



HAMBLE PARISH COUNCIL

RESPONSE TO HIGHWAYS ENGLAND CONSULTATION ON JUNCTION 8, WINDHOVE ROUABOUT AND THE A3024

The Council welcomes the consultation on junction 8 of the M27 and the wider road network. It is accepted that background traffic growth will impact adversely on the road network and that without a package of demand management measures and alternative transport solutions that traffic congestion will only worsen. The interrelationship between the strategic and local road network is critically important and proposals should be carried out in tandem with Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Southampton City Council (HCC) to ensure that the objective of achieving an effective highways network is achieved.

Many of the concerns that Hamble Parish Council (HPC) have stem from issues that are specific to traffic flows along Hamble Lane. A recent survey of residents (85%) in Hamble has highlighted high levels of dissatisfaction with the performance of this road with residents and businesses alike finding that congestion at three key points a daily frustration. These key junctions are: Hound Roundabout and below into the village, Portsmouth Road Junction and Windhover itself.

Unlike many other peninsula communities, Hamble has a significant manufacturing and service base employing a large work force. It is an important business hub in the local area as well as further afield with specialist industries such as Coopervision. The presence of such a large work force has meant that local initiatives in the past have been adopted to help manage congestion such as staggering shift patterns but over time this has had the impact of lengthening the peak travel periods am and pm and exaggerating the problem.

Given this Hamble Parish Council is very keen that any changes proposed to Junction 8, Windhover and to the A3024 do not focus on this narrow corridor without giving full and proper regard to traffic flows in and out of Hamble Lane as well at the strategic route into Southampton. Hamble Lane has become an access route into eastern Southampton via Woolston in large part due to the failure of the A3024. An approach that rebalances traffic back onto this key route is important to reduce pressures on the Hamble Road network where few alternatives to either widen or redesign are available. Investment and planning is needed in a coordinated fashion to avoid unintended consequences.

Public Transport

An integrated approach to sustainable transport linked to growth should be at the heart of an area wide transport plan. Given this it is important that alternatives to car use are promoted with a strong emphasis on improving the connectivity of public transport for short urban journeys. Within Hamble we have a number of challenges in this regard which results in additional car trips along Hamble Lane and onto Windhover Roundabout. This includes the following:

- No early morning bus service for college students to Eastleigh Town
- No integrated bus services out of Hamble to the wider area throughout the week.

- Low frequency rail service to Southampton with people opting to drive to Parkway
- Lack of parking at Hamble Station acts as a deterrent to taking the train on the local rail network.

Measures to reduce bus priority/lanes in Southampton will only slow journey times down further and discourage people from the wider hinterland from using public transport. Removal of bus or cycle lanes should not be considered in any of the proposals.

Options for a Park and Ride scheme should be considered as a priority and explored with EBC as part of its emerging Local Plan. Schemes in Winchester demonstrate high usage with the potential of reducing traffic at peak times. A detailed study of potential sites should be undertaken given the recognition of the problems on Hamble Lane which currently have no package of mitigation identified within the emerging plan.

Crossing Southampton Water

Delays into Southampton from Hamble are made worse by people not taking the Itchen Road Bridge because of the cost and delay in paying the tolls. HPC believes that the current tolls should be abolished and a route via the A3024 down Botley Road should be promoted to reduce pressure on Northam Bridge. At the very least investment in plate recognition and the “Dart Charge model” should be adopted if tolls are not abolished. Speeding up this route would encourage more people to use it reducing trip rates on the A3024 and the Northam Bridge. This could be a more cost effective option than upgrading Network Rails bridge and would reduce emissions in the AQMA (Air Quality Management Areas)

Local Road Network

Traffic currently diverts from Windhover down to Portsmouth Road to join the A3025. This is generating delays in both directions. Upgrading and reconnecting the stretch of Botley Road at Burrow Down Gardens would enable traffic from Hedge End to bypass Windhover altogether and remove traffic from the Portsmouth Road junction. The impact of crossing traffic has a significant effect on traffic flows up Hamble Lane especially at peak periods and the absence of a large enough central refuge prevents traffic passing down Hamble Lane.

