**SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL**

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FREEPOST

A47 Wansford to Sutton

Dear Sirs

**Sutton Parish Council**

The following are the formal comments of Sutton Parish Council on the proposals for dualling the Wansford to Sutton section of the A47

Our comments are structured to address the main questions in the consultation questionnaire.

**Q5. Do you think improvements are needed to the A47 Wansford to Sutton route?**

Yes, for the following reasons:

* The road itself is dangerous due to its narrowness, its twisting nature and vertical alignment near the Sutton Heath Road junction. (The latter is especially dangerous on winter evenings when there is low sun).
* The road junctions with the A47 and individual accesses off it have been the scene of fatal accidents, injury accidents and numerous other accidents due mainly to right-turning movements at times of high traffic flow.
* This section of road is unexpectedly narrow for traffic flowing from dual carriageway sections of the A47 and A1. This sudden change has itself led to accidents.
* There is no provision for cyclists and the road’s narrowness and lack of any verge refuge is especially dangerous for them.
* This section of road has a strategic function for all traffic but is a major constraint on cycle traffic of all forms seeking to travel east-west.
* The recently installed traffic lights at the Wansford junction have failed to fully address the problem of vehicles queuing back onto the A1 during peak hours.
* Structurally the road is unsound; the pressure of large HGV’s leads to subsidence.
* Traffic approaches the Sutton roundabout at high speed causing danger to vehicles or cycles and horses crossing between the old A47 and the Upton Road. The Sutton roundabout must be reconfigured not only to accommodate the dualling but also to effectively slow traffic down.

**Q6. What is our view of Option 1? (existing line)**

We are strongly against it for the following reasons:

* The implications for the side roads are not evident. The closing off of the junction with Sutton Heath Road, which seems to be proposed, would produce intolerable strains on the totally unsuitable Upton road and on living conditions for Upton residents. Closure of The Drift is also considered undesirable, likely to attract antisocial behaviour and constrain school bus access into Sutton.
* It is not a practical solution as the twisting alignment at the old railway bridge needs to be addressed.
* It is unlikely to deliver cycle facilities so easily.
* It makes no provision for local traffic movements to take place without joining the dual carriageway.

**Q7. What is our view of Option 2? (part north, part south)**

We are strongly opposed for the following reasons:

* This option brings the new road closer to Sutton increasing noise impact on its residents.
* It takes land from the floodplain and runs too close to the river.
* There is no clear cycleway route- the existing road at the E end is on the wrong side of the new road to readily serve as a cycle link with cycle movements to and from the old A47 road into Ailsworth/ Castor and points east.

**Q8. What is our view of Option 3? (north side route)**

We are strongly supportive of this option for the following reasons:

* The route takes noise impact further away from Sutton than the other options.
* It offers options for linking in side roads safely, preserving The Drift as an access point and utilising the existing surface for some local traffic movements.
* It offers the opportunity to utilising the existing road surface for cycles.
* Running on the south side of the new road, the cycleway could pass through the truckstop and beneath the A1 into Wansford, providing a safe and inexpensive link to points west.
* It is a better route in relation to the flood-plain
* Some woodland can be retained to screen the road.

**Q9 Should provision for pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians or other users be improved?**

Emphatically yes, both for local movements and for longer distance travel between the Peterborough area and the countryside west of the A1. At the moment this section of road is too dangerous for use by these potential users and forms a major constraint on east-west cycle travel.

**Further Comments:**

* We find it frustrating that these options are so very diagrammatic. No indication is given of how side road junctions might be handled and these are major considerations, your ideas for which would have greatly helped to inform our views at this stage.
* We are concerned to see that apart from the slip road from the A1 no proposals are shown to address the problems of long tailbacks which occur during peak times in both directions on the A47 itself.
* We are concerned at the future of the Buildings of Local Importance (the old station building and Heath House, the former station masters house). These are buildings of character and we urge that impact on them is minimised and efforts made to retain them. If directly affected we would like to see their being resited nearby. Failing that, at least a comprehensive photographic survey should be undertaken and made publically available as an historic record.
* The existing truckstop is notorious locally as a major centre for open-air sexual behaviour. This gives rise to problems of litter and unexpected and embarrassing confrontations for families taking an innocent walk on the Nene Way. We urge that it be closed as part of this project. This would enable its vehicular access to the A47 to be closed off and the strategic cycleway link into the Northamptonshire countryside taken through it and under the A1 into Wansford. It would also enable the section of the long-distance footpath The Nene Way which passes through the truck-stop to be used again, rather than avoided.

Yours faithfully



Deirdre McCumiskey

Clerk

Sutton Parish Council