

Middleton-cum-Fordley Parish Council

Issue Specific Hearing 12: Community, Amenity and Recreational, Human

Post-hearing submission

23 September 2021



Middleton cum Fordley Parish Council (MCFPC) was represented at Issue Specific Hearing 12 on September 15, 2021 by Julian Cusack, the Chair of the Council.

This post-hearing submission presents an edited transcript of his remarks at the hearing.

B1122 Mitigation

While we appreciate that Theberton is a larger settlement than Middleton Moor I would note that so far, there has not been the same level of engagement with Middleton Parish Council on mitigation of issues on the B1122 in the early years. We would welcome a meeting in due course with Mr. Steven Merry (SCC) and EDF on that subject if that was to be made available.

There are a number of residential properties along the southern edge of the B1122 which have very little room between the exits from their properties and the carriageway. We are concerned that with an increased level of traffic in the early years, it will be even more difficult for people to exit those properties in vehicles or on foot. We are therefore looking to find constructive ways to mitigate those issues, which may include some or all of measures drawn from the following list:

- speed limit reductions, maybe to 20 miles per hour
- a pedestrian crossing
- realignment of the carriageway
- provision of footways
- 'gateways' marking the entrance to or from Middleton Moor making it clear that this is a residential area.

Although, these issues have yet to be discussed with Middleton Parish Council they have been discussed, I understand, with the B1122 Action Group, which is good, but we'd certainly like to have engagement on those issues as soon as possible.

Fordley Road - increased risk of rat-running/denial of access

We are concerned about the risks to health and well-being caused by rat-running. This is the concern that disruption on the A12 could result in diversion of vehicles through Kelsale and then on into Middleton along Fordley Road past existing properties, the residents of which fear that they would have their access blocked for significant periods of time on a frequent basis.

At the Hearing, we heard earlier from Kirsty McMullen, on behalf of the Applicant, a well-rehearsed rebuttal of the rat-running fear, but that again focused on SZC's control of its own contracted vehicles and drivers. Some residents are sceptical about the effectiveness of that control. But our remaining and residual concern is not so much that SZC workers or SZC related traffic will rat-run through Kelsale and Middleton but that non SZC-related drivers obstructed by congestion or accidents on the A12 will do so. This happens very occasionally at present, but our concern is that

this will happen on a more frequent basis because we expect congestion incidents on the A12 will be much more significant and more frequent than they are now. So far, we've not really heard any convincing rebuttal to our fears about rat-running of this nature and in particular, the fears that certain properties, particularly those closest to Middleton could find access blocked for emergency vehicles, for significant periods of time on many days of the year during the construction period.

This is already causing anxiety and concern to our residents. We therefore do look forward to having further constructive discussions with the Applicant and the County Council about how these issues may be resolved.

Connectivity across the route of the SLR

It is a significant part of the way of life of our Parish to make journeys along, particularly Fordley Road, but also Hawthorn and Littlemoor Roads to a lesser extent. But the current proposals in the draft DCO would block up that connectivity on all these three routes. This is a particular concern for Fordley Road, which is the most used of these. Under the current proposals it would be stopped up on the north side of the SLR and therefore continuity not just for vehicles, but also for pedestrians and cyclists would be prevented. Furthermore, while the majority view of Fordley Road residents, and the Council's view, is that that road should be kept open, the worst-case scenario, is that it is closed on one side, but not on the other, which we believe would exacerbate the rat-running problem while not providing through-routes for any traffic. This is the configuration currently proposed by the Applicant.

Engagement with the Applicant

These interrelated comments all address the issue of the Community impact and well-being of our residents. So far there has been a lack or a perceived lack of effective engagement with us by the Applicant and by Suffolk County Council.

Specifically, there has been lack of engagement with:

- (1) Middleton Parish Council on early years mitigation along the B1122 through Middleton Moor
- (2) Residents of Fordley Road in respect of their concerns about rat-running and its health and security consequences
- (3) Residents of Hawthorn Road and owners of agricultural land accessed from Hawthorn Road on the consequences for their access of this road being stopped up on the north side of the SLR.