

A422 Farthinghoe  
Strategic Outline Case for Bypass August 2023

We acknowledge receipt of your document, A422 Farthinghoe - Strategic Outline Case for Bypass August 2023 and the subsequent TEAMS meeting held on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2023.

We are pleased to submit our comments/observations on this document.

Firstly, we wish to make it abundantly clear that as Farthinghoe Parish Council our prime objective is to secure a Bypass for Farthinghoe but that a Weight Restriction on the A422 through Farthinghoe should be considered as a necessary "interim" measure, to overcome the lengthy time it would take to implement a Bypass.

We were encouraged with the composite content of the report. In particular, it was pleasing to note that a Farthinghoe Bypass was considered to prove a strategic fit regarding the National, Regional and Local Development transport plans and that there were no negative responses to a Bypass.

Paragraph 2.7.6 encapsulates our considered opinion regarding the need for a Bypass, "When the transport problems and issues are considered collectively a clear need for Intervention is established"

We have requested National Highways to quantify the number of incidents that have necessitated closure of the M40 since 2018 to 2023. We are advised that since January 2018 the M40, between junctions 10 and 11, has been completely closed 9 times in the Northbound direction and 3 times Southbound, over the same period.

In addition, of course, there have been numerous M40 lane closures associated with vehicle breakdowns and collisions, minor roadworks and numerous other incident types which have severely added to the traffic through Farthinghoe. We do not consider we should be expected to tolerate and live in this environment, year on year.

A copy of the letter from National Highways is available, should you require.

We believe the statement in Clause 2.5.15 is incorrect when it states that "The Village does not have any congestion or delay issues". We experience delays and congestion almost on a daily basis and sometimes several times in the same day. Perhaps a visit to Farthinghoe, by the author of the document, should be made to verify our viewpoint.

Whilst we acknowledge that the author of the document has used National Transport models to achieve the improved BCR calculation, we would be grateful to learn which methodology exists that recognises the problems experienced by Farthinghoe, which is a Village located on an MRN with a Pinch Point and acting as the automatic diversion route for a 6 lane Motorway, in the event of an incident.

During the TEAMS meeting, WNC, agreed to thoroughly investigate a Weight Restriction on the A422 through Farthinghoe, using the B4525 signed replacement route to the A43. The outcome of this feasibility study to be reported upon by April 2024.

We believe an important element of this study should be a thorough Origin/Destination study of HGVs using the A422/A421 corridor, which could be diverted via Junction 10 of the M40.

An "interim" Weight Restriction would obviously provide an economic & improved timeline to implementation, of a solution, which in our opinion, will solve a large proportion of the traffic problems experienced in Farthinghoe.

This would allow the financial justification for a Bypass to be more comprehensively pursued, at a time when WNC finances are in a better place.

Incidentally, we would point out that the 10 mph speed limit mentioned at the Pinch Point, is only advisory and not mandatory, with very few HGVs adhering to this. Our recent request to the Safer Roads Team at Northants Police to collect data quantifying this lack of adherence was declined.

We note that air pollution monitoring took place in Farthinghoe. As the Parish Council, we were not aware of this study or the results and would be grateful to receive details of the dates and the timelines when samples were taken.

As stated in the TEAMS meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> September, we are highly suspicious of the traffic flow data presented in the document. We fail to understand why figures from 2015 might have been used, and to avoid any further ambiguity, suggest an up-to-date traffic survey should be implemented and used for any future BCR analysis.

We have attached to this letter an Addendum which provides recent photographs of the difficulties experienced at the Pinch Point and our thoughts on why the BCR calculation does not provide an improved figure.

Farthinghoe Parish Council  
22/09/2023