

As the homeowner of [REDACTED], I am submitting this "Written Representation" summary on behalf of my family and the property. Having considered all aspects of the current plans in detail we have no choice but to raise an objection to them in the current guise. The proposed plans which directly impact [REDACTED] are far reaching and unfortunately predominantly detrimental to the property and the family lifestyle which we have enjoyed for over 25 years. The plans remove many benefits of the property replacing them with a catalogue of negative changes which together create a major blight and leave a legacy of long-term issues.

In principle we are not opposed to the general aims of the scheme, but do not believe that this particular application represents a good solution to achieve those aims. With greater consultation and localised consideration much of the negative impacts could have been mitigated to provide an optimum sustainable solution while reducing public purse spend. The remainder of this summary provides an outline of those plans that we do not agree with and which have an impact upon the property. A more detailed description of the issues are provided in the attached document.

- 1. Acquisition of permanent rights.** The current plans include provision to permanently acquire rights over 308 square metres (1-8b) of mature (deciduous woodland) within the eastern boundary of the property to build a new access road. If fully implemented in line with this Land Take this would represent a major negative impact, removing key features and benefits that have been enjoyed by the family for a number of years. While losing a private and secure play area the impact on wildlife and the environment would be equally disappointing. Given the scope to select a number of other options which protect the woods we struggle to understand the rationale behind this decision. Similarly concerns also exist for the acquisition of rights of 640 square metres over parcel 1-8a.
- 2. Placement of Layby close to the property.** The submitted plans include the construction of a large layby close to the property and as such will become a primary visual feature on the landscape. As the layby span is similar to a dual carriageway it will significantly increase the amount of tarmac on view to 7 lanes. In addition to the visual impact, it is unfortunate that laybys attract a variety of anti-social behaviours which are commonly seen on other parts of the A1. This includes fly tipping which appears to be prevalent in the area. The Acquiring Authority has failed to demonstrate why they have chosen this particular location given the obvious impact on a number of residences.
- 3. Placement of an operational depot and soil store close to the property.** The submitted plans include provision to establish an operational depot and soil deposit directly west of the property. Whilst naturally anxious at the additional noise, fumes and dust that this will bring, the primary concern is the impact on the environment and in particular the mature woodland that will be felled to accommodate the depot. Given the scale of the land acquisition there is a risk that the whole woodland could be lost leaving a significantly marred westerly outlook exposing both the A697 and the A1. Given the multitude of less destructive options to place the depot I am struggling to understand the rationale behind this decision. The Acquiring Authority has failed to demonstrate why they have chosen this particular location given the impact on local residences and environment.
- 4. Access to the property.** The submitted plans propose that the current direct access be replaced with a convoluted private road, extending to nearly one kilometre, passing through 4 different properties with existing contentions and constraints. The issues are further exasperated by a less than picturesque point of access into the property that eradicates any kerb appeal and a creates a complete mismatch to the current orientation of the buildings. This is far from optimum creating a long list of negative impacts and leaving a legacy of

issues that will continue to burden the property in the future. The rationale behind the chosen route is also questionable from a Public purse perspective as the cost of implementing the road exceeds the value of the two properties that it is intending to service.

