

Customer Service and Communications
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By email

Rt Hon George Freeman MP
House of Commons
London
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NCC contact number:
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5 September 2016
My ref: ENQ 0107336

Dear Mr Freeman

Thank you for your email dated 17 August 2016 and the letter from Camilla Davis on behalf of Lyng Parish council, with some questions and concerns about the NDR. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying to you about this.

I have spoken to David Allfrey, the major projects manager, who has also been in touch with Camilla directly about this issues she has raised with you. Below are the responses to Camilla's questions, which have come from David and other members of the NDR project team.

One key point to note is that David has set in motion plans to undertake further survey work in October/ November this year to compare with previous survey data. This will then enable any changes in traffic flows and consideration of any weight and/or speed restrictions to be considered further. David will share this data with Lyng parish council and has suggested that he also visits them once the data is available.

- **What are the changes in traffic flow predictions post NDR for the A1067?**

Modelled traffic forecasts for scenarios with and without the NDR formed part of the information submitted in the application for a Development Consent Order. This information can be viewed on the County Council's website using this link:

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/major-projects-and-improvement-plans/norwich/northern-distributor-road/planning-and-approval-process/development-consent-order/dco-documents>

The information is contained in Document Ref 5.6 "Traffic Forecasting Report" and its appendices.

From this document the forecast traffic flows for the A1067 near Sparham are as follows:

2012 base = 9100 vehs

2017 without NDR = 10,300 vehs 2017 with NDR = 12,200 vehs

2032 without NDR = 12,900 vehs 2032 with NDR = 15,800 vehs

- **What is the confidence level for the predictions, given the situation at Postwick which required the head of department to appear on Look East to defend the very significant variance in expected traffic volumes?**

In order to produce the most likely and credible forecasts for the appraisal of the NDR, the traffic model was developed in accordance with the DfT's standards and

guidance for best practice. Similarly it was validated to meet DfT guidance targets. This means that it is considered the most appropriate method available for forecasting the effects of the NDR.

In accordance with Requirement 30 of the confirmed Development Consent Order for the NDR a programme of post monitoring traffic surveys, which will include Lyng, is being developed. This will allow further assessment/validation of the model.

- **Are any junction improvements planned at the A47 junction on the designated routes from the A1067?**

As outlined at the meeting you are aware that Highways England are delivering a scheme to dual the A47 between the existing sections of dual carriageway near Easton and North Tuddenham. The County Council is actively engaging with Highways England as part of the delivery process and is discussing the junction strategy for the dual carriageway scheme.

- **How will the route be signed from and to the Fakenham Road?**

The proposed signing of the new B road to and from the A1067 Fakenham Road is now in place and therefore no further major signing amendments are envisaged.

At the meeting there was a request for details of how traffic will be signed from the end of NDR. As a result I have provided a copy of the plans showing the signing proposals at this location.

- **If no junction improvements are planned traffic congestion at junctions will become an issue, not to mention safety (pre-Mattishall roundabout!) Traffic will respond by seeking alternative routes, increasing pressure on existing and potential rat runs. (We believe that already the implemented HGV plan at Hockering has had an impact on Lyng.) How will this be addressed?**

The County Council intends to undertake additional traffic surveys in October/November 2016 to further assess the view that the HGV plan at Hockering has had an impact on Lyng. This will provide a comparison with data from surveys completed over a similar period in 2014 and 2015, which is provided in one of the responses further below. We will discuss the findings of the 2016 surveys with you once the results are available.

- **The route through Lyng looks attractive on a map as it leads to a grade separated junction with the A47 which will mean no junction delays and a much safer means of joining the A47? Has this been identified and addressed?**

The better access onto the A47 via this grade separated junction has been identified and already forms part of the signed route for HGVs travelling south bound on the new B road from the A1067 at Lenwade. The additional surveys proposed in October/November 2016 will allow us to better assess whether HGVs are using the route through Lyng instead of the designated B road route.

- **Satnav devices use different criteria in suggesting routes e.g. shortest, quickest. Could satnavs possibly suggest the route through Lyng as quickest if there are junction delays at the A47?**

It is difficult to comment on how individual Satellite Navigation devices identify suggested routes for drivers as they all operate with differing parameters and

details. However, it would be expected that the dualling of the A47 will help minimise delays on the A47 and reduce the perceived attractiveness of other, less suitable routes.

- **Please confirm when and if the roads leading in and out the village, not to mention through the village, were surveyed to assess their suitability for HGV traffic.**

(Low widths, narrow bridges with no pedestrian facility, poor horizontal alignment, substandard turning radii at Heath Road, substandard footway widths in village etc.)

If a survey was carried out, the Parish council would like a copy of their report.

The County Council has a Route Hierarchy network that identifies routes according to their function a level of use. This was agreed in the 1990s following reviews of the highway network and since this time we have continued to assess this network when the need for changes has arisen.

