

## **Boreham Conservation Society**

### **Deadline 6 Submission**

The Applicant has excluded BCS from the Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) processes. BCS thank their elected local government representatives and their officials for updating the Society on their policies regarding unresolved issues. BCS appreciate their inclusive approach to seeking an agreed, community-based, policies.

BCS has made many detailed submissions regarding southbound access to the A12 between the villages of Hatfield Peverel and Boreham, the split of traffic between Junction 21 and the B1137, the volume of additional traffic through Boreham and on its local roads and the capacity of those roads to cope with such traffic. These submissions are on record and do not need detailed repetition. In summary BCS's "SOCG" is as follows:

#### **1. Traffic Mitigation Measures within Boreham Village**

- a) BCS acknowledges and welcomes the mitigation measures accepted so far by the Applicant as necessary for the B1137 and the villages of Boreham and Hatfield Peverel. BCS request the ExA to ensure that these measures are implemented from the start of the construction phase.
- b) BCS adds its support to Essex County Council, Chelmsford City Council and Boreham Parish Council in their request that the B1137, through Boreham, be narrowed for safety and to reflect that the character of the road has changed from an "A" specification to that of a 30-mph limit "B" road through a rural, residential, environment. The proposal by Boreham Parish Council, that "hatching" be removed would reinforce this change for motorists and help provide space for cycling lanes. BCS would add that such lanes would provide an additional barrier between pedestrians and traffic through the village.
- c) BCS request that enforcement by Average Speed Cameras on the B1137, be extended to cover the B1137 between Boreham and Junction 19. It seems illogical to exclude this stretch of road and irresponsible to remove enforcement on the approach to the Paynes Lane Bridge, entrances to Boreham House, The Grange and Hotel together with the traffic lights at Junction 19.

#### **2. Junction 21 / Duke of Wellington junction of the B1137 and B1019 in Hatfield Peverel / Southbound Access to the A12.**

- a) BCS do not contest the Applicant's predictions of traffic volumes or traffic mix.
- b) BCS do not contest the estimated journey times quoted by the Applicant.
- c) BCS do not contest that an estimated journey time "advantage" of one minute of the Junction 21 route over the B1137 route may, if replicated in sat nav's, attract some visitors to use that route.
- d) BCS do contest that this potential "attraction" will have a material impact on regular commuters who know the characteristics of their possible routes to and from work.
- e) BCS do not contest that the crucial factor is the number of motorists who choose the Junction 21 route to Junction 19.
- f) BCS do not contest that the Applicant has followed the mathematics of the model used by Department for Transport to predict route choice.
- g) BCS do know that in any model, rubbish in produces rubbish out. The Applicant has not responded to requests for the data / assumptions it has fed into the model. BCS continue to contend that the modelled output of an 87% choice of the Junction 21 route is so extreme as to defy belief. The Applicant may be able to look in the mirror and reflect that the correct

model was used. BCS's fear is that residents will be able to look out their windows and know that the model's inputs and outputs were wrong.

- h) BCS content that residents know that if the dDCO is approved as drafted there is no available recourse; residents must stick and suffer. The Applicant will move on without a thought of the misery they will have created for hundreds, if not thousands of residents. The ExA know that BCS believe that, at best, 50% may choose the Junction 21 route and this is what drives our implacable opposition to the removal of southbound access other than if a "Maldon Link Road" was constructed. Everything rests upon the ExA's assessment of the efficacy of the Applicant's inputs and assumptions fed into the Department for Transport's formula.
- i) On a practical level, BCS do not have data on elapsed journey times from home(s) to Hatfield Peverel nor do we have data on onward journey times from Hatfield Peverel to place of work. However, the minimum commute involving travel from Hatfield Peverel to Junction 19, will be by a resident of Hatfield Peverel. The Applicant predicts a journey time via Junction 21, of 9m 59 sec (say 10.00 minutes) to Junction 19 and BCS predict a further 15 minutes to central Chelmsford; a total commute time of 25 minutes. The predicted saving of one minute is 4.6% of the commute; for the majority with much longer commutes e.g., from Maldon the percentage saving will be much less than 4%. Therefore, BCS contend that it is simply not credible that a one-minute difference (less than 4% of the journey time) results in 87% of drivers choosing the Junction 21 route. In the court of public opinion BCS contend that this would be laughed out of court. If BCS are correct then the traffic flow through Hatfield Peverel and subsequently Boreham, will be significantly greater than predicted. Accordingly, while maintenance of southbound access may not benefit Hatfield Peverel it should not greatly disadvantage them but would greatly benefit Boreham and those resident in /to the west of Hatfield Peverel who would continue to be able to access the A12 at a southbound access before Boreham.
- j) BCS do not contest the Applicant's data regarding HGV journey times between the junction of the B1137 and Maldon Road in Hatfield Peverel, to Junction 19. The Applicant's data confirm our concern regarding the volume of HGV's that, denied southbound access between the villages, will continue on the B1137 through Boreham to Junction 19 for the A12. BCS request the Applicant to provide the following data for the am & pm peaks and in the IP together with the daily total numbers:
  - a) The number of HGV's that currently use the B1137 to access the A12 via Junction 20a.
  - b) The number of HGV's in a) above, should Junction 20a / southbound access be removed, that are predicted to use Junction 21 to access the A12.
  - c) The number of HGV's in a) above, should Junction 20a / southbound access be removed, that are predicted to use the B1137 through Boreham to access the A12 at Junction 19.

