

Planning Inspectorate  
A358 Taunton to Southfields Scheme  
National Highways  
Temple Quay House  
Bristol  
BS1 6PN

2 March 2022

ref: TR0010061

cc: letter sent to National Highways

Dear Ms Liddington,

***Hatch Beauchamp – Transport Support***

With regard to the above subject Pell Frischmann has been commissioned by Hatch Beauchamp Parish Council to undertake a review of the local transport network surrounding the village to inform neighbourhood planning matters and to identify National Highways dualling proposals for the A358.

***Pell Frischmann Highway Review***

A site visit to Hatch Beauchamp was carried out on 22.09.2021. During the visit an appraisal of highway infrastructure within and around the village was undertaken with a particular focus on identifying those locations with highway safety concerns that would be exacerbated by future development or changes to the operation of the highway network as a result of the proposed A358 dualling.

The research carried out culminated in the production of a transport report which is to be submitted for your consideration alongside this letter. A summary of the key findings from the highway review are summarised below:

Hatch Beauchamp and the neighbouring communities connecting to it are generally characterised by narrow roads subject to the national speed limit, with limited dedicated passing places and high hedges on approaches to settlements that in their current form, are ill suited to accommodate intensified use.

The dualling proposal will require neighbouring settlements to seek passage to the A358 via Hatch Beauchamp where previously they would have been able to utilise more direct routes away from the village.

High level route reviews between Hatch Beauchamp and the proposed points of connectivity to the A358 demonstrate that the existing levels of accessibility to the A358 will be diminished and that in doing so road users will be required to channel down routes that are notably longer and by extension so are journey times. This not only represents a loss of existing amenity but also increases the number of potential conflict points road users will be exposed to on route to the A358.

The review demonstrates that the majority of the routes outside the built environment, on which traffic will be focused, are characterised by high-speed limits, narrow carriageways restricting two-way operation, frequently reduced forward visibility and limited formal passing locations which are currently unsuited to carrying regular two-way traffic. A number of key junctions have also been identified as having substandard visibility and as such there is a necessity to consider what improvements can be achieved to improve highway safety.

It was also notable that within Hatch Beauchamp village consistent footway connectivity was limited between key residential areas and potential pedestrian trip attractors such as bus stops, playing fields, schools and local eateries and as a consequence, in some instances, pedestrians are required to share the carriageway with vehicles to access them. Whilst pedestrians in the carriageway is not uncommon in rural locations where traffic flow is light, it is likely that a number of road routes will be subject to greater volumes of vehicular traffic as a result of the A358 proposals and as such pedestrians in the carriageway will be at greater risk of conflict.

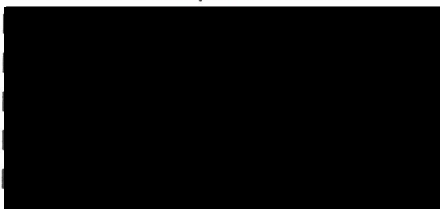
Reflecting on the summary provided above and the content of the accompanying report, it is considered that whilst new highway infrastructure is required to be delivered to appropriate standards, further investigation undertaken by National Highways is necessary in relation to how retained links and junctions are to be improved to accommodate intensified use so as to not prejudice highway safety. It is considered appropriate that the content of such investigations and any intervention schemes identified, be that through discrete highway improvements or a greater reconsideration of how sections of their proposal are delivered, be made available to the Parish Council and key stakeholders for consideration.

#### ***Hatch Beauchamp Parish Council Comments for Consideration***

In addition to the findings of the highways review undertaken by Pell Frischmann, Hatch Beauchamp Parish Council have specific concerns regarding the recent public consultation exercises carried out by National Highways, many of which have been sent to you as part of a joint response from a group of local parishes. However, the evidence from Pell Frischmann underlines our view that the consultation was premature and flawed and we request that it is re-run once the relevant information is made available for consultees to provide fully-informed feedback. HBPC will also be making that point to the Planning Inspectorate.

We trust that the information supplied is of use and look forward to your feedback.

Phil Weatherhead  
Associate Transport Planner



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