

A453 Widening M1 Junction 24 to A52 Nottingham

Public Consultation Report

December 2007

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- Advertisement published in Local Press on 23 and 24 May 2007

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

1.1.1 The A453 Trunk Road east of the M1 Motorway is a major route between Nottingham, the M1 and East Midlands Airport, and forms part of the Regional strategic road network. This section of road currently carries between 23,000 and 30,000 vehicles per day. It is severely congested at peak hours with unreliable journey times and a poor safety record and is difficult to maintain.

1.1.2 The proposed improvement scheme, with an approved budget of approximately £90 million, is to widen the A453 between Junction 24 of the M1 and the A52 Nottingham Ring Road. The rural section is to be designed as a dual carriageway and the urban section through Clifton as a four-lane single carriageway (without a central reserve).

1.2 Background

1.2.1 In August 2002 the A453 Multi-Modal Study recommended the dualling of the rural section of the A453 from M1 Junction 24 to The Crusader Roundabout in Clifton and the widening of the carriageway through Clifton to a four lane single carriageway. On 18 May 2004 the Secretary of State announced that the proposal to widen the A453 between M1 Junction 24 and A52 Nottingham in line with the recommendations of the Study and the scheme had been added to the Government's Programme of Major Schemes (then known as the Targeted Programme of Improvements).

1.2.2 The proposed scheme was shown to the public at an Exhibition of Preliminary Proposals in September 2004.

1.3 Purpose of 2007 Consultation

1.3.1 In March 2006 the Highways Agency appointed a contractor, Laing O'Rourke, together with a design agent, White Young Green, to develop the proposals for the A453 widening in more detail.

1.3.2 The Scheme Objectives were:

- To deliver one of the Trunk Road improvements required as part of the 'multi-modal strategy for improving transport links' identified by the A453 Multi-Modal Study.
- To improve journey time reliability and improve safety and accessibility on the A453

1.3.3 Examining the preliminary scheme proposals in more detail, the team identified a number of potential drawbacks to the original proposals. The most significant of these were:

- The earthworks balance showed a considerable excess of material due to the cutting through Brands Hill.
- The dual carriageway on the approach to Crusader would require much of the existing noise bunds and environmental planting to be removed and these could not be replaced. Therefore, wooden noise fences may have been required in order to mitigate some of the impact, and this would be visually intrusive.
- The downhill gradient of a dual carriageway on the approach to Crusader could result in a failure to observe the 40mph limit and an increase in noise levels.
- There was a desire by representatives of non motorised user (NMU) groups to provide a continuous NMU route from Clifton to the M1.
- The proposed alignment of the Barton Lane Diversion was not ideal due to environmental constraints.
- Provision for future access to the Nottingham Express Transit Park and Ride facility to the south of Clifton had not been fully considered.
- There would be capacity problems at Green Lane roundabout from the high number of right turning vehicles traveling towards Ruddington and south Clifton.
- The only access to Barton in Fabis (other than via Manor Road through Thrumpton) would be via Barton Lane from Clifton Lane.
- Access for Fox Covert Lane had not been considered in any detail.
- The buildability and phasing of the Works had not been examined in detail.
- An oak tree with special significance for the area would be put at risk.
- The impact on public utilities apparatus

1.3.4 The team proposed a number of changes to overcome these drawbacks. The most significant of these are as follows:

- The introduction of an 'offline' section between Barton-in-Fabis and Clifton
- Construction of a new roundabout and link road at Mill Hill
- Provision of 4-lane single carriageway road between Mill Hill Roundabout and Farnborough Road Junction rather than between Crusader Roundabout and Farnborough Road Junction
- Closure of the existing Barton Lane junction with the A453

- Creation of a new local road linking Barton and Thrumpton between Mill Hill and West Leake Junction.

1.3.5 The effect of these changes is explained in more detail in section 2.1.

1.3.6 Detailed of the proposals were included in a consultation leaflet which is attached as Appendix B to this report.

1.3.7 The purpose of the Public Consultation was to seek views on the revised proposals from the general public, local authorities and other interested bodies.

1.3.8 During the exhibition, it was made clear to attendees that comments received as a result of the consultation would be carefully considered, and that a report on the consultation would be published. The Highways Agency intends to put the Public Consultation Report onto the Highways Agency website, with hard copies available on request.

1.4 Scope of the Report

1.4.1 This report describes the proposed scheme and the consultation arrangements, and provides information on the responses received.

1.4.2 The report draws conclusions and makes general recommendations on actions to be taken following the Public Consultation.

2.0 PROPOSALS PRESENTED FOR CONSULTATION

2.1 Details of Proposed Scheme

Rural Section

- 2.1.1 The 9km of improved highway between M1 Junction 24 and the proposed new roundabout near Mill Hill on the edge of Clifton would be a dual 2-lane carriageway road with a 70mph speed limit. The widening would generally follow the line and level of the existing road, though there would be works required outside the existing highway boundary associated with the earthworks necessary to construct additional carriageway and implement environmental mitigation.
- 2.1.2 Carriageway widening would mainly be on the south side of the existing road. Existing bridges over the A453 at Long Lane and Thrumpton would be extended, and new bridges would be built alongside existing structures on the A453 to accommodate the additional carriageway.
- 2.1.3 A new grade separated junction at Ratcliffe-on-Soar (Parkway) would provide access to the proposed Parkway Railway Station and Kegworth. The layout of the junction is slightly different from the indicative layout shown at the 2004 exhibition. The reasons for this change are to comply with current design standards for highway alignment.
- 2.1.4 A full grade-separated junction would also be provided at West Leake Junction, which is the principal access for HGVs to the Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station. This differs from the proposal shown at the 2004 exhibition which showed a lower standard, compact grade separated junction. The latest traffic figures are higher than the limit for a compact junction and this means that a full standard junction would be necessary.
- 2.1.5 Between Barton in Fabis (Manor Road Junction) and the new Mill Hill roundabout on edge of Clifton, the new A453 dual carriageway would be constructed off-line up to 200m to the south of the existing road. The land here is lower and a more favourable earthworks balance can be achieved, saving thousands of lorry movements to and from the site. The road in this location would be more visible from the south and east but would provide drivers with a view of the landscape rather than the bottom of a cutting. Mill Hill roundabout will be in cutting between 1.5 and 3.5 m deep and will be visible from some locations especially at night when it will be lit.
- 2.1.6 The old A453 would be de-trunked and a short new section built to connect with Barton Lane (Thrumpton). This would create a new local road connecting West Leake Junction with the Mill Hill Roundabout, thus improving accessibility for local residents, farmers, walkers, cyclists and horse riders. This differs from the proposal shown at the 2004 exhibition which showed the dual carriageway along the route of the existing A453.

