

Response to HE Document REP1-064

I wish to express my frustration at the largely irrelevant Highways England (HE) responses in document REP1-064 (pp29/30 as items 1.2.2 to 1.2.7) to my previous submission that the Fenrother junction on Part A of the proposed A1 dual carriageway should be moved 3km north to Causey Park.

Please would the Planning Inspectorate consider my further responses to each point raised by HE in turn :-

1.2.2 Under the current proposals, there are only two alternative junction access points to Fenrother for southbound Amble motorists to get onto the proposed A1, each using winding older roads rather than the upgraded wider straighter roads through West Chevington to Causey Park :-

- West Moor – over 3km and 7min longer via West Thirston according to Googlemaps, and only sensibly used by Amble motorists to CROSS the A1 to travel further west
- HighLaws – nearly 1.5km and 6min longer via Widdrington, Ulgham and Hebron according to Googlemaps, and would only make use of 1km of new dual carriageway

These alternatives are just the same whether the intermediate junction is at Fenrother or Causey Park, and therefore largely irrelevant to my proposal. The fact is that ALL satnavs/commuters will select Causey Park as the optimum A1 southbound access point from Amble and so should HE.

1.2.3 The time savings referenced in APP-344 4.8 are for **through** (NOT local) A1 traffic and **totally unaffected** by where the Fenrother junction is located, so how can this have any bearing on the extra delays for Amble motorists that would be avoided by locating the junction at Causey Park ?

1.2.4 It is obvious that the existing Causey Park T junction would be far less busy once the proposed A1 is built, indeed "*Widdrington Road*" (which I assume is Chevington Road) at "*3vpm*" would probably be busier than the old A1 at "*20-140pcu*" (all HE's own figures) so if Amble traffic has to get on the new A1 at Fenrother, could we please at least have right of way going south at the T junction, and not create a **third (at Causey Park) and then fourth junction (at Fenrother) where we will have to give way to less traffic in less than 6km?**

1.2.5 The accident data is for **ALL of Part A** (ie Morpeth to Felton) and irrelevant to my point that it would be marginally safer again if the intermediate junction was moved from Fenrother to Causey Park

1.2.6 I have no issues with gritting policies which again are irrelevant to junction location.

1.2.7 Various numbered points are made here :-

1. I agree with all of this except the last sentence, which still makes no explanation of why Fenrother was chosen as the intermediate junction, and not Causey Park
2. **At last** here is the **ONLY** attempt to justify the location of the intermediate junction at Fenrother. First of all the irrelevant alternative access points are referenced as under 1.2.2 which I have clarified above. Then there is a spurious point about time savings being less important for long distance tourist – of course they are, but I am far more concerned about the far greater numbers of regular commuters and local residents who do not have that luxury.

There is a long overdue reference to HE's traffic modelling in their report ref. APP-344. They imply that more vehicles per hour use the Fenrother junction than Causey Park, although there are no comparative figures as the modelling for the junction at Causey Park is nowhere

to be seen. Please could this modelling data be made available so the actual differences can be studied ?

Fig. 7 in the report APP-344 bears out my concerns – although the units of average annual daily traffic flows(AADT) are not explained, the numbers for each existing road junction on Part A from Morpeth to Felton are as follows :-

Location	AADT westwards	AADT eastwards	Comments
Highlaws/ Hebron	746/590	1309/1083	Junction to be provided
Fenrother/Tritlington	58/63	194/195	Junction to be provided
Causey Park	149/216	1157/1574	No junction provided
Burgham Park/Helm	411/492	181/167	No junction provided
West Moor/Felton	510/466	1066/756	Junction to be provided

I can't make this any clearer – Causey Park has **almost an order of magnitude MORE** joining traffic than Fenrother, using HE's own numbers, yet gets ignored !

The next point is that Fenrother has better E-W connectivity than Causey Park, despite only having a third of Causey Park's westward traffic in the fig.7 figures above. The westward traffic at Fenrother is only to the A697, which has a better wider straighter connecting road at Highlaws anyway – again compare the westward numbers from fig.7.

The final point is that the local road network is "*more suitable*" at Fenrother than Causey Park. This is a very generic subjective remark that is difficult to comprehend when NCC have spent significant sums straightening Chevington Road as it approaches Causey Park junction and further west past the opencast reinstatements. I accept the road west from Causey Park to the A697 is more circuitous than from Fenrother, but HE's traffic figures above still show it is more popular, presumably with Longhorsley residents.

3. I fully agree that the proposed junction design could "*easily accommodate the forecast traffic flows*" whether it is built at Causey Park or Fenrother, so this is irrelevant to where the junction is.
4. I fully agree that there is no justification for the extra cost of building junctions at BOTH Causey Park and Fenrother, so this is also irrelevant to where the junction is.

To summarise, I have yet to see a good logical argument to show why the **one** intermediate junction on Part A (ie between Highlaws and West Moor) should be at Fenrother. Causey Park is logically preferable for the reasons explained above and previously ie

- It gets local traffic onto the new A1 and off the old A1 much more efficiently, increasing safety on the old A1
- It spaces the junctions more equally along the new A1 (5.5/4km instead of 2.5/7km), easing driver reaction times and optimising diversion options/ network resilience
- There are no significant construction/ environmental differences to my knowledge and could even be a cost saving

I therefore ask the Planning Inspectorate to test the logic of HE's proposals further and if the Fenrother junction cannot be justified, to recommend it is moved to WHERE THE TRAFFIC IS at Causey Park.

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9 Feb 2021