5. **Transport.** The submitted plans make very little provision for other types of transport to complement the dualling project. Indeed, existing transport modes in my local area are to be removed. This includes a regular bus service with bus stops outside of my property. Similarly, the local cycle link and footpath are to be removed. Given the government agenda to encourage greater use of cycle paths I was surprised not to see a more strategic plan to integrate cycle links with the project. This was successfully achieved with the recent Morpeth bypass project.
6. **Landscape and Visual.** We currently enjoy a picturesque outlook with mature woodland, rolling fields and tree lined avenue. The proposed plans radically change this with the introduction of an operational depot, additional access roads, a layby and the expansion of the carriageway all in close proximity to the property. After overcoming the significant visual impact of the construction phase, we will be facing the prospect of 7 lanes of tarmac being the primary landscape view from the front of the property. Furthermore, the removal of woodland to the west of the property will leave the A697 trunk clearly visible for the first time. Whilst there is some attempt in the Landscape Mitigation plan to mask some element of this it falls well short and what is proposed will take a long time before it can take effect.
7. **Noise and Vibration.** The proposed plans suggests that the introduction of a sound barrier and the use of low-noise surface will be sufficient to reduce noise levels of increased traffic travelling at much faster speeds. However, the proposed sound barrier is not guaranteed and only covers part of the property leaving much of it exposed. I welcome the use of low-noise surface, however, as seen on other roads the noise levels significantly increase with time as the road ages and becomes damaged with wear. We currently enjoy the use of the garden after 7pm when the traffic is very quiet and not noticeable. The expansion of the road will encourage a 24/7 use of the road thereby creating a constant noise barrage. Given the uncertainty with the sound barrier more could have been done to mitigate the impact of noise which are known to have a detrimental impact upon health.
8. **Air quality.** The current projections from data captured in 2015 suggest that the actual air quality when the road becomes operational will, under standard conditions, be within legal limits. I am surprised that such an important aspect to people's health is left to such a long-range estimation without further surveys to validate. In deriving an air quality forecast I understand that there are a large range of unknown variables which require assumptions to be made. Given the dependency on such variables I was expecting a wider range of potential results to cover different scenarios. For example, what is the impact on air quality in the event that there is an accident and traffic is stationary for some time.

Although we are realistic in recognising that a project of this scale is inevitably going to have some negative impact, we have been stunned by the scale and detrimental nature of the planned changes on a single property. At this stage of the planning process, we still have well over 50 issues which remain outstanding which does not feel right given the availability of viable alternatives that would address them. In summary, we believe that there are specific elements of the current plans that are far from optimum, however, there are cost saving alternatives which would mitigate the impact upon the property and the environment, while still meeting the scheme objectives.

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In principle we are not opposed to the general aims of the scheme, but do not believe that this particular application represents a good solution to achieve those aims. With greater consultation and localised consideration much of the negative impacts could have been mitigated to provide an optimum sustainable solution while reducing public purse spend. The remainder of this document provides a more detailed description of the issues previously raised by the summary document.

1. **Acquisition of permanent rights.** The current plans include provision to permanently acquire rights over 308 square metres (1-8b) of mature (deciduous woodland) within the eastern boundary of the property to build a new access road. If fully implemented in line with this Land Take this would represent a major negative impact, removing key features and benefits that have been enjoyed by the family for a number of years. While losing a private and secure play area the impact on wildlife and the environment would be equally disappointing. Given the scope to select a number of other options which protect the woods we struggle to understand the rationale behind this decision. Similarly concerns also exist for the acquisition of rights of 640 square metres over parcel 1-8a.
 - a. If fully implemented in line with the 1-8b rights acquisition then there is a risk that over 50 mature deciduous trees and hedgerow would be felled which would effectively eradicate a woodland sanctuary.
 - b. This area of the property is an integral part of the garden which provides a private and secure place to enjoy day and night. The land acquisition and land take changes all of that. Given the introduction of the access road it will no longer be safe to use the area at night and it will be necessary to make secure anything of value in the area.
 - c. The current pleasant outlook across rolling fields and woods will be replaced with a tarmac road and regular vehicle traffic and people footfall.
 - d. Children and pets will no longer be able access the area safely and secure fencing will be needed to cordon the area off.
 - e. The felling of the trees and the construction of the road will eradicate a wide range of wildlife that have been encouraged over the years.
 - f. The introduction of the road will add noise and air pollution where there was none.
 - g. The woodland was one of the main attractions of the property and the proposed acquisition represents a significant loss of benefit. Any compensation offered to offset the impact would fall well short of the real value to the household.
 - h. There are no details in the plans as to what is proposed for parcel 1-8a which is concerning given where we are with the planning process. In the absence of a plan, I am naturally concerned at what will be done when the rights are acquired.

2. **Placement of Layby close to the property.** The submitted plans include the construction of a large layby close to the property and as such will become a primary visual feature on the landscape. As the layby span is similar to a dual carriageway it will significantly increase the amount of tarmac on view to 7 lanes. In addition to the visual impact, it is unfortunate that laybys attract a variety of anti-social behaviours which are commonly seen on other parts of the A1. This includes fly tipping which appears to be prevalent in the area. The Acquiring Authority has failed to demonstrate why they have chosen this particular location given the obvious impact on a number of residences. The following provides further details on why this is considered to a significant issue.