- 2.1.7 A new road would link the new Mill Hill Roundabout with Clifton Lane/Nottingham Road. Mill Hill Roundabout and the new Link Road were not proposed as part of the scheme at the 2004 exhibition. The main reason for including them as part of the current proposals is that the traffic model indicates that a right turn is required before Crusader Roundabout, otherwise the Green Lane junction will reach capacity soon after construction. The Link Road provides Barton/Gotham traffic with a replacement for the loss of Barton Lane and could also provide access to the proposed NET 'Park and Ride' scheme.
- 2.1.8 The existing junction of Barton Lane with the A453 would be closed and an underpass provided for use by non-motorised users and as a private means of access for the landowners. This differs from the proposal shown at the 2004 exhibition which showed an all purpose compact grade separated junction. Traffic counts showing relatively few vehicles turning into/out of Barton Lane prompted a re-think about the need for a junction, especially since the high traffic flows on the main road would have necessitated an expensive full-standard junction. Access to Barton in Fabis could be provided more safely and conveniently (albeit with a slight increase in journey times between Barton and Gotham) by using the new local road connecting with the A453 at Mill Hill.

Urban Section

- 2.1.9 The 2.5km of improved highway between Mill Hill Roundabout and Farnborough Road Junction would be a 4-lane single carriageway road with street lighting and a 40mph speed limit. The widening would generally follow the line and level of the existing road, though there would be some works required outside the existing highway boundary. This differs from the proposal shown at the 2004 exhibition which showed the dual carriageway extending past Mill Hill to Crusader Roundabout and a 4-lane single carriageway road between Crusader Roundabout and Farnborough Road Junction. The reason for this change is that the wider cross section and more stringent horizontal and vertical alignment of a dual carriageway would have resulted in the loss of existing mature planting and noise bunds. This would have had a detrimental impact on the environment for local residents. Also, it was considered that a dual carriageway on the downhill approach to Crusader Roundabout could have posed speed-related safety problems, especially without a roundabout at Mill Hill.
- 2.1.10 The existing Crusader Roundabout would be provided with full time traffic signal control.
- 2.1.11 A full time traffic signalised roundabout would be provided at Green Lane Junction. Land to the south of the junction would be used to construct the enlarged roundabout thus avoiding the Village Green to the north.
- 2.1.12 A traffic signalised junction, providing all movements except for a right turn out, would improve access to Nottingham Trent University. This junction was not proposed as part of the scheme at the 2004 exhibition. The reason for including this as part of the current

proposals is that traffic coming from Nottingham would otherwise have to perform a 'U turn' manoeuvre at Green Lane Junction to gain access because of the right turn ban. This would have caused capacity problems at Green Lane Junction which would only have been overcome by designing a bigger junction with an additional adverse impact on this Village Green.

- 2.1.13 A full time traffic signalised roundabout would be provided at Farnborough Road Junction.
- 2.1.14 Traffic signal controlled crossings would be provided for pedestrians and cyclists at each roundabout (except Mill Hill) and a stand-alone crossing provided at the Man of Trent public house. Bus laybys and bus stops would be provided at appropriate locations.
- 2.1.15 From Mill Hill to the Crusader Roundabout, NMUs would use a combination of new and existing routes. The existing provision for pedestrians and cyclists to the north of the existing carriageway between Green Lane Junction and Farnborough Road Junction would be improved and extended westwards to provide a link between Green Lane Roundabout and Crusader Roundabout.
- 2.1.16 The Four Winds and Baird House care homes, which currently have direct access from the A453, would be provided with an alternative access from within Clifton Estate.

3.0 CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Reports Issued

3.1.1 As part of the consultation process, details of the scheme proposals were issued to Statutory Consultees and other stakeholders, inviting comments and feedback and offering the opportunity for further consultation. These included illustrative design drawings, assessments of environmental issues and effects on the surroundings, and details of transport forecasting. Details of reports and notes issued, together with a note of comments and issues raised, are shown in Appendix A.

3.1.2 Responses from Consultees are summarised in Section 4 of this report.

3.2 Public Consultation Leaflet and Comment Sheet

3.2.1 A Public Consultation leaflet was prepared containing information on the scheme proposals, together with details of the exhibition dates and venues. A copy of the leaflet can be seen in Appendix B.

3.2.2 The leaflet contained contact details for the Highways Agency. These consisted of postal address, telephone number, and email and website addresses.

3.2.3 Comment sheets were made available at the Public Exhibitions for visitors to complete and hand in at the time or take away and return to the Highways Agency with their comments on the scheme proposals.

3.2.4 Comments sheets also included questions to provide the Highways Agency with feedback from members of the public relating to the clarity of information shown at the Public Exhibitions, and the helpfulness of the Project Team in answering any questions.

3.2.5 Approximately 15,000 copies of the consultation leaflet were delivered by hand to all residential and business addresses in the distribution area between 23 May and 25 May 2007. The distribution area is shown in Appendix C, and covered the communities listed below.

- Barton-in-Fabis
- Clifton
- Gotham
- Kegworth
- Kingston-on-Soar
- Ratcliffe-on-Soar
- Thrumpton

3.2.6 In addition, leaflets were posted to Members of Parliament, Members of European Parliament, Local Authorities, Statutory Consultees, other stakeholders and local landowners (please see Appendix D).

3.2.7 Leaflets were also delivered to a number of deposit points. Further details are shown in Appendix C.

3.2.8 The approximate numbers of leaflets delivered to various parties prior to the exhibitions are shown in Table 1 below.

