

Planning Enquiry OFH Speaking Notes

1. Introduction

1.1 Bill Kyle lived in Boreham for over 40 years, today representing Boreham Conservation Society (BCS) formed 20 years ago, funded by subscriptions run by unpaid volunteers, with around 300 members – not NIMBY's – do not routinely oppose development. We support this development other than:

It's failure to provide a direct link from the B1019 to J21; new roads elsewhere in this development; why not this one?

Compounding the link road mistake by proposing to close the 20a west on-slip.

1.2 Given the potential consequences for the people of Maldon, Hatfield Peverel and Boreham, we respectfully request that an Issue Specific Meeting be held.

What follows addresses the consequences of these errors but I must first gratefully acknowledge support of our MP Kemi Badenoch, ECC Cllr John Spence and the late local and Chelmsford Cllr John Galley together with those who submitted RR's, objecting to the adverse impacts of the scheme's design. We estimate these RR's account for 25% of the total submitted.

2. Public demand.

NH's claim of public consent stems from a 2017 non-statutory consultation which stated, without providing any traffic data, that there may be a benefit in merging junctions 20a and 20b into a single new junction at an unspecified location. - 46% supported merger / closure, 54% did not. We believe that the objections to proposals in the 2021 statutory consultation are a better indication of public opinion; we contend that NH assertions of public demand are not justified.

3. NH 2021 Statutory Consultation and Data

3.1 First publication of any traffic data and confirmation regarding site of new J21. ECC, Maldon and Hatfield Peverel Councils comprehensively cover the issues at the junction of the B1137 and B1019 (DofW), so I will not do so now.

Our objections included - closing the westbound on-slip at J20a results in more traffic not less in the peaks and daily traffic/ Severance / Noise and Disturbance all impact Boreham 24 hours per day would be an

unjustified and inequitable outcome from a spend of £1.3bn public money to save Long Distance traffic 1.5 hours per week. NH response was “the road can cope”. No relevant data was provided, so we asked for it - what has been provided is both opaque and confusing; what is needed is an analysis of the directional distribution of the cohort of traffic arriving in Hatfield Peverel on the B1019 Maldon Road. Our efforts, those of our MP and Councillors have been unsuccessful; we hope you can succeed where we have failed and have NH provide the necessary data.

3.2 We are not experts in traffic modelling but we know in any model – rubbish in, rubbish out. Common sense raises questions, some of which are:

How can the numbers for the B1137 Main Road in Boreham have remained stable throughout when the numbers for the B1137 (The Street) in Hatfield Peverel and in Plantation Road in Boreham, have had significant changes e.g. Plantation Road from 50% to 25% to 17% increases. We do not understand why there has not been a “knock-on” impact on Main Road.

How can NH assert that the B1137 between Hatfield Peverel and Boreham and Plantation Road within Boreham can cope with the same volume of traffic? We do not understand how this can be so - the B1137 was formerly the A12 / roman road, while Plantation Road is a short c class, residential road. We request a Site Inspection of these roads and Church Road in Boreham which leads from Plantation Road to the single-track bridge over the Chelmer River, where (ignoring CCC’s DC15 Protected Lane) an increase in commuter traffic is planned.

How can NH assert that 88% of the commuters arriving at the DofW junction in Hatfield Peverel will turn east to the new J21 to then turn west back towards their workplace? Currently these commuters turn west at the DofW towards their workplace to access the A12 at J20a or J19. NH’s justification for this aggressively optimistic assumption is that commuters will be influenced to turn east by signage. We would point out that these are commuters who know where they are going and a sign will not

be influential. NH also state that they assume that the predicted saving off one minute per journey will sway commuters to turn east, travel further, negotiate two major roundabouts to join the A12 to travel west. We have been commuters and find this unconvincing. We believe many commuters will opt to save a mile rather than a minute, that “old habits (of turning west) die hard” and many less commuters than predicted will turn east. If they do not turn east, they will turn west on the B1137 towards Boreham. Our concern is that the predicted increased flow through Boreham can easily become a flood.

3.3 It is vital that citizens have confidence in NH traffic data; currently we do not, neither do Boreham parishioners; NH predictions of junction capacity and queue lengths are met with incredulity from those who live in Boreham and use these junctions day in and day out. We hope after consideration you agree and initiate an independent review to restore public confidence and provide data as basis for sensible discussions.

4. Mitigation

4.1 The June 2021 statutory consultation did not propose any mitigation. NH have since proposed Signage, dealt with above, and reductions in speed limits on the B1137 between Hatfield Peverel and Junction 19. These reductions would be welcome especially that to 30 mph through Boreham Village, but NH do not have the relevant jurisdiction. We request that they be required, as a condition of approval to use their best endeavours to arrange implementation.

4.2 We contend (as the proposed Site Inspection would confirm) that reductions in speed need enforcement and our proposals included Average Speed Camaras. Essex Police support this measure and we join them in requesting that NH fund their permanent installation and ask that this provision be a condition of approval.

5. BCS proposal

BCS has a proposal that would resolve many of the issues for parishioners and the wider Essex community by retaining westbound access and the 3-lane highway. It has been developed by my colleague, Mr Charles Martin who will explain this proposal at the next session of this hearing.

6. Success criteria

6.1 We support, and I quote, the objective to “take long distance traffic off the local roads and put it back on the A12 where it belongs, so that local roads aren’t used as rat runs, affecting local villages and their communities”. In Boreham, AM peak +34% on Main Road, at least +17% on Plantation, 24% in ADT with noise a/ disturbance sufficient to cause multiple households to suffer sleep disturbance; this is a 24 -hour a day failure, not a success.

6.2 Boreham does not have a problem with long distance travellers; we have a problem with commuters / rat-runners. This scheme would divert traffic from the A12 (where it belongs) and force it through Boreham Village (where it does not belong); this is not success.

6.3 In September 2022 Mr P Davie, NH Project Director for the A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme stated and I quote “Anyone living locally will also know the issue of traffic including Heavy Goods Vehicles, using local roads as rat runs. This is dangerous and has an adverse effect on local villages and the surrounding communities. This scheme will put that traffic back on the A12 where it belongs. We agree with Mr Davie and are at a loss to understand why this scheme has been proposed in the knowledge that it will have adverse and dangerous impacts on Boreham. We have requested an explanation; none has been given. We request, in the absence of the necessary link road to bypass Hatfield Peverel, you impose as, a condition of approval, that west bound access to the A12 is maintained between Hatfield Peverel and Boreham.

6.4 Finally must record that the Boreham bypass was built to save Boreham from traffic now, 50 years on, it now needs Boreham to have this traffic back in order to improve the bypass.

Thank you.