

Wansford Parish Council

Deadline 4 Submission

ISH2 Agenda Item 7

Geotechnical Risk

A47 Wansford to Sutton Dualling

In Issue Specific Hearing 2, the matter of geotechnical risk in the area of the escarpment down to the river Nene was discussed. At the end of the hearing, National Highways' counsel stated that there would be no problem as National Highways knew how to build roads.

As we are sure the Examining Authority is well aware, geotechnical issues are common in the construction of roads however carefully they are designed. Locally there have been recent examples on the A16 Peterborough to Crowland road and the A142 Ely Southern Bypass. Both these roads were carefully designed but both suffered construction delays of more than a year because of geotechnical problems close to rivers. There are numerous other examples of geotechnical problems causing difficulties with roads including to local one of the barriers on the river side of the A47 having to be reset at regular intervals.

Highways England has updated the guidance on geotechnical risk twice in the last four years, clearly showing that it is a live issue.

The road alignment chosen by National Highways exposes the project to the risk of cost overruns and delays as a result of geotechnical risks while an alternative alignment gets away from these risks completely.

If it were decided to widen the A47 at some future date, the design engineers would be faced with a choice of destroying the southern feature of the Scheduled Monument or constructing a large embankment much closer to the river. This would have a very high cost and a considerable construction risk.