With this route open more traffic could be diverted from the A3024 onto the A3025. This would reduce pressure on the Portsmouth Road junction. This junction should be redesigned to dissuade traffic coming along this stretch and instead keep traffic on designated routes.

The policy of holding traffic back onto the Motorway through the “gated junctions” needs to be challenged. Although more traffic at junctions along the route potentially would add to a reduction in air quality an approach that enable a low consistent speed rather than stop and starts would help to reduce emissions.

Junctions at Windhover need to be reviewed. All junctions should be signal controlled to allow safe access onto and off the roundabout and enable pedestrians and cyclists to cross safely. The exit junction from Windhover down Hamble Lane should be reconfigured as the current layout is tight and with very large boat movements a not infrequent occurrence the current layout results in standstill. The redesign needs to recognise the high frequency of large trucks, tankers and other large vehicles accessing and existing Hamble Lane.

Providence Hill /Bridge Road currently suffer heavy congestion in both directions around the Swanwick turn. Employers in Hamble have confirmed that many of their staff live and work in Locks Heath/Warsash and divert onto the motorway to avoid lengthy delays caused by Swanwick Lane. Cutting off access to Swanwick Lane from Botley Road end, would reduce

traffic at this junction and divert traffic back to the top end of Bridge Road in Locks Heath. A reduction in travel time along this stretch would reduce what is essentially a single junction trip relieving pressure on Junction 8 & 9.

Lastly consideration needs to be given to traffic within Hamble Village itself. Much of the congestion is frequently contained below Hound Roundabout with delays in the pm peak of up to 45mins from the Parish Council office to the Hound roundabout. Along that stretch of road businesses are joining from Hamble Point at Copse Lane, Ensign Way business park, GE at Kings Avenue, the Police College and Satchell Lane. At the very least each of these junctions should be monitored to understand the impact on Hamble Lane

Junction 8 and Windhover.

Traffic heading westbound on the M27 frequently exits at Junction 8 and re-joins using the slip road back onto the motorway to reduce waiting time in peak period. This prevents traffic coming down Bert Bett's Road and causes delays on Windhover and its junctions. Signal controls for traffic heading straight on would reduce this with a running lane for traffic heading up Bert Bett's Way. This would enable traffic to get onto the roundabout far quicker.

A more radical proposal would be to consider grade separation at Windhover with a through route from Bert Betts Way straight through onto the A3024 with local traffic moving around a modified Windhover Roundabout. If the Botley Road route was opened up this could have more impact than other options.

General

Lastly the size and scale of development at Providence Hill is going to compound the problem of traffic coming onto Windhover. It is inconceivable that the problems at Windhover are such that national funding is needed to remedy the current problems there yet further traffic is going to be permitted without regard to the impact on the wider area. There is a pressing need for the Planning Authorities and Highways bodies to work together in a coordinated way to manage new development and not to allow piece meal development without understanding the impact on the wider road network and ensuring that either developments are refused or adequate contributions are taken and ring fenced to provide proper and timely mitigations. The role of the Local Plan is central to this and consultations on the road network should be part of a joint consultation reflecting this.

There has already and is further housing growth planned both within SCC and within EBC's emerging Local Plan. Funding from Highways England and the two Highways Authorities should come together to provide a framework for looking at an area wide transport model based on the Smarter Choices type approach that brings together developers contributions, CIL and central government funding.

Progress could also be made in Hamble with the creation of a village wide travel plan bringing the business community together with a package of measures. Providing funding for the work and to support the measures in a travel plan would be a more cost effective approach than hard engineering. Hamble Parish Council would welcome a coordinated consideration of this by the highway and planning authorities.