In this Route Hierarchy, Principle Routes (generally A roads) and Main Distributor Routes (generally B roads) form the main road network and are roads expected to accommodate the majority of through traffic. From this main road network the most appropriate route to a significant generator of HGVs is designated as a HGV Access Route and the most appropriate route to a village is designated as a Local Access Route.

The C198 Lyng Road/The Common from the A1067 to the village is designated as a Local Access Route within the Route Hierarchy. As a result we would not expect significant through HGVs to be using this route, however there could be some local HGV movements associated with access to local businesses and farms in the area.

Previous surveys of vehicle flows to assess the volume of HGV traffic through Lyng have already been undertaken in October/November 2014 and 2015. A summary of the results of these surveys was contained in the County Council's letter of 9 June 2016 although this only showed total vehicle flows and did not include the number of HGVs. I have therefore provided this information again and included the number of HGVs (the figures provided are 24 hour (00:00hrs to 24:00hrs) weekday average flows).

	November 2014		October/November 2015	
	North/East Bound Direction	South/West Bound Direction	North/East Bound Direction	South/West Bound Direction
ATC1	928 vehs (7 HGVs)	916 vehs (6 HGVs)	932 vehs (7 HGVs)	985 vehs (8 HGVs)
ATC7	780 vehs (10 HGVs)	1388 vehs (60 HGVs)	657 vehs (15 HGVs)	1271 vehs (58 HGVs)

- **Does the County Council have desirable minimum carriageway widths for 2 way HGV traffic?**

There is no specific standard for the carriageway width for 2 way HGV traffic although for a route to a generator of significant HGVs (i.e. a designated HGV Access Route within the Route Hierarchy network) it is desirable to have a width of 6.0m as this allows 2 HGVs to pass each other without conflict.

Local communities themselves can generate some HGV movements (e.g. deliveries to shops/businesses) although to a lesser extent. As a result the desirable width of the main access route into a village (i.e. a designated Local Access Route within the Route Hierarchy network) is 5.5m.

The new B road from the A1067 at Lenwade and the A1067 near Hockering has generally been upgraded to 6.5m wide to reflect its new designation as a Main Distributor Road. Signing to reflect this new status has also been introduced.

- **Road improvements are usually to benefit communities but in this case there is the potential to destroy the rural environment of a whole village. The meeting felt that it is not acceptable to "wait and see" as set out in the inspector's report. There will be a delay whilst evidence is accumulated possibly at a time of economic restraint possibly amounting to a number of years. Instead we strongly believe that the County Council should be taking a PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH and act in advance.**

The comments regarding effects on the rural environment of the village are noted and the additional surveys proposed in October/November 2016 will allow us to better assess whether more HGVs are using the route through Lyng and also provide the evidence for any remedial action that might be considered before the NDR is open. Further surveys after the NDR opening are proposed.

Requirement 29 of the Development Consent Order, which has been confirmed by the Secretary of State, places a commitment on the County Council to provide a scheme of traffic management measures for Lyng if monitoring shows an increase in traffic that is a result of the NDR.

- **A weight restriction does not strike the village as an unaffordable mitigation measure given the overall cost of the project. For instance how much has been budgeted for mitigation measures to protect wildlife and how does this compare with the cost of preparing the order and signing a HGV restriction?**

At this stage a possible weight restriction for the village has not been ruled out but it will need to be carefully considered, including the impacts on local businesses and farmers. The additional traffic survey proposed for October/November 2016 will help us with the assessment of this restriction.

- **We have had a refusal to consider a 20mph restriction and would like the reasons for this.**

My colleague, Jon Winnett's letter of 6 November 2015, correctly identified that our approach to such restrictions is to use evidence to support any proposed restriction. The October/November 2016 surveys will also record vehicle speeds and will help us with the assessment of this evidence.

- **There are significant concerns regarding an increase in all traffic, but especially an increase in HGV's moving through the village. In Lyng there are many potential hazards including absent and substandard footways poor surfacing and surface water drainage, a school, play areas, and horse riders.**

The comments regarding hazards in the village are noted and these will be considered, together with the results of the additional surveys proposed in October/November 2016.

- **We have identified particularly hazardous stretches of road and junctions, within or affecting the village, which are –**
 - (i) the northern length of Heath Road, (traffic already regularly mounts the pavements at this point narrowly missing pedestrians.)**
 - (ii) the exit at the eastern end of the Lyng Easthaugh Road and**
 - (iii) the junction with the Lyng Road and the Fakenham Road at Sparham.**

The comments regarding these locations are noted and will be considered, together with the results of the additional surveys proposed in October/November 2016.

I have also attached two plans showing the signing from the end of the new NDR. The signing along the A1067 from the NDR roundabout will only show destinations for Lenwade and Fakenham.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Cressida McLaughlin
Compliments and complaints team