Recipient	Approximate numbers of leaflets delivered
General Public	15,000
Deposit Points	500
Stakeholders including MPs, MEPs, etc	400
Total	15,900

Table 1 - Leaflet Distribution Prior to Public Exhibitions

3.3 Further Advertising

3.3.1 The Public Exhibitions were advertised as follows:

- Highways Agency website for the A453 Widening Scheme
- Highways Agency press notice (issued on 23rd May 2007)
- Formal invitation to attend a preview of the Public Exhibitions sent to Members of Parliament, Local Councillors, the Emergency Services and other key stakeholders
- Advertisements in the Nottingham Topper (23rd May 2007) and the Nottingham Evening Post & Nottingham Recorder (24th May 2007).
- Coverage on local radio (following issue of the Highways Agency Press Notice)
- Notices put up at the exhibition venues on the days of the exhibition
- Posters put up at locations detailed in Appendix C of the report.

3.3.2 The Public Exhibitions were the subject of television coverage on the BBC (East Midlands Today) and Central TV (Central Tonight) on 6 June 2007.

3.3.3 Further details on the advertising of the Public Exhibitions are shown in Appendix D.

3.4 Public Exhibition

- 3.4.1 Public Exhibitions were held on 6, 8 and 9 June 2007. Details of the numbers of visitors to exhibitions are shown in Table 2. The exhibitions were attended by staff from the Highways Agency, Laing O'Rourke, White Young Green, Pell Frischmann and AMScott (Managing Agent Contractor for the A453), who were available to answer questions on the proposals from members of the public.
- 3.4.2 Details of exhibition venues are included within the Public Consultation Leaflet shown in Appendix B.
- 3.4.3 The scheme proposals were shown at the Public Exhibitions with a combination of drawings and descriptive text. Material displayed at the exhibition is shown in Appendix E and photographs showing some of the display at the Public Exhibitions in Appendix G. It should be noted that the proposals displayed were based on preliminary design development and could, therefore, be subject to change as detailed design progresses.
- 3.4.4 A preliminary three-dimensional visualisation was also shown at the exhibitions. This consisted of a virtual reality drive-through of the scheme proposals, which was displayed on a large television screen running on a continuous loop. This was well received and proved popular with visitors to the exhibitions.
- 3.4.5 Prior to the opening of the Public Exhibition on Wednesday 6 June 2007, a Preview Exhibition was held for Local Councillors and invitees at which Highways Agency, Laing O'Rourke, White Young Green, Pell Frischmann and AMScott staff were available to explain the proposals and answer questions. A list of invitees to the preview exhibition is shown in Appendix D.
- 3.4.6 Copies of the Public Consultation leaflet were made available at the exhibitions. There was also the facility for members of the public to make written comments, or request that a member of the exhibition staff recorded their views.
- 3.4.7 There were 28 visitors to the Preview Exhibition. The total number of visitors who attended the exhibitions excluding the Preview Exhibition was 783, representing approximately 5.1% of the number of leaflets distributed (15,400). The level of attendance was generally in line with expectations.
- 3.4.8 During the exhibition at Clifton, a small group of protesters handed out leaflets containing text opposing the construction of new roads and advertising an international day of action against climate change.
- 3.4.9 The weather on all three days of the exhibition was dry and sunny.

Venue	Date	Opening Times	Number of Visitors
Kegworth Whitehouse Hotel Packington Hill Kegworth Leicestershire DE74 2DF	Wednesday 6 June 2007	Preview Exhibition 10.00am - 1.00pm	28
		2.00pm - 8.00pm	133
Clifton Leisure Centre Southchurch Drive Clifton Nottinghamshire NG11 8AB	Friday 8 June 2007	10.00am - 8.00pm	401
	Saturday 9 June 2007	10.00am - 4.00pm	249
Total Number of Visitors			811
Total Number of Visitors Excluding Preview Exhibition			783

Table 2 - Public Consultation Exhibitions

3.5 Consultation Period

3.5.1 The closing date for receipt of comments resulting from the Public Consultation was 23 July 2007. This date was stated on the Public Consultation leaflet, giving a period of 6 weeks from the date of the final Public Exhibition during which responses could be made. However, all comments received by the Highways Agency before 31 August 2007 have been considered within the report.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

4.1 Responses from the Public

4.1.1 There were 783 visitors to the Public Exhibitions, excluding the Preview (please see breakdown at Table 2). Exhibition staff recorded 31 comments and visitors left 148 completed comment sheets at the exhibitions.

4.1.2 217 further written responses were received following the exhibitions up to 31 August 2007, plus a verbal response from the Environment Agency (see paragraph 4.2.2). 194 of these responses were received from members of the public. The breakdown of responses received from the public is as follows:

- 73 comment sheets
- 43 letters
- 72 responses via email
- 6 responses via the Highways Agency Information Line (HAIL)

4.1.3 A breakdown of written responses received from the public by geographical location is as follows:

Location	Number of Respondents
Barton-in-Fabis	72
Clifton	105
Gotham	28
Kegworth	11
Kingston-on-Soar	1
Ratcliffe-on-Soar	5
Ruddington	12
Silverdale	9
Thrumpton	11
Other	67
Address not given	21

Total	342
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4.1.4 3 responses were received from the statutory environmental consultees together with 20 responses from local authorities, the emergency services and other organisations.