- a. Laybys are commonly used by HGV vehicles to provide a stopover. The prospect of overlooking a tarmacked layby is not great but a HGV vehicle park would spoil the landscape further.
- b. Laybys are essential to assist broken downs vehicles. Unfortunately, it is also common that they look to the local properties for assistance.
- c. The close proximity of the layby provides a convenient place to park for anyone wishing to burgle the local properties.
- d. The wide expanse of the layby minimises what can be done to the landscape to mitigate the impact of removing the hedgerow and coronation trees.
- e. It is common to see vehicles sitting idle in laybys running their engines thereby further increasing concerns on air quality.
- f. Unfortunately, the antisocial behaviour on display at laybys is not restricted to just fly tipping.

3. **Placement of an operational depot and soil store close to the property.** The submitted plans include provision to establish an operational depot and soil deposit directly west of the property. Whilst naturally anxious at the additional noise, fumes and dust that this will bring, the primary concern is the impact on the environment and in particular the mature woodland that will be felled to accommodate the depot. Given the scale of the land acquisition there is a risk that the whole woodland could be lost leaving a significantly marred westerly outlook exposing both the A697 and the A1. Given the multitude of less destructive options to place the depot I do not understand the rationale behind this decision. The Acquiring Authority has failed to demonstrate why they have chosen this particular location given the impact on local residences and environment. The following provides further details on why this is considered to be a significant issue.

- a. The current land take which is planned to accommodate the depot is extensive and includes all of the woodland west of the property. Having acquired the land there would be no constraint on how much woodland is felled to accommodate the depot and local works. There is has been no justification as to why so much land has been acquired. The acquisition should be tailored to actual need rather than leaving it so open ended.
- b. The proposed acquisition for the depot includes plans demolishing of a very pleasant stone cottage.
- c. A regularly used footpath through the woodlands will be lost the acquisition and the works. The removal of the footpath leaves the property land locked with no option to venture west of the property.
- d. Information on how the HGV vehicles access the depot is still not clear. This includes vehicles required to deposit soil. It is likely that further tarmac will be need to laid to facilitate this during construction thereby adding to the existing 7 lanes of tarmac on

view. The significant negative impact the depot will have on the landscape is recognised in the plans during the construction phase.

- e. Access of vehicles to the depot will add to the air quality, dust and noise concerns.
- f. Given the negative impact on the environment and landscape and the close proximity to a cluster of houses it is even more confusing as to why this site was chosen.

4. Access to the property. The submitted plans propose that the current direct access be replaced with a convoluted private road, extending to nearly one kilometre, passing through 4 different properties with existing contentions and constraints. The issues are further exasperated by a less than picturesque point of access into the property that eradicates any kerb appeal and creates a complete mismatch to the current orientation of the buildings. This is far from optimum creating a long list of negative impacts and leaving a legacy of issues that will continue to burden the property in the future. The rationale behind the chosen route is also questionable from a Public purse perspective as the cost of implementing the road exceeds the value of the two properties that it is intending to service. The following provides further details on why this is considered to be a significant issue.

- a. Although it is understandable that the current direct access has to be replaced the proposed solution is not good one removing many benefits while imposing additional burdens on the household.
- b. Even at this late stage in the planning process there is still a lack of information on how the access road is to be managed and what rules will apply to govern its usage. Various models have mentioned but all are less ideal and all would place additional burden and risk on the property.
- c. The current pleasant outlook across rolling fields and woods will be replaced with a tarmac road.
- d. The introduction of the road will add noise and air pollution where previously there was none.
- e. In wrapping around the property, the access road raises concern on security for the first time. Furthermore, all privacy enjoyed in the garden will be lost.
- f. Entrance to the property from the North will take much longer to complete with circa 3 extra miles of travel and an additional 15-minute journey to access the property. Similarly, journeys to the south will take much longer. The prospect of friends popping into the house will no longer be an option.
- g. The new access road to the property will entail travelling through the property of 4 different owners, who are known to have concerns about the access. Although it is understood that the owners cannot change or restrict usage there is still an overriding feeling of being beholden to the respective owners and will be open to abuse or a conflict of interest. For example, the farm use of the road will be very different to domestic use and will understandably be motivated to maximise crop growth. Similarly, the domestic properties will be unhappy at the level of mud being transferred by farm vehicles.
- h. To get access to the rear of the property (to carry out maintenance) by car the new plans require a journey of over 1k over 2 additional properties.
- i. Given the high level of dependency on 6 different properties to gain access to the property there is real risk that the access will become compromised with any relationship fall-out. This has happened in the past and unfortunately is likely to

