

Application by Highways England for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton project.

Actions arising from the issue specific and compulsory acquisition hearings which were held virtually from Tuesday 2 November to Friday 5 November 2021.

Issue Specific Hearing 2 Response from Weston Longville Parish Council.

Reference:20028094

Action 2 and Action 4

2. Provide references to demonstrate that the scheme has always proposed to include two junctions along its along its length, along with its intent to remove the Easton roundabout and provide a junction to the west of the Easton roundabout.

4. Provide the evidence to demonstrate the size of roundabout required should the Norwich Western Link not be provided.

Untangling the design and decision making chronology with respect to the Wood Lane, Norwich Road and Easton junctions is difficult, interwoven and influenced as it was by with the choice of either option C or D for the Norwich Western Link (NWL). Option D, which was the one favoured in the public consultation, joined the dualled A47 close to Taverham Road but was moved eastwards to accommodate the concerns of residents. In the event Norfolk County Council chose Option C. Thus began a process of adjustment with roads added, closed, and removed according to the pressure exerted by different groups and interested parties and it is clear from the DCO responses that this process is continuing. WLPC wholly accepts the right of all those affected by the road to make their case. However National Highways (NH) seem to have lost sight of the original objective. The HE High Level Strategy contained in the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton Junction Sideroad Report published in February 2020 states that the development of the scheme was based on maintaining the old A47 and *'connecting severed roads or accesses either with new connector roads or utilising the existing local road network'*. Its hard to judge how much this failure to sustain strategic focus arises from the delays and changes in contractors and senior personnel which have dogged this project. It now seems that the pressure to complete the project is having an equally deleterious effect.

Recent submissions to the ExA suggest a wish to call into question whether the Norwich Road roundabout is necessary at all. If this suggestion gains any kind of traction, it has significant consequences for Weston Longville if the dualled A47 is not accessible from Ringland Lane, Weston Road and Honingham Lane leaving only the B1535 and C167 open for cross valley traffic , regardless of whether the NWL is built or not. Given the range of representations from different interested parties WLPC believes that NH should stop trying to square the circle. There would appear to be enough fundamental flaws in the design and locations of the proposed junctions to justify going back to the drawing board in order to produce a design which answers the question, *'What would the junction and side road strategy look like if the NWL was not regarded as 'certain ?'*.

Minimally there should be no changes made at this stage without a full assessment of the consequences for the B1535 and C167 with and without the NWL.

Action 8

Respond to the comment raised by the Interested Party with respect to the potential to relocate the proposed environmental mitigation area from the land to the west of Wood Lane junction, to an area to the south.

If, as it would appear, the proposal to relocate the proposed environmental mitigation area from the land to the west of the Wood Lane junction to the south is in order to allow for the construction of a service station then Weston Longville Parish Council (WLPC) would object. There is no demonstrable need for service station at this point on the network and it would have the effect of drawing in more traffic on to the already overburdened B1535 and C167 with or without the NWL.

Weston Longville Parish Council

21 November 2021