The ExA know the current route and have the plans for the new proposed Junction 21 route. It is probable the three members of the ExA are motorists. BCS believe that if the ExA envisage piloting a HGV on both routes, they will reach the same conclusion as BCS namely that HGV's will choose the direct route on the B1137 and happily forgo a potential saving of 30 seconds to avoid the torturous route from the Maldon Road to Junction 21. The Applicant's assertion that there will be a reduction in HGV traffic is not credible, whatever the "model" may say.

- k) BCS note that the Applicant now states the Junction 21 route "is not subject to the congestion and hazards related with driving through two villages, as well as an overall faster route ". BCS believe many motorists would choose "the congestion and hazards related with driving through two villages" (in other words driving in normal peak time conditions in Essex)

rather than join a lookalike smart motorway with high speeds, 3 lanes, no hard shoulder nor traffic cameras and which has both collision and delay risks. The Applicant may wish to overlook the dangers of “smart motorways”, ordinary folk do not.

**3. Southbound Access between Hatfield Peverel and Boreham.**

- a) BCS have requested the Applicant to provide their prediction of the number of motorists, from the west of Hatfield Peverel, who would be forced to use the B1137 through Boreham should southbound access be closed. A response is awaited.
- b) BCS continue to strongly contest the proposed closure of southbound access between the villages of Hatfield Peverel and Boreham. The ExA are fully aware of the cases made by BCS and the Applicant and so these do not require repetition.
- c) BCS conclude that despite the absolute necessity and merit of their case, the Applicant having, planned the construction of a new “all movement” Junction 21 and banked the 2019 descope savings in time and money, was never going to voluntarily agree to the retention of southbound access between the villages. Accordingly, the Applicant has successfully shifted the decision and responsibility for the outcomes to the ExA.

**4. Paynes Lane Bridge**

BCS register their support for the points made by CCC and BPC regarding the design, appearance and surrounding infrastructure of the Bridge.

**5. Junction 19**

- a) BCS thank the Applicant for the clarification confirming that it is not proposing to create a dedicated access lane avoiding the General’s Farm dumbbell from the B1137 to the southbound A12.
- b) BCS request the Applicant to confirm that the proposed new, northbound on slip meets the DMRB standards for weaving distances.

**6. Noise Suppression**

- a) BCS contest that it is not necessary to lay an enhanced mitigation surface on both carriageways and note that this is being done elsewhere. Given that the section between Junction 21 and Junction 19 will be one of the busiest if not the busiest section, this omission seems odd.
- b) BCS contest the non-renewal of sound barriers the length of Boreham. Non-renewal has been justified on the ground of vegetation loss. BCS contend that vegetation will grow back, just as it did after the current barriers were installed many years ago.
- c) BCS contest the Applicant’s implication that additional noise is acceptable if it is from the same source (traffic) at the same location (a Boreham resident’s home). BCS point out that the Applicant constructed the A12 and now proposes a widening scheme that will increase traffic and noise on the A12 and, by closing Junction 20a southbound, would deliberately increase traffic and noise on the B1137. Boreham is recorded in the Domesday Book; traffic noise came later and from the Applicant’s actions. The Applicant must accept responsibility and implement the measures requested.

**BCS June 2023**