

Cllr. Peter Raffell  
Chairman of the Clopton Parish Council  
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The Street  
Ashfield  
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IP14 6LX

Councillor Matthew Hicks  
The Old Rectory  
Athelington  
Suffolk  
IP21 5EJ

16th August 2019

Dear Councillor Hicks,

Re: Ipswich Northern Route Consultation – Response from Clopton Parish Council

Clopton Parish Council held an extraordinary meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2019 to discuss the Ipswich Northern Route. This was attended by in excess of 80 Clopton residents. We write to you with feedback from that meeting to outline the stance of Clopton Parish Council in relation to the proposed Ipswich Northern Route.

1 Concerns about the validity of the Consultation

There has been no real consultation with any of the district or Parish Councils representing the Carlford and Fynn Valley Ward.

To date, from Suffolk County Council (SCC), we have received a document outlining a rough plan for three possible routes for an Ipswich Northern Route. There have been 11 events held which merely duplicated the information in the document. There has been no discussion with residents or Ward councillors about the options, nor any opportunity to put forward alternative suggestions. What purports to be a consultation document is little more than a glossy PR brochure.

The quality of the consultation is woefully inadequate. The “consultation document” provides no evidence or detail to support the assertion that the provision of a Northern Route will solve the range of problems that the document implies.

The “consultation document” contains a brief mention of 31 alternative options that could meet the objectives, however there is no detail and no explanation as to why a new road north of Ipswich was selected as the only solution.

The accompanying consultation questionnaire gives no scope for public to propose alternative solutions. It is filled with leading questions and is little more than an exercise to claim public support for the Ipswich Northern Route and to force a preference for one of the routes. It is an information gathering exercise aiming to support the outcomes that the stakeholders desire.

It has been said that there are three routes listed simply to make up the numbers to try to create the illusion of options and a bonified consultation.

A true consultation would have enabled local residents and their representatives to raise issues and suggest alternatives, for example, the issue that some of the proposed key connecting roads are wholly inadequate for the purpose suggested.

All three routes would exacerbate the current problems with the existing traffic and congestion on the A12 north of Ipswich at peak times, and during holiday season in this busy tourist area, particularly the sections at Martlesham, Woodbridge and further north. SCC urgently need to prepare a detailed plan for the whole of the existing A12 north and east of Ipswich.

## 2 Negative Environmental impact

SCC have declared a climate emergency however, there appears to be a complete lack of independent investigation into the environmental impact that a northern bypass would cause.

We are facing an environmental crisis on a massive scale which, according to leading experts, if unchecked will leave our descendants with a planet that is unrecognisable.

East Anglia is a leader in the production of low carbon electricity. This is a golden opportunity for our councils to build on this, to embrace the future, to set an example and demonstrate a willingness to be environmentally progressive and adopt more environmentally sympathetic options towards transport and infrastructure.

Instead they seem determined to carry on with the traditional methodology, claiming all our problems will be solved if we construct a new road, and ignoring the well documented induced traffic effect.

Locally the construction of a dual carriageway on any of the routes would cut a massive swath across established rural landscape, devastating wildlife habitats and severing wildlife corridors which once gone, are lost forever.

A road of this type would exacerbate the creation of air, particulate, noise and light pollution and distribute this poison, over areas previously undamaged.

### 3 Negative Impact on Local Tourism

Suffolk Councils quote tourism as a major industry for the area. Suffolk Coastal and the surrounding villages rely heavily on tourism for a significant source of income, as it is for many residents in Clopton and the surrounding villages. The attraction of this area is its outstanding natural beauty, tranquillity and wildlife. A road of this nature cutting across the beautiful countryside will be detrimental to the tourism industry and economy of this area.

### 4 Negative Impact on Agriculture

East Anglia is a significant contributor to the food industry. The loss of hundreds of acres of valuable farmland for a project that seems to have so little evidence of tangible benefit is unacceptable.

Locally the Outer route severs the land of a local farmer, and major food producer. This will potentially result in the need for large slow moving farm machinery to travel either onto or across this bypass, compounding delays and contributing to congestion.

### 5 Negative impact on the village of Clopton, the B1078 and local roads

If adopted, the proposed outer route will cut the tiny village of Clopton in two. The historic church will be isolated from the main residential area and the new road will destroy the village as an entity.

Additionally, the outer route would inevitably increase traffic on the already dangerous B1078 through Clopton. This road operates at the national speed limit through the heart of the village. The majority of residents live off the adjoining side roads.

The Northern bypass is designed to attract traffic to and from the north of Ipswich and the proposed junction at Potash Corner is a feeder route for traffic from as far as the A12 at Wickham Market, increasing traffic volumes through the village and exacerbating an already dangerous situation.

### 6 Planning blight for home and land owners

All three, ill conceived, and poorly considered proposals, have instantly devastated many residents with properties either in the path or in the vicinity of these three route options.

It has been indicated that the planning stage will not be concluded before 2024 which means that homeowners could be in limbo for many years to come. Since these announcements within the village we have already seen this blight in action, with house sales falling through and homes becoming unsalable.

Having made these proposals, Suffolk County Council must immediately act to compensate affected residents.

7      The Housing Issue

The consultation brochure states that this project will enable the delivery of around 10,000 to 15,000 additional homes across Suffolk, supporting Suffolk's housing ambitions. This is misleading, the current local plans already provide enough land for the required housing targets. Additional land supply is not therefore required to support these needs.

We understand that the 10,000 to 15,000 houses mentioned are required to raise a building levy to meet the local council's 20% contribution towards the cost of the proposed road.

Should this number of houses be built this building levy would be needed for the provision of local facilities such as schools, recreation and medical facilities. Where will the funding for the provision of these facilities come from if the levy is used to finance the road?

Ironically an increase in housing will increase the number of vehicles on local roads. An increase in traffic will defeat the whole purpose of the provision of a Northern Route to reduce congestion, further adding to the natural Induced Traffic Effect.

In conclusion

Clopton Villagers present at the meeting were unanimously opposed to the proposal of all three routes.

Clopton Parish Council deplore the lack of consultation over these plans, the lack of an independent environmental assessment and is opposed to the proposal of all three routes.

We trust that you will consider our feedback and take seriously our grave concerns.

We hope that you will respond with a solution for those villagers who's lives have been impacted by planning blight.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Peter Raffell  
Chairman of the Clopton Parish Council

cc Councillor John Ward  
Councillor Suzie Morley  
Councillor Steve Gallant  
Councillor David Ellesmere  
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