

Wansford Parish Council

Deadline 4 Submission

ISH4 Agenda Item 4

Consultation with Parish Councils

A47 Wansford to Sutton Dualling

In Issue Specific Hearing 4, the matter of ongoing consultation with Wansford Parish Council (WPC) and Sutton Parish Council (SPC) was raised under Agenda Item 4. This agenda item was the result of an earlier submission by SPC.

The National Highways (NH) response to this issue was that they would “strongly oppose ongoing consultation with the Parish Councils on the grounds of delay”. This shows a considerable level of arrogance and a complete disregard for government policy on democratic representation.

Parish Councils are the elected representatives of their communities and it is government policy that matters should be dealt with at the lowest level competent for the task. At present Peterborough City Council is undergoing something of a financial and staffing crisis and as a result they have not been able to devote very much time to the project. This gap has been filled by the Parish Councils who are able to call on significant technical resources from within their communities. Many of the major consulting engineering companies have offices in Peterborough and many of their staff live in the villages to the west of the city.

Throughout the A47 Wansford to Sutton Dualling project, the two Parish Councils have taken a keen interest in scheme as it has developed and we have raised numerous issues on behalf of our communities. On many occasions we have pointed out problems in the work done by NH and this has resulted in a change of route, significant improvements in the Non-Motorised User provision and other changes to the scheme.

The Parish Councils have always tried to work constructively with NH but they have often disregarded the points that we have made and excluded us from meetings where we could have made a significant contribution.

As an example of our contribution, in ISH3, the Examining Authority noted the inconsistencies in the traffic modelling of the Wansford Western Roundabout and asked NH to check this. The problems with this modelling were raised by Wansford Parish Council more than 2 years ago but NH declined to do anything about it. Now the project may be delayed while the modelling is corrected.

Wansford Parish Council requests that the Examining Authority recommends to the Secretary of State that National Highways continue to consult with Wansford and Sutton Parish Councils as the scheme completes the DCO process and hopefully goes into detailed design and construction.