happen again especially when you factor in road maintenance responsibilities. This arrangement will be a constant source of contention going forward and is not sustainable. Unfortunately, even before the route has been established it has already created a fall-out between neighbours.

- j. The maintenance of the new access road will place an additional obligation on the property. Given the length of the private road and the mixed usage (including farm vehicles) this undoubtedly represents a major new burden on the household.
 - k. The planned point of access to the property is less than optimum. The original build and design of the house (and gardens) were purposely customised to orientate around the current access and significant investment has been over the years to landscape the property to optimise the ease of use and maximise the “kerb appeal”. The proposed plans effectively negate all this effort and investment and will require a major redesign which is not been planned. This will also involve the removal of further trees which will expose the new carriageway further. The current point of access is also not wanted by the neighbour whose property the access road has to travel over.
 - l. The costs of constructing the access road to service the two properties represent a significant public purse spend and one that exceeds the value of the properties. This position is further exasperated with plans to construct a further access road to the rear of the property.
5. **Transport.** The submitted plans make very little provision for other types of transport to complement the dualling project. Indeed, existing transport modes in my local area are to be removed. This includes a regular bus service with bus stops outside of my property. Similarly, the local cycle link and footpath are to be removed. Given the government agenda to encourage greater use of cycle paths I was surprised not to see a more strategic plan to integrate cycle links with the project. This was successfully achieved with the recent Morpeth bypass project. The following provides further details on why this is considered to be a significant issue.
- a. Having a regular bus service directly outside the property is a major benefit to the property and has been well used over the years. There is minimal reference to the impact on Transport links in the DCO.
 - b. In the future my family and I will need to walk over a mile to the nearest bus stop. The prospect of anyone from the family walking alone along an unlit country road in the winter is a nonstarter given the obvious safety concerns.
 - c. To neglect the potential of improving cycle links and footpaths in the area would appear to be a missed opportunity.
 - d. The loss of these transport options, particularly the bus service, represents a significant loss of benefit to the property.
6. **Landscape and Visual.** We currently enjoy a picturesque outlook with mature woodland, rolling fields and tree lined avenue. The proposed plans radically change this with the introduction of an operational depot, additional access roads, a layby and the expansion of the carriageway all in close proximity to the property. After overcoming the significant visual impact of the construction phase, we will be facing the prospect of 7 lanes of tarmac being the primary landscape view from the front of the property. Furthermore, the removal of woodland to the west of the property will leave the A697 trunk clearly visible for the first time. Whilst there is some attempt in the Landscape Mitigation plan to mask some element

of this it falls well short and what is proposed will take a long time before it has any positive impact. The following provides further details on why this is considered to be a significant issue.

- a. The current plans also include a significant public spend to construct a high-quality formal road to the woods north of the property. Given the low farm usage of this road it would appear an expensive over engineered solution. There is an opportunity to save budget by extending the existing farm track to the woods while at the same time significantly improving the landscape outlook.
- b. With the new access road wrapping around the property all views from the property will be dominated by tarmac.
- c. The plans involve significant felling of mature trees on the north, west and east outlook leaving tarmac on view.

7. Noise and Vibration. The proposed plans suggests that the introduction of a sound barrier and the use of low-noise surface will be sufficient to reduce noise levels of increased traffic travelling at much faster speeds. However, the proposed sound barrier is not guaranteed and only covers part of the property leaving much of it exposed. I welcome the use of low-noise surface, however, as seen on other roads the noise levels significantly increase with time as the road ages and becomes damaged with wear. We currently enjoy the use of the garden after 7pm when the traffic is very quiet and not noticeable. The expansion of the road will encourage a 24/7 use of the road thereby creating a constant noise barrage. Given the uncertainty with the sound barrier more could have been done to mitigate the impact of noise which is known to have a detrimental impact upon health. The following provides further details on why this is considered to be a significant issue.

