

A509 Isham Bypass

Public Inquiry

30th October 2007

Summary of
Engineering Proof of Evidence
of Hugh Smith BTech., CEng., MICE
on behalf of Northamptonshire
County Council




Northamptonshire County Council
County Hall
Northampton
NN1 1AW

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1. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVE

- 1.1 My name is Hugh Smith and I am a Project Manager for Atkins/Northamptonshire Highways. I have an honours degree in Civil and Structural Engineering from the University of Bradford. I am a Chartered Engineer and have been a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers for almost 25 years.
- 1.2 I have specialised in highway design and development for 30 years. Over 20 years experience has been gained in Local Authorities, at Northamptonshire County Council and Warwickshire County Council. I have designed and managed a number of major highway schemes including bypass projects. I presently work for Atkins and have been in my current position for the last 5 years. I have during this period been responsible for the development of the A509 Isham Bypass.

2. ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

- 2.1 Atkins began the preliminary assessment with thirteen route options (see Appendix 1). Most of these options were derived from a public consultation held in 1993, when a preferred route was chosen for a bypass.
- 2.2 Eight routes (1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 13) were subject to further assessment. The Wider Reference Group was informed and consulted on these options between August 2002 and January 2003 in respect to engineering, environmental, traffic and economic assessments. A decision was made to take forward three routes to public consultation. The routes recommended were Routes 2, 5 and 6 (see Appendix 2).
- 2.3 Route 2 was designated as the Preferred Route. Reasons for the rejection of alternative Routes 5 and 6 included:
- ◆ 82% of the consultation questionnaires returned supported the idea of an Isham Bypass, with 62% supporting Route 2, 34% Route 5 and 4% Route 6.
 - ◆ Environmental considerations relating, in particular, to Routes 5 and 6 passing through the River Ise floodplain. The Environment Agency had a preference for Route 2 on the grounds that the other routes would involve development within the flood plain of the River Ise.
 - ◆ Transportation aspects including traffic modelling, cost benefit analysis and accident savings showed the Preferred Route as having the most beneficial cost benefit ratios, best accident savings and good traffic relief.

A comparison summary table of Routes 2, 5 and 6 is shown at Appendix 3.

3. THE A509 IN A LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

- 3.1 In order to meet future infrastructure needs the County Council decided it would investigate an extension of the Isham Bypass, running between Hill Top Road and the north of Wellingborough. This scheme, known as the “A509 Isham to Wellingborough Improvement”, would bypass the village of Great Harrowden and complete a high quality dual carriageway road between Kettering and Wellingborough.
- 3.2 Route 5 was suggested by some to offer a comprehensive solution to the A509 Kettering to Wellingborough strategic route. Although longer and more costly than Route 2, supporters of Route 5 considered that, when compared to the combined schemes of A509 Isham Bypass and A509 Isham to Wellingborough Improvement, it would perform better. A comparison was undertaken which identified that Route 5 would:-
- ◆ Cost more
 - ◆ Offer poorer value for money
 - ◆ Save fewer accidents
 - ◆ Offer less traffic relief in Isham and Great Harrowden
 - ◆ Impact adversely on the flood plain of the River Ise
 - ◆ Be less effective as a strategic route within the framework of the sub-regional strategy.

4. THE NEED FOR THE SCHEME

- 4.1 The village of Isham suffers from the effects of through traffic. The observed 24 hour average annual daily traffic flows on the A509 through Isham at detailed investigation stage were approximately 21,300 vehicles, 2,556 (12%) of which were heavy goods vehicles.
- 4.2 The existing A509 is a single carriageway road with an undulating and bendy alignment. There are 4 junctions with minor roads along the length to be bypassed, as well as other side road junctions and private accesses within the village of Isham.
- 4.3 The existing road through the village is a two lane single carriageway of approximately 7.3m width. The existing A509 through Isham is subject to a 30mph speed limit through the village.
- 4.4 The footpaths through Isham are adjacent and in places set back from the carriageway. There is a controlled pedestrian crossing facility within the village.
- 4.5 The existing A509 through Isham is lined by mainly residential properties set back from the road.
- 4.6 Within Isham, the existing A509 is the main thoroughfare for vehicles and pedestrians. The public house and church directly overlook the road and the primary school is in close proximity, with access off Church Street.

- 4.7 The A509 between Kettering and Wellingborough was classified as a 'Red Route' by Northamptonshire County Council. This refers to a route with a high number of accidents resulting in fatal or serious injury.

5. SCHEME OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The Northamptonshire County Council's objectives for the proposed A509 Isham Bypass are to:
- ◆ reduce community severance currently experienced through the village of Isham by removing through traffic, particularly heavy goods vehicles
 - ◆ reduce the number and severity of road accidents
 - ◆ reduce congestion on the A509 particularly during peak hours
 - ◆ enhance the local environment of Isham and improve conditions for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians
 - ◆ improve transport links between Kettering and Wellingborough.

