

PPC Statement - 1/10/17

5th July – c 100 residents turned up to PPC meeting as a result of information being circulated about the Eastern Option proposals.

PPC – unanimously resolved to oppose the Eastern Options - this was a view everyone supported.

The most important thing that PPC could do was to encourage as many people as possible to engage with the consultation process – 3 Councillors met with SGC officers to discuss this.

19th July meeting – discussed and agreed a raft of actions and key messages which were published in our minutes, online and via Twitter and formed the basis of the special edition of Pucklechurch News and the latter summarised PPC's view at that time as follows:

Parish Council view

The Council position is that the Eastern Option does not deliver the outcomes the cross-party campaign fought for: there would be irreversible consequences for the Bristol/Bath Green Belt and potentially devastating consequences for our community identity, multiple designated heritage assets, our industrial and archaeological heritage, the conservation area, the character of the local landscape (including the setting of the Cotswolds AONB) and its biodiversity, as well as residential amenity, traffic and air quality. Our primary aim at this stage is to demonstrate the Eastern Options are not an option.

Councillors have also been meeting with representatives of other parish councils with a view to impressing upon them that this is more than a Pucklechurch Parish issue: one likely consequence of the Eastern Option would be the creation of new rat runs and traffic congestion over a much wider rural and regional road network (induced traffic).

It also said:

Your view

There are a number of reasons you might oppose the Pucklechurch option.

It is also possible that you may object to the construction of any junction at all.

This newsletter was delivered to every household in the parish.

M4 J18a has been a standing agenda item and discussed at every full PPC meeting since 5th July (5 meetings to date) and Councillors have made themselves available for residents to discuss this issue or ask questions twice every week (11 opportunities to date). Not a single resident has attended any of these meetings to question PPC's position and until this week PPC has received no written correspondence on this matter. It has however been copied into letters that have been sent to SGC that express objection to the Eastern Options and support for the Western and is also aware that some people oppose the building of any junction at all.

PPC also provided the opportunity for residents to make their views known at a Public Meeting on 12th September.

For the last three months PPC has been gathering information to inform its formal submission in response to the consultation. This submission will consider all the issues that have been raised. At its meeting on 20th September it was agreed that a list of Council concerns would be produced to be

reviewed and agreed at the next meeting to be submitted on line, in relation to the consultation. This was minuted as follows:

- 1. A direct challenge to the consultation process on its failure to provide appropriate detailed and accurate information on which anyone can make a well-informed comment etc. to be backed up with evidence.*
- 2. That the documentation provided (and referenced elsewhere) does not provide sufficient evidence for the provision of any junction at all especially as no alternative options have been explored against which the proposed options can be tested for their efficacy. PPC believes therefore that no case has been made to support the delivery of any of the options.*
- 3. PPC is best able to provide evidence that demonstrates why neither of the two Eastern options are appropriate and remains resolute in its opposition to these options. The demonstration of our opposition to the Eastern options should not be read as tacit approval of the Western option as an alternative/appropriate solution.*

Work to complete the draft submission is in progress and the Executive Summary currently reads as follows:

Pucklechurch Parish Council believes that the consultation process is flawed, that no case has been effectively made to support the delivery of any of the options and it remains resolute in its opposition to the Eastern options: these options simply do not deliver the outcomes that the cross-party campaign fought for. Furthermore, if either of the two Eastern options are enacted this would have potentially devastating and irreversible consequences for our community identity, multiple designated heritage assets, our industrial and archaeological heritage, two conservation areas, the character of the local landscape (including the setting of the Cotswolds AONB) and its biodiversity, as well as residential amenity, traffic and air quality. One likely far-reaching consequence will be the creation of new rat runs and traffic congestion over a much wider regional and rural road network (induced traffic) that has not been appropriately analysed as part of this study.

The detailed demonstration of the Parish Council's opposition to the Eastern options should not be read as tacit approval of the Western option as an alternative or appropriate solution.

This response is divided into three sections:

- The consultation process and its failure to provide appropriate detailed and accurate information on which anyone can make a well-informed comment*
- The efficacy of providing a junction at all in light of the fact that no alternative options have been explored against which the proposed options can be tested*
- Evidence that demonstrates why neither of the two eastern options are appropriate*

Residents need to be aware that the Parish Council's submission carries no more weight than any other individual submission – it will be classed as one objection amongst many others.

With reference to the REPORT TO WECA VOLUNTARY JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, Friday 22nd Sept 2017 WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT TRANSPORT STUDY and M4 J18a Consultation, it was brought to our attention that two papers prepared by W S Atkins (West of E JTS Executive Summary Sept 2017 and

W of E JTS Final Report Sept 2017) were made available to this Committee at its meeting on 22nd September (Agenda Item 13).

PPC acted swiftly on this matter and submitted a letter to SGC and all the WECA constituent bodies and MPs on Monday 25th September to ask for a full written explanation as to how particular assumptions and estimated costs were determined for the purposes of the JTS Report since it appears to pre-empt the outcome of the M4 18a public consultation process and the final feasibility study report before it has been delivered. PPC also requested a copy of a document entitled "M4 J18a Link Note for JTS May'17" (and any subsequently revised versions) under FOI.

PPC informed all parties that it reserved the right to take legal advice based on the content of the disclosures.