

Comment for planning application WSCC/052/20

Application number

Name

Address

Type of Comment

Comments

The revised Planning Application still fails to address key concerns and objections to the initial Planning Application or fully answer the questions raised by the Planning Officer. The WSCC reply to the concerns raised by the Aldingbourne, Barnham and Eastergate and Walberton Parish Councils indicate a continuing failure to understand the issues raised and/or a deliberate disregard for the legitimate rights and welfare of the existing community. Three prominent examples are the scheme justification, the Traffic Assessment and the Road Safety Audit. Scheme Justification: One main reason given for the A29 realignment is to fulfill the purpose of a trunk road by providing a faster, more reliable route between Fontwell and Bognor Regis. At the same time the Applicant claims it is not a trunk road because it services new housing developments. The Applicant uses this argument to evade conforming to DMRB requirements for the protection of local amenity (eg an unsightly sound barrier) or to meet basic safety standards (eg safe pedestrian crossings and RSA). This is dishonest and casts doubt on the integrity of the rest of the scheme. Traffic Assessment: The Traffic Assessment is not sufficiently transparent to establish its validity; in particular: - The Chichester Area Transport Model (CATM) 2017 model validation (Report 2018) has not been updated to account for subsequent changes such as numerous joining roads from local housing developments and their effect on traffic flows, - Modelling assumptions are not clearly defined: eg. are existing travel patterns and transport choices used or are there different assumptions (if so what and in where is the validation of assumptions?), - Different models use different units (eg CATM uses vehicle flow and Turn Counts use PCU) with no defined correlation, - Turn count modelling (roundabout saturation assessment) shows a dual lane approach from Fontwell Avenue to the A27 roundabout but in practice there is only space for about 5 cars to queue side by side, - The household and traffic growth data actually used in the modelling is not precisely defined and appears to overlook household growth between 2017 (when traffic flows were initially assessed) and 2021/22, - No evidence is offered to show that the assessment that Eastergate Lane (or any other rural minor road connected to the main highways) traffic growth will be less than 30% (historical experience demonstrates that during the construction phase in particular this totally untrue), - No Traffic Assessment is presented for the stress on the existing road infrastructure between 2023 and completion of the North/South link (Phase 2) in 2036 (Environmental Statement 5.4.12) despite a year on year 10% housing (and related) traffic increase in the intervening years. A simple verification check using the original stated travel patterns, transport choices and current vehicle ownership levels (most new houses appear to be planned with two parking spaces so vehicle ownership might increase) indicate the modelling results to significantly underestimate projected traffic levels. An independent audit of the Transport Assessment, and in particular the supporting modelling, is required to assess whether this really is a viable plan. Road Safety Audit: - The scope seems to be restricted to the realigned A29 and its connections with existing highways without considering effects on neighbouring highways such as local lanes and the B2233 west of Nyton Road, - The few issues raised seem only to be directed at users of the new road or residents from new development with little or no consideration of the existing community, - It is based on traffic increase from 2760 new homes rather than the 5000+ which are now planned in the immediate area (let alone 11,400 in this part of Arun), - There is no recognition that until 2036 when the Phase 2 North/South link is completed all North/South traffic will have to use the existing A29 or assessment of the potential hazards for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders (NMUs) needing to cross the very busy roads, - There are many small errors such as stating that the Fontwell Avenue footpath (East Side) South of the proposed new roundabout is a shared foot and cycle path, which it is not, or recognizing that widening it to turn it into one is quite impractical at narrow points such as the Lion roundabout, - The growing hazards of HGVs and farm traffic turning into Eastergate Lane, which have to take up the full width of the road to make the turn, is not recognized, - There is no recognition of the dangers to the many people who are obliged to walk or cycle along local lanes without footpaths or cycleways to get to school, catch a bus or go to the shop/surgery; many of them are vulnerable such as schoolchildren and care home residents. These issues are fundamental to the safety of the existing population and it is particularly damning that the objection to the lack of an NMU (non-motorized user) survey raised at the initial Planning Application has been dismissed because it would be unrepresentative under Covid-19 conditions. No responsible authority should allow this application to be considered until a valid NMU survey has been completed and the Road Safety Audit updated to take account it and of all the wider issues identified." The shortcomings listed in my objection to the first submission of this Planning Application still stand.

Received

Attachments