4.1.5 Overall Assessment of Comments

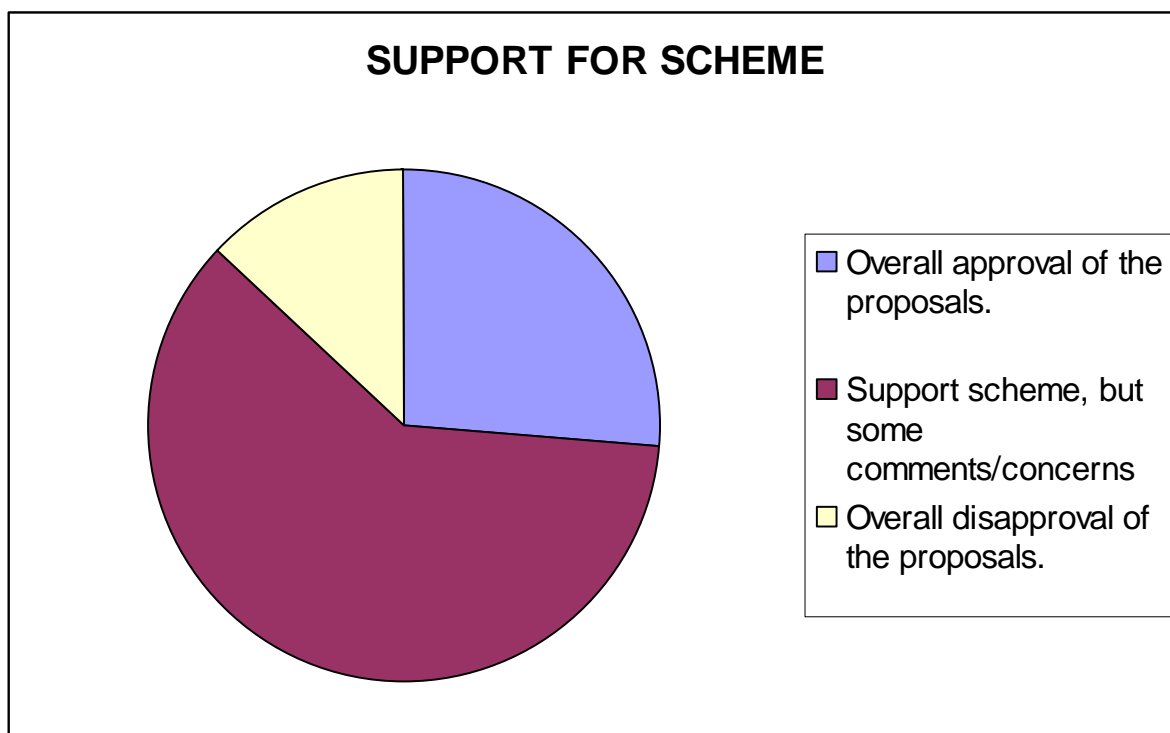
4.1.6 A high-level summary of comments is shown below in three main categories:

1. Overall support scheme
2. Support scheme, but have some comments/concerns
3. Overall oppose scheme.

96 respondents expressed overall approval of the proposals.

221 supported scheme, but had some comments/concerns

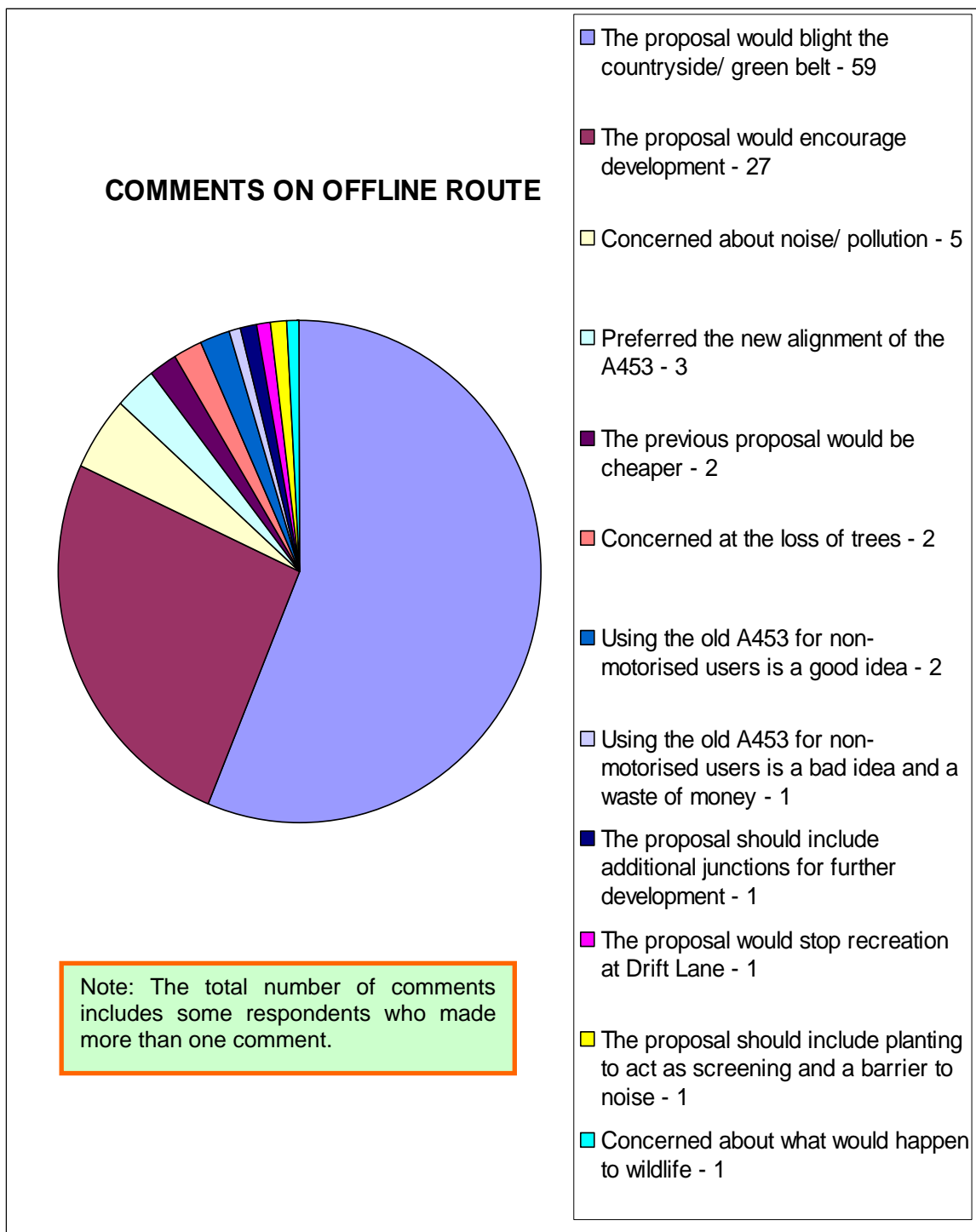
48 respondents expressed overall disapproval of the proposals.



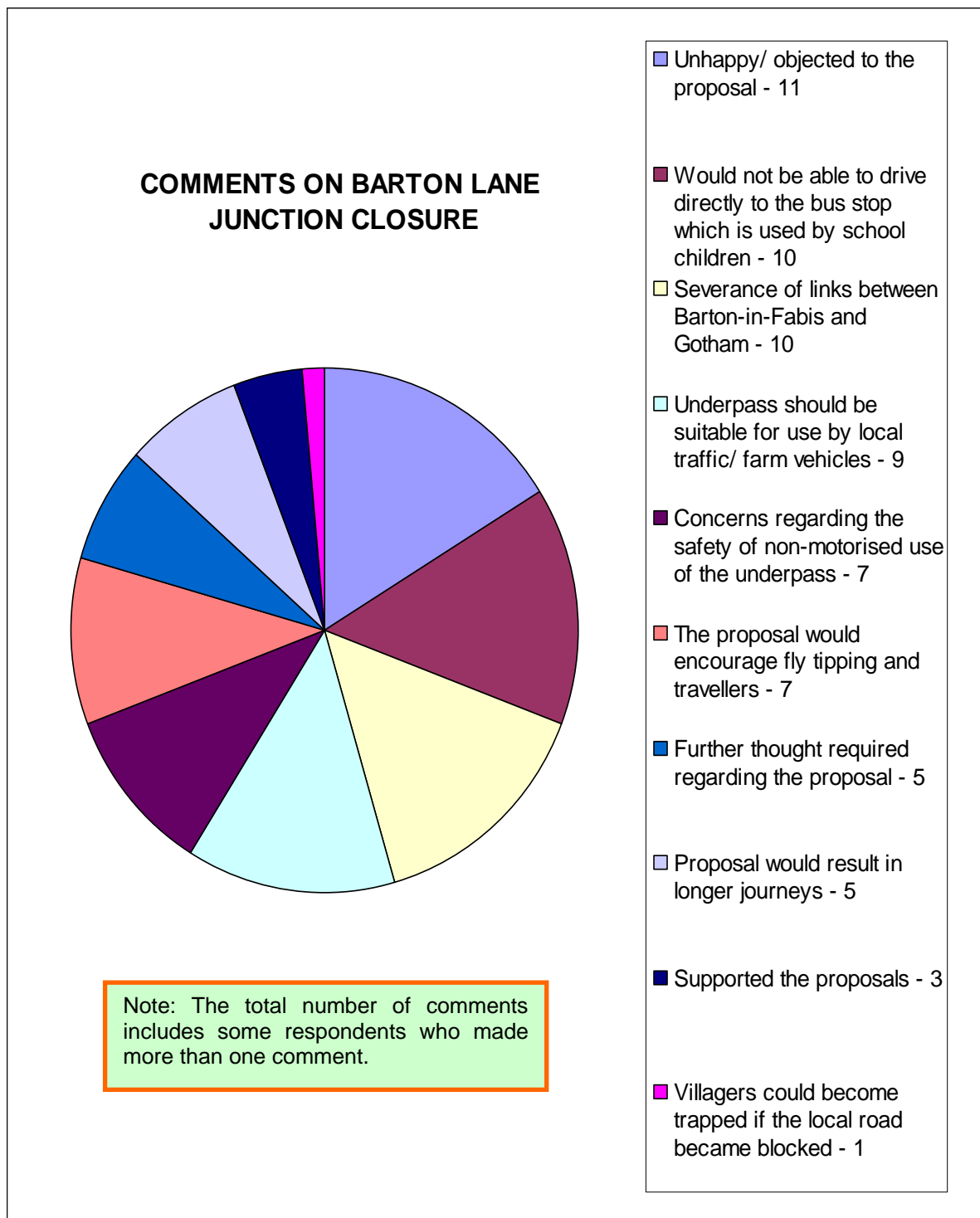
4.1.9 Comments on Major Changes

Three major changes to the original design were identified

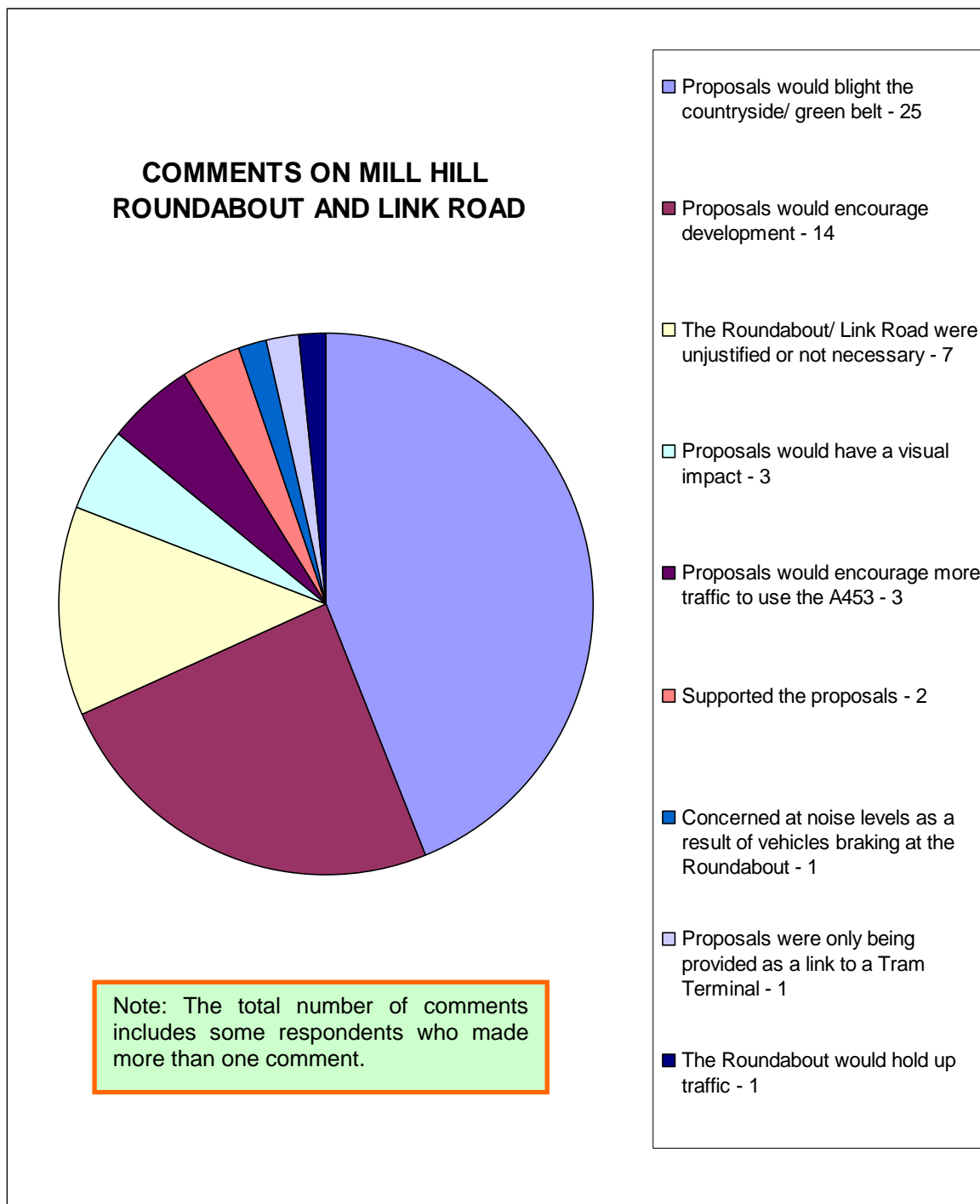
4.1.10 **Off-line Route** - 73 respondents commented regarding the proposed off-line section of the A453 between Barton Lodge and Clifton. A summary of the main issues of concern expressed in these comments is contained in the pie chart below.



