

Terling and Fairsted Parish Council submission upon registration of interest in A12 widening scheme – 4th November 2022

Comments on Junction 21 – southern link road removal (Hatfield Peverel)

This will be the major link for the Terling community to the A12. Parishioners have previously suggested that their preferred route for coming to Terling from the west will be to exit at the improved Junction 19 and journey along B1137 to Terling Hall Road (or Station Road when the widened bridge is installed). This also has the potential to become the preferred route for delivery vehicles, works traffic and HGV transport. However, Terling Hall Road is a Braintree District Council (BDC) designated Protected Lane and there is a height restriction (12'6") on the East Coast main railway line bridge.

The Protected Lane status of Terling Hall Road and others in and surrounding Terling and Fairstead, along with numerous listed buildings in the area make this an unsuitable option for through traffic during or after delivery of the scheme. We request assurance from the applicant that adequate plans are in place to permanently prevent traffic from taking this route or other routes incorporating Protected Lanes unless for direct access (restricted access only). We would suggest at a minimum that use of Terling Hall Lane as a possible access route to and from the car park at Hatfield Peverel needs to be conditioned "out" with suitable signage (eg. no access to Hatfield Peverel Station).

We note the applicant's outline plan for traffic management and are supportive of aims to keep traffic on the A12 for as long as possible, maximising day time working and Bury Lane access during delivery of the scheme. However, the applicant's current preferred diversion route for Hatfield Peverel station users not wanting to use the temporary station car park and non-essential deliveries is inappropriate and should be reconsidered. The planned route runs the full length of a designated Protected Lane (Witham Road/Terling Road). As above (Terling Hall Lane), this road contains multiple listed buildings, is narrow in places with a very tight bend at the junction with Peg Millars Lane/Dancing Dicks Lane. This junction is also an accident hot-spot.

Peg Millars Lane, Blunts Hall Road and Dancing Dicks Lane are also Protected Lanes. Drivers following the diversion who become lost or follow shorter, alternative satellite navigation suggestions will materially increase traffic flow down these lanes and others in the surrounding areas, increasing the risk of damage to the lanes and accidents involving other road users (pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders).

We are additionally concerned that HGV drivers following the diversion (unable to pass under the Terling Hall Road bridge) will travel through the centre of Terling village for their onward journey. This is inappropriate given the narrow roads, sharp bends, lack of pavement, lack of street lighting and proximity of residential buildings (a large number listed) to the road.

Terling and Fairstead Parish Council has now provided the applicant with a full list of designated Protected Lanes within the parish, along with known others in the local area (2nd November 2022). We are disappointed that prior consideration had not been given to lanes with Protected status or listed buildings around the scheme and now seek assurance via: alternative options, detailed plans for mitigation of risk of damage to these lanes, publically available surveys of the lanes and impacted roads (prior to and upon delivery of the scheme) and detailed plans for the reparation of lanes/impacted roads upon completion.

It is our expectation that surveys of these routes prior to the commencement of the project will include a photographic survey, provided on public record to aid and ensure re-instatement.

We would also bring to the attention of the applicant that suggested alternative routes which are not currently on Protected Lanes are largely on unrestricted and unlit country roads. In many cases these roads are single track with limited passing places and a speed limit of 60mph. We would expect that the DCO condition that any options for preferred diversion routes limit the speed for the duration of the diversion period.

We understand that the applicant had previously agreed to provide detailed costings of an alternative option of taking vehicles from the proposed junction 21 to the north of the railway line, connecting to the existing road network between Hatfield Peverel and Titbeech. We are not aware of this having been provided to the Examining Authority and conclude therefore that this exercise wasn't completed prior to consultation or since, despite the advantages communicated. We request again that detailed costings are provided to the Examining Authority given that the suggestion was discounted due to "prohibitive costs".

For avoidance of doubt, Terling and Fairstead Parish Council will seek to oppose the existing preferred diversion route and any mitigation plans which could present risk of damage to Protected Lanes, listed buildings, safety of residents, safety of road users and the rural nature of the parish. We note that another DCO in the area (Longfield Solar Farm) **has** given consideration to Protected Lanes and the rural nature of area and we would urge meaningful conversation, with genuine collaboration on these issues for the benefit of parishioners.

We note more generally that there does not appear to be joint working between Essex Highways (for the Chelmsford Eastern Bypass), Longfield Solar Farm and National Highways based on information shared to date. The present construction programmes appear to be concurrent, which will place significant pressure on the road infrastructure. As above, we consider that meaningful conversations between the groups will be for the benefit of parishioners. May we please encourage National Highways to present their combined views.

The current National Highways proposals appear to combine to place extra traffic generation at "pinch points" at Maldon Road and The Street (Hatfield Peverel) as well as proposed improvements to Wellington Bridge. Is the intention to have traffic lighted controls or flow metering priority traffic management in these locations. The HGV traffic and its separation from local traffic in Maldon Road and The Street is a source of continuing concern. Will The Street have to become a "clearway" to resolve the issue?

We take comfort that National Highways remain committed to doing their part to find a joined-up solution for the identified issues on the Maldon Road and The Street in Hatfield Peverel.

Other questions relating to the proposed scheme:

- Will Junction 21 be lit at night?
- We note that a significant area of privately owned land is subject to the DCO. From the plans shared, it doesn't appear that this area is to be used for road. Are we right to assume that the land will be returned to the stewardship of the existing owner on completion of the project? If not, what plans are in place to ensure that the area lost will continue to be managed in a way that encourages wildlife, biodiversity and enjoyment of any public rights of way/permitted paths by way of a comprehensive section 106 Agreement conditioned in a permitted DCO?
- Are there to be any traffic data monitoring screens in the junction 19- 22 area?
- When are temporary access routes to be established (for both traffic and pedestrians)?
- Will there be any permanent improvements made and will the condition of the route be established both prior and post the proposed diversions?

Comments on improved road surfacing and removal of noise barrier (Hatfield Peverel)

We support the improvement to road surfacing and look forward to learning of proposed, permanent noise reduction.

We have also had comments concerning permanent deer proof fencing be considered between junctions 19 and Junction 20a and 20b. There have been wildlife kills in this area with consequent disruption to traffic.

Protected Lanes

Please find below the list of Protected Lanes in the Terling and Fairstead Parish with the addition of one protected lane just outside the Parish.

Terling Hall Road
Rolls Farm Lane
Gambles Green Lane
Terling Hall Road/Church Road
Waltham Road
Noakes Farm Road
Blunts Hall Road/Dancing Dicks Lane
Terling Road
Witham Road
Peg Millars Lane
Fairstead Road
Fairstead Hall Road
Braintree Road
Pole Road/Fairstead Lane
Fairstead Lodge Road
Boreham Road/Cole Hill (Protected Lane outside Terling and Fairstead)

TERLING & FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL