

The process of NH consultation with the village of Cowley has been less than satisfactory and unfortunately the involvement with Cowley Parish Councillors has been non-existent. NH wrote to Parish Councils on 12 November 2021 to provide an update on the scheme and to seek the views of the Council on entering into an SoCG. The Councillors were not given sight of this document and it was not disclosed whether further discussions with NH were available, although it was voted by the Parish Council with a Birdlip majority that a SoCG was not necessary. So, consequently, NH met with other local Parish Councils on 9 December 2021 to further discuss any concerns and update them and once again a missed opportunity for Cowley to have 'a voice'. Discussions with the other Parish Council are ongoing. Also, the last two submissions by Cowley and Birdlip Parish Council was not disclosed and unaware of Chairman speaking at Hearing 4 where it disclosed that communication has been had with NH.

Minutes of meeting from 21st March 2018 'a local businessman explained his proposal to the Parish Council regarding the possible redundant stretch of road from the existing Birdlip junction to the Stockwell turn off. He proposed the Council ask for this to be left as a road to be used as a recreational facility for cyclists. This would also be used by walkers, runners and possibly a bridle way - with the car parking being at Barrow Wake where the viewpoint is that with families using this facility on a regular basis, this facility should also put a stop to the anti social behaviour at the View Point. Councillors voted to add this possible option to their response to NH. The Clerk would seek to organise a meeting with NH to discuss further'. A response was prepared for NH including the redundant stretch and a slip road to allow access to the Golden Heart Inn and Stockwell/Cowley turn off to be submitted before 29th March 2018 deadline. This was put forward one year BEFORE ROUTE 30 had been chosen! National Highways adopted this proposal in their eagerness to add some substance to their Environmentally-led Route 30 scheme that they preferred. The green bridge was also not in the original consultation, so the environmentally-led mantra was obviously an afterthought to sell to the public.

There are serious concerns that the traffic through Cowley is expected to increase during and after the development of the A417 option 30. The roads into the village are unsuitable for a higher volume of traffic with the road surface constantly potholed due to flash-flooding. Maintenance has been poor. Access to the A417 via A436 where a build up of traffic is forecast will lead to worse rat running through the village with drivers trying to shorten their journey times.

Mindful of the government review on road building not being published until 2023, would it not be prudent to defer a decision until the strategy is known as it will strike a sour note if the 'missing link' is at odds with Climate Change recommendations.