4.1.11 **Barton Lane junction closure** - 53 respondents commented regarding the proposal to close the Barton Lane junction with the A453 and provide a non-motorised user underpass. A summary of the main issues of concern expressed in these comments is contained in the pie chart below.



4.1.12 **Mill Hill Roundabout / Link Road** - 41 respondents commented regarding the proposed Mill Hill Roundabout/ Link Road. A summary of the main issues of concern expressed in these comments is contained in the pie chart below.



4.2 Responses from Statutory Consultees and Local Authorities

The responses of statutory environmental consultees and local authorities are summarised below:

4.2.1 English Heritage

English Heritage drew attention to the Roman Villa at Glebe Farm, and commented that there may be other important archaeology within the scheme site that may be directly affected. They also noted that the proposed grade-separated junction at Ratcliffe-on-Soar might have an adverse impact on the setting of listed buildings in the area and asked us to reconsider the off-line section.

4.2.2 Environment Agency

The Environment Agency did not provide any written comments, but verbally confirmed that they would formally comment when the widening scheme proposals had been developed in sufficient detail.

4.2.3 Natural England

Natural England confirmed that they had been involved in informal discussions with the Highways Agency, and looked forward to being consulted over the complete Environmental Statement for the scheme in due course.

4.2.4 Nottinghamshire County Council

The County Council expressed their support for the scheme and urged the Highways Agency to implement the improvements at the earliest possible opportunity. They requested that the Highways Agency incorporate appropriate environmental mitigation measures into the scheme to minimise any residual adverse impacts. The Council also requested that the Highways Agency liaise with them to implement a suitable traffic management system across the wider road network to protect communities in the vicinity of the A453 from the adverse effects of traffic seeking to avoid delays associated with the widening scheme.

4.2.5 Leicestershire County Council

The County Council requested that the widening scheme proposals have regard to the currently adopted 'Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan (1996 to 2016)', and provided a list of the policies they consider relevant to the proposals. They confirmed that development of the scheme should also have regard to the following publications:

- The authority's 'Highways, Transportation and Development' guidance
- The 'Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Leicestershire (2006-2011)'
- The objectives and guidelines in the Trent Valley section of the 'Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy'

- Existing mineral and waste policies in the 'Mineral Local Plan' and 'Waste Local Plan'

4.2.6 Nottingham City Council

The City Council expressed their support for the majority of the scheme within the Urban Section and for the off-line solution. They also identified that further dialogue would be required regarding bus stops, bus shelters, real time information displays, CCTV, traffic management strategy during construction and impact on the local community during construction. They suggested ongoing dialogue with planning authorities on the likely impacts of development options south of Nottingham.

4.2.7 Rushcliffe Borough Council

The Borough Council expressed support for a number of elements of the scheme including the off-line solution. They commented that noise and visual impact on Ratcliffe-on-Soar should be mitigated, and traffic through local villages minimised during construction. The Council suggested that construction material should be locally sourced where possible, and requested assurances that school buses would be able to continue operating during construction as well as after completion of the scheme. They also commented on the impact of the scheme on the landscape, trees and woodlands, and the need for appropriate mitigation.

4.3 Response from Emergency Services

The one response received from the emergency services is summarised below:

4.3.1 Nottinghamshire Police

The Police were concerned that the four lane single carriageway in the Urban Section could lead to accidents and illegal vehicle manoeuvres, and suggested that this part of the road should be dual carriageway. They expressed concern regarding enforcement of the proposed 40mph speed limit in the vicinity of Mill Hill and asked if the 'old' A453 could be used as a diversion route in the event that there was an incident on the dual carriageway necessitating closure of one of the carriageways.

4.4 Responses from Other Bodies and Groups

The responses received from other bodies and groups are summarised below:

4.4.1 East Midlands Regional Assembly

The East Midlands Regional Assembly commented that they supported the scheme proposals, and urged the Highways Agency to take account of future public transport provision in the scheme design.

4.4.2 Gotham Parish Council

The Parish Council expressed overall support for the scheme. However, they objected to the off-line solution and in particular to the Mill Hill Roundabout and Link Road as not being

justified in traffic terms. They were against the loss of the connection with Barton-in-Fabis via Barton Lane. Concern was raised regarding noise and visual impact on the village and the effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures.

