were rather astounded to watch you build a fort around your pitch with high windbreak barriers. You then dragged a large 6 seater, communal picnic table in to your area and used this as a foot rest throughout your stay, despite bringing your own table and chairs. With dimensions of around half the size of your tent, we do agree that the picnic table may have crowded your pitch somewhat.

We are licensed for 75 pitches at Long Hazel, however, we only use around 50 of these to ensure that all our customers have large pitches and ample room. We would also like to highlight that we have 7 toilets, 3 urinals and 5 showers, which is far in excess of our designated site license. Our newly renovated shower block has been incredibly well received this season, so we are disappointed to see that you felt our accommodation and facilities are not up to scratch.

**Overall**

Location

Value for money

Accommodation

Facilities/activities

Customer service

Child friendliness (No rating)

Cleanliness

Wifi (No rating)



Noisy but well kept site. 31/08/2019



Anonymous



Confirmed ?



Electric hardstanding and grass motorhome pitch



Recommend to friends



Visit again

**Liked:** Informative greeting and welcome. Level pitch. Well kept and clean facilities. Small site.

**Disliked:** Push button taps in showers and sinks - some of which were inoperable. Noise from very nearby main road.



I found this helpful

#### From the manager...

Thank you very much for your review of your stay with us over the August Bank Holiday weekend. We're glad you found us to be well kept and clean and that you appreciated our welcome on our small park.

We do have push button taps in showers and sinks. This is for two main reasons, the first and most important being accessibility for all. Not all customers are able to use turn taps and, with much research over the years, we have found the best way to overcome this is to install push taps throughout our facilities, which has been very well received by those who need a little extra help with accessibility. Secondly, we have found that using push taps means that the taps are less likely to be left on after use, saving water. The taps run for long enough to be able to wash your hands without constant compression.

We would like to point out that only one tap in the ladies' was out of action for some of the bank holiday weekend, leaving three sinks (with the one other tap on the same sink) and both showers in working use. The issue was that the tap was "sticking" in the on position so we put it out of order. It was fixed as soon as the Bank Holiday weekend was over and we were able to get hold of a brand new tap, which has now been fitted.

Thank you again for leaving a review we appreciate your kind comments.

Overall

8

Location



Value for money



Accommodation

(No rating)

Facilities/activities



Customer service



Child friendliness

(No rating)

Cleanliness



Wifi

(No rating)























