

Day Ten

Len Turner

Mr Turner read his proof of evidence, from para 2.1 onwards.

Mr Turner stated the benefits of the Warminster Bypass. He said that although traffic flows were approaching pre-bypass levels, 90% of traffic was from within the town, showing that the bypass has been effective in diverting through traffic.

Mr Turner read his Appendices WWEP/A/1 and WWEP/A/2, letters from HPH Ltd and Rygor Group Services Ltd in support of the scheme.

Cross Examination

Para2.2. What were the purposes of the Warminster Bypass?

-Predominantly traffic relief

Any other stated purposes?

-Can't recall

WHA109. WCC document showing annual average traffic data. Traffic counts for Warminster High St. 1991 – 12,000. 2001 – 10,600. Subsequently rose to 11,600.

-Agreed

Over a period of sixteen years, there has been no significant reduction over that period?

-No

From 1998 onwards there has been an increase in traffic?

-Agreed

-Concern within town over traffic growth, however Mouchel Parkman showed 90% of cars were local.

-Through traffic removed by bypass.

-If current situation was exacerbated by lack of bypass, situation would be intolerable.

-Bypass has been of benefit.

Still heavy traffic in Warminster, creating various difficulties. The bypass has not been a panacea?

-It has, because it has removed HGV through traffic.

-Local people can tolerate local traffic.

In what way has the provision of the bypass encouraged modal shift towards public transport or cycling and walking?

-It has not

Aware that the case of WHA is that roads per se do not lead to regeneration,

-Agree with that

Also there is a question of whether West Wiltshire is in need of regeneration in national context.

-Would disagree

-RSS has afforded increased status to towns such as Trowbridge – now recognised as sub-regionally significant centre.

Trowbridge has an elevated regional status. Emerging RSS has a key objective of reducing out-commuting.

-Agreed, also an objective of WWEP

P2.6. Developers have submitted land that could be allocated for developed.

-Detailed examination of those sites has not yet occurred

Have these sites been identified with the provision of this scheme as a precondition?

-To my certain knowledge, some of the sites have been put forward for development in the knowledge that the bypass will be built.

Do any of those sites lie between Westbury and the scheme?

-Yes

P2.8. Difficulties of local businesses. WHA101. The Estate Today. Second bullet. WWTE has 9 acres of undeveloped land. Proposal to expand WWTE presently?

-Yes, but this is hardly surprising.

WWTE has lowest vacancy levels for 10 years. Not much indication from WWTE that they are suffering hardship from lack of bypass.

-Youngsters do not have employment opportunities at present, aim to provide employment for people with skills.

-Wiltshire has a low qualified workforce compared to qualification of residents. Aim to retain skills by enticing businesses

No link between that process and new road.

-New businesses fearful of establishing locating south of Melksham because of travel time

How much journey time will be saved by bypass?

-Not aware

-Perception that Westbury is a good business environment vital to investors.

If a perception is created that a bypass will make a dramatic difference to access, but the reality is that only 2 minutes will be saved, how will the business community respond?

- Vehicles will consume more fuel if stationary, and businesses will expend more wages
- Businesses seek more efficient way of moving vehicles around

Accept that the actual journey time saving would be two minutes?

- Cannot contest

P2.9. Tourism. No evidence of what proportion of Longleat / Centre Parks users travel through Westbury?

- No

Stated that it is beyond doubt that a number of potential visitors deterred by journey times. What evidence of this?

- That has been said to me by manager of Longleat
- They have the evidence of people that are deterred

What difference will two minutes make?

- Scheme would be part of a cumulative process to reduce the time of travel between M4 and the South.

P2.10. WWEP and Chamber of Commerce supported Western route?

- Agreed, supported in principle

When did that change?

- Latest consultant report, that dismissed possibility of W route

Fact is that once a W route ruled out by WCC, WWEP had no choice but to support E route?

- When two W routes and one E route being considered, the Chamber of Commerce took the view that none of these routes fully met businesses' needs
- When it became apparent that W route could not meet needs, and E route provided link to business estate, Chamber gave support to E route
- Do not argue that E route is ideal, but meets objectives of WWEP
- Better to proceed with this route than have no route at all

In what way does E route meet objectives better than W route?

- Nobody could demonstrate W route that could be achieved
- Scheme needed that gave direct access to railway, but nobody put forward scheme that could accomplish this aim through W route.

Even were the scheme to be built, accept that there are still pinchpoints?

- Agreed

Yarnbrook/West Ashton not addressed?

-Agreed

-WWEP argues for further road improvements

Inspector's Questions

Mr Langton asked if the rail freight interchange was still being pursued. Mr Turner said that companies had been interested in using freight interchange, however there were not a sufficient number of rail interchanges elsewhere in the country which goods could be transported to. Mr Turner said there were no active discussions within the business community on the interchange at the present time.