4.4.3 Ratcliffe on Soar Parish Meeting

The Parish Meeting requested that traffic noise levels adjacent to Ratcliffe on Soar be monitored and controlled to an acceptable level. They also requested that pedestrian and cycleway provision across the A453 at Ratcliffe-on-Soar (Parkway) Junction be extended through the village alongside the River Soar and that the cycleway from Long Lane be continued to the M1/ A453 junction. The Parish Meeting also called for footpaths from Ratcliffe village to Cedar Isle and Warren Lane to have a direct connection to the bridleway linking Long Lane and Kegworth.

4.4.4 Thrumpton Parish Meeting

The Parish Meeting were unconvinced that significant improvements in journey times into Nottingham will be achieved by the scheme and expressed concern regarding future development along the A453. They requested that the scheme includes extensive landscaping, low noise road surfacing and measures to minimise light pollution. The Parish Meeting also expressed concern regarding impact on the landscape, rat-running, the link road to Gotham and non-motorised users.

4.4.5 Kingston-on Soar Parish Council

The Parish Council welcomed the widening scheme, but expressed concern regarding potential for increased traffic through the village during construction and during road closures for maintenance. The Parish Council also expressed concern regarding traffic noise levels, traffic speeds, 'rat-running' and pedestrian safety, and requested details of mitigation proposals.

4.4.6 Barton in Fabis Parish Council

The Parish Council recognised that there was no consensus locally about the published proposals but expressed the hope that the final proposals would attract support. They listed points made in favour and against the proposals. Points in favour included the minimising of disruption during construction, safe access to and from the village, local environmental benefits including the prevention of 'rat-running' and improved traffic flow. Points against included local environmental impacts including intrusion into the Green Belt, and concerns over pedestrian safety, severance and farm access.

4.4.7 Nobel Road Tenants and Residents Association (NORDTRA - Clifton)

NORDTRA expressed concern regarding forward visibility for drivers approaching the proposed roundabout at Mill Hill. They also expressed concern regarding light pollution from the roundabout, and the impact it would have on the environment. NORDTRA also suggested alternative proposals for various elements of the widening scheme.

4.4.8 Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust considered that it would not be appropriate to implement the widening scheme in isolation before delivery of the significant public transport recommendations of the Multi Modal Study, given that the scheme would result in increased CO2 emissions. They questioned the safety justification for the scheme and objected to the construction of new highway on Greenbelt and Greenfield land. The Trust confirmed that they expected the Highways Agency to provide a 10:1 ratio of habitats created to habitats lost on the basis that created habitats would be poorer in quality for a considerable number of years.

4.4.9 Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE - Rushcliffe Group of Nottinghamshire CPRE)

CPRE expressed overall support for the scheme, but commented that the length of off-line new road proposed is far longer than was included in the 2004 proposals which increases the environmental effects. They feel strongly that the widening scheme should remain on-line. CPRE also expressed concern regarding the impact Mill Hill Roundabout and Link Road would have on the landscape.

4.4.10 Nottingham Trent University

The University lodged a holding objection to the proposals, although they explained that they fully understood the pressing need to upgrade the A453. Their main concern was potential loss of land and vegetation along the University frontage. The University had commissioned consultants to advise on the treatment of the Campus frontage in the event of A453 widening. They sought reassurance that the Campus frontage would be treated in accordance with their consultant's recommendations. The University also commented that they were satisfied that the A453 widening proposals would allow a more satisfactory means of access to land under their ownership to the rear of Barton Green estate.

4.4.11 Pedals (Nottingham Cycling Campaign)

Pedals generally supported the scheme proposals subject to a 40mph speed limit on the detrunked redundant section of the A453 west of Mill Hill Roundabout, as well as enforced cycle lanes, good cycle signing and good quality/ additional cycling facilities.

4.4.12 Empower

Empower confirmed that their 'Overhead Line Training School' would be affected by the widening scheme and sought assurance that the Highways Agency would reimburse all costs associated with constructing a new training facility.

4.4.13 E.ON

E.ON confirmed that they do not object to the scheme and commented on diversion works required to E.ON apparatus affected by the widening proposals.

4.4.14 Fujitsu Telecommunications

Fujitsu Telecommunications were unaware of any plant or services supported by Fujitsu in the area affected by the widening proposals.

4.4.15 National Grid

National Grid confirmed there was a high risk that their apparatus would be affected by the A453 Widening Scheme and supplied plans showing the approximate locations of their apparatus.

4.4.16 Severn Trent Water

Severn Trent stated that neither their water distribution apparatus nor their public sewers will be affected by the A453 Widening proposals; however it will be necessary to adjust the finished level of any surface boxes that are affected, it is also possible that reduction in existing levels may result in conflict with apparatus such as valve spindles or tops of hydrants.

4.4.17 Trafficmaster Plc

Trafficmaster Plc confirmed that they have traffic monitoring equipment on the existing A453 between Nottingham and M1 Junction 24 and that they would like to establish the same equipment to cover the new route of the A453. They requested drawings showing the scheme proposals and contact details of persons with whom they should liaise regarding installation of new equipment.

4.5 Further Information Issued by the Highways Agency

4.5.1 There were a number of comments raised, and questions directly asked, that required individual written replies. Furthermore, 34 of the consultation responses requested copies of plans or other items displayed at the exhibitions. Therefore, in addition to sending written acknowledgements of responses, the Highways Agency has replied as appropriate to respondents' specific comments, questions and requests for information.

5. ISSUES RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

The main comments received from the public have been broken down into categories below. A brief summary of the key issues raised is also included.

5.1 Off-line Section

- 5.1.1 73 consultation responses were received regarding the off-line section [see 4.1.10 above]. Furthermore, 3 consultation responses commented that describing the new 'off-line' section of the A453 as 'widening' was misleading, and that it was in fact a new road across Green Belt land.

5.2 Closing Barton Lane Junction to Vehicular Traffic

- 5.2.1 53 comments were made on the proposals to close the existing Barton Lane junction with the A453 to vehicular traffic. 3 consultation responses supported the proposals for closure of the existing junction. [See 4.1.11 above.]

5.3 Proposed Mill Hill Roundabout

- 5.3.1 41 comments received on the proposed Mill Hill Roundabout. [See 4.1.12 above.]