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHEME

- 6.1 The proposed A509 Isham Bypass would be a dual carriageway. Each carriageway would consist of a two lane 7.3m wide running surface and 1m wide hard strips both sides. Verges would typically be 2.5m wide and the central reservation would typically be 2.75m.
- 6.2 The proposed A509 Isham Bypass would pass to the west of Isham, commencing at the A14 junction 9 (Pytchley Roundabout) and run southwards to rejoin the A509 Wellingborough Road midway between Hill Top Road and Great Harrowden. The length of the Isham Bypass would be 4.3km. There would be two at-grade roundabout junctions, one at the junction with the A509 Kettering Road 800m south of the A14 Pytchley Roundabout and the other at the junction with the B574 Hill Top Road.
- 6.3 All the side roads would be single carriageway. The side roads would provide access to the village of Isham via the existing A509 and maintain access to the B574. An over bridge would be provided to carry Orlingbury Road over the proposed A509 Isham Bypass.
- 6.4 Extensive earthworks would be required, with cuttings up to a maximum of 9m deep and embankments up to a maximum of 10m high.
- 6.5 The proposed A509 Isham Bypass would cross bridleway GW15, footpaths GW2, TM3, TM4 and TK18. These would be diverted to proposed culverts or bridges to ensure safe crossing provision.
- 6.6 The proposed A509 Isham Bypass would cross three watercourses which drain into the River Ise. Balancing ponds would be constructed, to control the discharge rate of highway drainage, at each of the watercourses.
- 6.7 The road surface on the proposed A509 Isham Bypass would be stone mastic asphalt material. This material is considerably quieter than traditional hot rolled asphalt surfacing and has exhibited good durability in previous use.

7. THE ORDERS

- 7.1 The Orders are required under the Highways Act 1980 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 to provide Northamptonshire County Council the authority to alter side roads, footpaths, bridleways and accesses and to acquire all the land and rights necessary for the construction of the proposed A509 Isham Bypass

8. THE SIDE ROADS ORDER

THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (A509 ISHAM BYPASS CLASSIFIED ROAD) (SIDE ROADS) ORDER 2006

- 8.1 If confirmed, it would authorise the Northamptonshire County Council to improve and stop up highways, construct new highways, stop up private means of access to premises and provide new private means of access to premises.

9. THE COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER

THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (A509 ISHAM BYPASS CLASSIFIED ROAD) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2007

- 9.1 If confirmed, it would authorise Northamptonshire County Council to compulsory purchase the land and rights described in the schedule of the order for the purposes of:-
- ◆ The construction of a highway from the A14 Junction to the B574 Hill Top Road;
 - ◆ The construction of other highways and the improvement of existing highways in the vicinity of the route;
 - ◆ The carrying out of works on watercourses in conjunction with the construction and improvement of the highways;
 - ◆ The provision of new means of access and the carrying out of works on watercourses; and
 - ◆ Mitigating the adverse affect of the classified road and the other highways proposed to be constructed or improved will have on the surroundings thereof.

10. OBJECTIONS

- 10.1 A total of 6 statutory and 70 non-statutory objections to the Orders were received by the end of the objection period. 21 non-statutory objections were in the form of a Standard letter.
- 10.2 Northamptonshire County Council and Atkins have met representatives of all the Statutory Objectors. Discussions and correspondence concerning points of objection have been on-going.

- 10.3 Atkins, on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council, has responded to each non-statutory objector. The responses have summarised the objection points raised and in turn set out facts, opinions and reasons in regard to each of the points.

11. REPRESENTATIONS AND SUPPORTERS

- 11.1 A total of 38 representations in the form of support for an Isham Bypass or in particular support for the proposed A509 Isham Bypass were received by the end of the objection period.

12. CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1 The existing A509 between Kettering and Wellingborough is a busy road that passes through the village of Isham
- 12.2 A bypass would protect the village from the environmental damage caused by traffic, improve safety, reduce community severance and provide a high quality route for through traffic.
- 12.3 The proposed A509 Isham Bypass is widely supported in the community, provides good economic returns, compares favourably in environmental terms and would be effective at taking traffic out of Isham village.
- 12.4 In respect to Engineering, the proposed A509 Isham Bypass would meet all technical design standards and technical advice notes. Geotechnical investigations have identified ground conditions are suitable. A Flood Risk Assessment has determined the impact on the water environment to be only slightly adverse. Proposed structures would minimise severance and they would be sympathetically designed into the landscape. Rights of Way diversions would be minimised whilst ensuring safe crossing provision of the proposed road. Utility services affected by the proposed A509 Isham Bypass would either be diverted or protected in accordance with the operator's requirements.
- 12.5 The proposed A509 Isham Bypass would meet Northamptonshire County Council policies and provide a net environmental benefit to the community.

APPENDICES

Atkins is one of the world's leading providers of professional, technology based consultancy and support services. In recent years, it has expanded from its historical base in traditional engineering, management consultancy and property services into related technological consultancy and the management of outsourced facilities. With over 14,000 staff worldwide, Atkins has enormous expertise, providing both breadth and depth of knowledge in an extremely diverse range of disciplines.

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Atkins
Riverside House
Riverside Way
Northampton
Northamptonshire NN1 5NX

Telephone +44 01604 238100

Fax +44 01604 238111

info@atkinsglobal.com

www.atkinsglobal.com