

Having attended and now having discussed the recent Issue Specific Hearings, Honingham Parish Council wish to make the following additional submission.

Side road strategy and practical solutions remains a major unresolved issue. This is vitally important in the lives of local residents, businesses and farms. We have consistently argued that as much of the existing A47 as possible should be retained to serve as access for local people and to enable full connection to the existing local side road network. The failure of the National Highways proposal to address this and the absence of any coherent joined up practical proposals with Norfolk County Council on side roads at this stage of the process defies belief. As a Council we cannot understand why anyone would propose that some 1800 vehicles a day (NCC modelling outputs shared at the Local Liaison Group without construction of the NWL, reducing to 1,100 with the NWL) be allowed to traverse a single-track narrow country lane with limited passing spaces. Apart from the severe impact on the lives of residents in Taverham Road, we feel this situation is manifestly unsafe for road users. The Council continues to maintain that Taverham Road should not be directly connected to the A47 mainline at the Norwich Road junction but continue to be connected via the existing A47 route to the existing Mattishall Road roundabout. This would require limited motorised access (weight, height and width restricted) via the proposed WCHR underpass access adjacent to St. Andrews Church. This in our view balances the need to maintain local access across the Wensum Valley whilst further discouraging rat running around the western edge of Norwich, for what would be a relatively small change to the existing scheme. This proposal has additional advantages in avoiding the problems of rubbish dumping and illegal occupation that the existing National Highways proposal would bring to the severed road in front of St. Andrews Church. The Council is also of the view that insufficient screening is proposed for the residents of Taverham Road from the Norwich Road junction complex.

The Council supports the Berry Hall proposed alternative plans in respect of the Wood Lane/NWL junction. This shows that it is potentially feasible to design a junction that significantly reduces existing mature tree and hedgerow removal required in the current scheme. This would provide significant immediate environmental gain in a world where climate change and conservation should now be overriding priorities. In our view the current scheme 15-year environmental net neutral target does not sufficiently recognise this priority. This alternative would also provide for increased mitigation to shelter the west side of Honingham from what will be significant visual, noise, pollution and light impacts on local residents. This alternative also keeps open more of the existing A47 (via the Lady's Grove underpass) which provides advantages in terms of a direct route for local bus services (potential services from Hockering - Honingham - Easton and onto Norwich), local motorised traffic and cyclists – all of whom would not need to negotiate the proposed Wood Lane / NWL A47 mainline junction. The size of the over designed roundabouts on the current National Highways proposals at this junction remain a further key concern. It appears that the designed capacity to have minimal queues in 2040 based on historically informed estimates of future journey growth (before current trends to work more from home and be more sustainable can be effectively determined) and to provide a link to the NWL that may never be built is at the needless expense of considerable immediate environmental damage. The existing junction proposal may meet required regulations and design standards but, in our view, completely misses the opportunity to considerably reduce environmental damage and to maintain connectivity of the local road network.

The Council is also concerned that the proposed scheme may attract opportunistic development proposals that are unacceptable to the rural character and setting of the Parish, not least the landscape of the River Tud. The Parish is determined to retain its current rural character and to ensure that any development is consistent with this.