

This representation is made by the acting Chairman on behalf of Easton Parish Council and aims to reinforce the comments made at the Open Floor Hearing on 12th August 2021 in support of the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton scheme.

In 1992, our village was split in two by the A47 dual carriageway. In the early days residents could freely cross the A47 on foot in relative safety, however, this has since changed due to the significant increase in traffic volumes using this stretch of road. Furthermore, Lower Easton is almost a no-go area, especially for those on foot. The severance between Easton and Lower Easton is so extreme and severe Councillors have had concerned parishioners enquire where Lower Easton is. Ringland Road and Lower Easton was once a quiet country lane but it is now a major rat-run for at least 4,600 vehicle movements per day, for which the road simply does not have the capacity for. These A47 improvement works need to occur to provide better access for pedestrians and cyclists between Easton and Lower Easton and improve the lives and safety of the residents in Lower Easton and Easton as a whole.

As it stands residents of the Parish will not use the A47 Easton roundabout (near St. Peter's Church) because it is so dangerous. Conversations with residents has revealed many choose to travel to Ringland and wider Broadland via Costessey/Longwater which places further pressure on other already strained junctions and road networks. Therefore, these improvements must occur to remove a dangerous roundabout from the highway network and ease pressure on the surrounding infrastructure network. Easton Parish Council would like to stress the urgency of these improvements in light of the forthcoming residential development in and around Easton, with the village allocated to provide almost 1,000 homes in the Greater Norwich Local Plan. More houses will result in more residents using the surrounding infrastructure, therefore it is imperative we remove dangerous roundabouts and unsuitable roads from the network by enabling this A47 improvement scheme to ensure the safety of these forthcoming residents as well as those already living in the Parish.

As a Parish we do not feel it is right to speak concerning other segments of this much needed development and improvement scheme. However, when you understand others from outside our community want to sacrifice our resident's wellbeing it is time to speak out and represent the interests and safety of our village. The collection of affected local parishes chose to meet before formal consultation with Highways England, and this helped to produce a coordinated approach to the scheme that was in the best interests of all the impacted residents. Since the Open Floor Hearing Easton Parish Council were delighted to be informed of Hockering Parish Council's resolution to support the scheme demonstrating the improvements to the road is backed along most of the proposed route. Therefore, the current plan for Easton, submitted by Highways England, developed after extensive discussion and participation with local people and Easton Parish Council, should be accepted without amendment.

Traffic modelling showed that adding an extra section of road between Lower Easton and the Taverham Road/Blind Lane junction provides no benefit to the residents of our community. If anything, adding this additional section of road would make the environment worse and increase the amount of agricultural land that would be destroyed at a time where development must minimise its environmental impact and the destruction of our treasured natural resources. The scheme design has been model tested by Highways England. It works. It is supported by the majority of residents of Easton as a totality. Therefore, there is no need for any further amendments, alterations or delay and the scheme should progress to deliver the aforementioned benefits to the Parishioners of Easton.

The improved stretch of road will also help improve employment and commerce opportunities in the area, in turn improving the lives of local residents. This is especially in relation to the development of the Food Enterprise Park which provides a unique employment opportunity to local people. However, on the morning of the Open Floor Hearing (12th August 2021) lorries associated with its expansion and construction were queuing along Church Road for nearly half a

mile. This road network is not able to accommodate this volume of traffic and exemplifies the need for this improvement scheme as it will allow much needed economic development and investment in the area without sacrificing the wellbeing of the residents and community of Easton. The A47 North Tuddenham to Easton improvement scheme will also reduce the traffic jams associated with the current roundabouts which will improve the air quality and noise pollution that currently blights our Parish. Therefore, it is imperative this scheme progresses as it is currently proposed for the safety and wellbeing of the residents of Easton.

Thank you for taking the time to engage with Easton Parish Council.