5.4 Environment

- 5.4.1 103 consultation responses raised concerns regarding the impact on the environment. The main issues raised were:

- The off-line section of the A453 cutting through open Green Belt land resulting in loss of farmland, wildlife, trees and views of the countryside.
- The impact of Mill Hill Roundabout and Link Road on the landscape.
- Road surface noise and vibration.
- Light pollution.
- Vehicle emissions.

5.5 Non-motorised Users (NMUs)

5.5.1 29 respondents comments on NMU facilities' need to be improved and generally support the revised proposes. Several would still like to see better segregation and the route provision continuing to M1 Junction 24.

5.6 Public Transport and Integrated Transport

5.6.1 17 comments were made on Public Transport and Integrated Transport, some saying the scheme should not be implemented in isolation and others opposing the Nottingham Express Transit..

5.7 Farnborough Road Junction and A52

5.7.1 27 comments received on the proposals Farnborough Road Junction and A52 .

5.8 Proposed Footway/Cycleway at Thymus Walk

5.8.1 7 consultation responses raised concerns regarding the potential for the proposed footway/ cycleway at Thymus Walk to be used for anti-social behaviour. (Thymus Walk is a cul-de-sac accessed from Linden Avenue just north of Crusader Roundabout.)

5.9 Silverdale Junction

5.9.1 23 consultation responses commented regarding existing severe traffic congestion at Silverdale Junction, and concerns that improving the A453 would result in additional congestion. 8 of the 23 consultation responses made suggestions regarding measures to reduce congestion at the junction.

5.10 Clifton Bypass

5.10.1 4 consultation responses supported a bypass of Clifton in preference to the A453 Widening Scheme.

5.11 Opening up Land for Development

5.11.1 29 consultation responses included comments that the off-line section of the A453 and Mill Hill Roundabout/ Link Road gave rise to potential for future development.

5.12 Traffic, Traffic Signals and Safety

5.12.1 52 commented on traffic, traffic signals and safety. Main issues raised were as follows:

- The number of pedestrian crossings and traffic signals proposed along the Urban Section of the A453 would increase rather than decrease congestion.
- Accidents as a result of a central reservation and barrier not being provided in the Urban Section.
- Existing 'rat-running' and whether this would be alleviated by the widening scheme.
- Vehicle emissions.

5.12.2 4 consultation responses suggested the use of speed cameras to enforce a 40mph speed limit along the Urban Section.

5.13 Disruption and Impact During Construction

5.13.1 10 comments regarding potential disruption during construction. Main issues raised were as follows:

- Construction traffic using local roads.
- Increased traffic load caused by traffic diverting through villages to avoiding roadworks on the A453 (HGVs in particular).

5.14 Other General Issues

Other general issues raised are summarised as follows:

- 38 respondents provided general comments on the proposals for the Rural Section of the A453 between M1 Junction 24 and Mill Hill Roundabout.
- 24 respondents provided general comments on the proposals for the Urban Section of the A453 between Mill Hill Roundabout and the A52.
- 2 comments on the proposed Nottingham Trent University junction.
- 7 comments on the proposals between Green Lane Junction and Farnborough Road Junction.
- 6 comments on the proposals between Mill Hill Roundabout and Crusader Roundabout.
- 4 respondents commented on the proposals between Crusader Roundabout and Green Lane Junction.
- 6 respondents commented on property and compensation.
- 46 respondents made other comments.

5.15 Miscellaneous

5.15.1 There were no specific comments regarding the proposal to extend the single 4-lane carriageway to Mill Hill.

5.15.2 Some of the concerns and issues raised by visitors could not be fully addressed given the early stage of scheme development. For example, environmental effects and mitigation principles were discussed in the leaflet and on the exhibition panels, although, due to the early stage of the scheme, this information was only given in general terms, such as the provision of noise fencing and/or the use of low-noise surfacing where appropriate.

5.15.3 There were no written comments regarding the proposed changes to Ratcliffe-on-Soar (Parkway) and West Leake Junctions. However, verbal comments were made on the increased impact on landscape with the larger footprint of West Leake Junction.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 A total of 811 visitors attended the exhibitions, including the Preview. The Highways Agency received a total of 396 responses to the public consultation, the majority from local residents.

6.2 The exhibitions gave the public the opportunity to gain information about the scheme, in particular the changes since the last exhibition in 2004, and to comment on the latest proposals. The level of public attendance at the exhibitions and the number of responses received suggest that the consultation achieved its object.

6.3 **The majority of** respondents to the consultation expressed general support for the widening proposals and believed that improvements to the existing A453 were necessary. However, most respondents had comments or concerns relating to specific elements of the scheme. About 12% of the responses expressed overall disapproval of the proposals.

6.4 Four issues dominated the comments from the public:

- Impact on the environment, particularly the off-line section of the A453 cutting through open Green Belt land, resulting in loss of farmland, wildlife, trees and views of the countryside.
- The impact of Mill Hill Roundabout and Link Road on the landscape.
- Future development as a result of the off-line section of the A453 and Mill Hill Roundabout and Link Road.
- Closure of the existing junction of Barton Lane with the A453.

6.5 Other issues which generated a number of comments included:

- Proposed footway/ cycleway at Thymus Walk.
- Congestion at Silverdale Junction.
- Support for a Clifton Bypass in preference to the A453 Widening Scheme.
- Traffic signals, road safety and 'rat-running'.
- Disruption to villages in the vicinity of the A453 during construction of the widening scheme.

6.6 The various issues raised in response to the public consultation have been, and will continue to be, carefully considered by the Highways Agency during the further development of the widening proposals. All respondents to the consultation, along with all others affected by or with an interest in the proposals, will have the opportunity to see and comment further on the scheme when draft Orders and the Environmental Statement are published later in 2008.

6.7 The Highways Agency will consider separately the question of a possible improvement scheme at Silverdale Junction.

APPENDIX A

Reports issued to Statutory Consultees

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APPENDIX B
Public Consultation Leaflet

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APPENDIX C

Leaflet Distribution Area & Deposit Points

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APPENDIX D

Further advertising:

- **Highways Agency Press Notice published on 23 May 2007**
- **Advertisement published in Local Press on 23 and 24 May 2007**

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APPENDIX E
Public Exhibition Display Material

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APPENDIX F

Comments received from the Public

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APPENDIX G

Public Exhibition Photographs

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