- a. There is no detail available as to why the sound barrier is at risk and why it cannot be extended.
- b. In comparing the noise levels between a dual carriageway and the current single carriageway it is very noticeable how much noisier the dual is compared to the single carriage. The higher speeds and increased volume of HGV traffic significantly increase noise levels.
- c. Given the DCO conclusion that there will be no increase in noise levels I am very sceptical on how this has been derived. It would appear that they have prematurely assumed that the sound barrier will be constructed and have not taken into account of how noise levels change at different times of the day.
- d. As highlighted in the DCO the average speeds along the current single carriageway are circa 50 mph which is an optimum speed for minimising noise levels. Vehicles travelling at 70 miles an hour or over are significantly noisier regardless of road surface.
- e. The DCO does not provide any indication of the impact of the new access roads and the depot on the noise levels.
- f. With the new access road circling the property there is no longer any part of the property where it is possible to escape from road noise.
- g. There is very little reference in the DCO on what impact vibration will have on the properties. Positioned just 8 meters from the new dual carriageway the increase in HGV vehicles and speeds will lead to a significant increase of vibration on the property. The stone building which was built over 100 years ago was never engineered to withstand the impact of a dual carriageway so close to the property. A survey has not been carried out to assess the impact on the building.

8. **Air quality.** The current projections from data captured in 2015 suggest that the actual air quality when the road becomes operational will under standard conditions be within legal limits. I am surprised that such an important aspect to people's health is left to such a long-range estimation without further surveys to validate. In deriving an air quality forecast I understand that there are a large range of unknown variables which require assumptions to be made. Given the dependency on such variables I was expecting a wider range of potential results to cover different scenarios. For example, what is the impact on air quality in the event that there is an accident and traffic is stationary for some time.

9. **Air quality.** The current projections from data captured in 2015 suggest that the actual air quality when the road becomes operational will, under standard conditions, be within legal limits. I am surprised that such an important aspect to people's health is left to such a long-range estimation without further surveys to validate. In deriving an air quality forecast I understand that there are a large range of unknown variables which require assumptions to be made. Given the dependency on such variables I was expecting a wider range of potential results to cover different scenarios. For example, what is the impact on air quality in the event that there is an accident and traffic is stationary for some time. The following provides further details on why this is considered to be a significant issue.
 - a. I understand that the majority of the data was captured in 2015 and the subsequent results extrapolated before the current plans were formulated. A significant number of changes have been made to the plans since then which have a direct impact on air pollution
 - b. The DCO would appear to be content that no mitigation is required as it meets EU standards. The measurement of air quality is not something that should be assessed in such a digital manner. Any degradation of air quality should be recognised as a negative and taken seriously. There can be no doubt that an increase in levels of traffic, particularly of HGV vehicles, there will be a greater level of pollutants in the air. There is no mitigation planned to offset this.
 - c. The air quality predictions documented in the DCO are based upon various receptors that were placed along the route in 2015. This includes one that was placed within our property which we are unaware of.
 - d. Although I understand that it is standard industry practice to extrapolate the expected air quality 10 years in advance, I am struggling to understand how an accurate forecast can be derived given the wide range of different factors which have an impact upon air quality.
 - e. In the event that the forecasts are wrong there would appear to be no options for recourse after the event
 - f. Occasionally the traffic is brought to a standstill on such occasions it is noticeable that fumes drift into the property. With the dualling of the road the impact will be double what we have experienced in the past.
 - g. Given the age of the data sources I was expecting to see a schedule for further surveys to be carried out to update and validate the results.
 - h. The DCO does not provide any detail on the impact of the access road encircling the property.
 - i. The DCO does not provide any detail on the impact of the layby close to the property.

Although we are realistic in recognising that a project of this scale is inevitably going to have some negative impact, we have been stunned by the scale and detrimental nature of the planned changes

on a single property. At this stage of the planning process, we still have well over 50 issues which remain outstanding which does not feel right given the availability of viable alternatives that would address them. In summary, we believe that there are specific elements of the current plans that are far from optimum, however, there are cost saving alternatives which would mitigate the impact upon the property and the environment, while still meeting the scheme objectives.