

## **A428 BLACK CAT TO CAXTON GIBBET**

### **Submission by Great Gransden Parish Council on Highways England's proposals of March 2017**

#### **GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL SUPPORTS THE ORANGE ROUTE.**

#### **Introduction and Summary**

1. Great Gransden is a village located 2 miles south of the A428 between St Neots and Cambourne. It has a population in excess of 1000.
2. It is a community directly affected over many years by the congestion problems arising on the A428. Great Gransden residents have put much thought into considering which of the Proposals would be the best solution to the current issues, also faced by other villages such as this along the route.
3. To avoid the morning traffic jams on the A428 over 400 vehicles go through our village in less than 2 hours. Most of this is local traffic commuting to Cambourne or Cambridge. In the evening the situation is repeated in reverse.
4. Prior to the publication of your Proposals a local public meeting on this issue was attended by 63 residents. Post publication a further very useful question and answer session with Highways England was held in Great Gransden and attended by 153 local people who made their views clear.
5. The position of the Great Gransden Parish Council is determined by the above.
6. As a result of these public consultations, the Parish Council gained the overwhelming view that the proposed Orange Route would be the best solution to the problems incurred by the A428 congestion. It is also the one preferred by the whole community.
7. In relation to the Black Cat Roundabout proposals, the Council believes that the A Option is the one that would best serve the needs of the area to the east of the Great Ouse, although Option C would be supported. The problem of rat-running through St Neots would not be solved by the B option, and could be worsened.
8. The reasons for our views are given below:

#### **Reasons for Supporting the Orange Route:**

##### **1. Reducing Congestion related delays:**

- With 8000 vehicles from St Neots using the A428 daily, the Orange route would appear to be the only one of the Proposals which would allow this traffic to make use of the Expressway, thus reducing congestion and rat running through the villages.
- Conversely, traffic from Cambourne heading to St Neots' Railway Station could also use the expressway, an option not open with the Pink & Purple routes.

- The Orange route will enable eastbound traffic from St Neots, both local and long distance, to make use of the new route without having to make a long detour to the Black Cat Roundabout in order to join.
- The many local people who cycle to work will benefit from the reduction in traffic on the existing A428, but only if local automobile traffic can easily access the new Expressway.

## **2. Improved Traffic Flow:**

- Existing road networks will gain significant extra capacity as long distance and eastbound traffic from St Neots would use the new Orange route.
- St Neots and village businesses will have greater certainty in their travel plans if the Orange route is adopted, as giving the most direct access to the Expressway.
- Small intersecting roads which are essential for agriculture and business in local villages will experience the least amount of interference from the Orange route.
- Disruption to local routes affected by the Pink and Purple proposals may cause more heavy vehicles to travel through the villages.

## **3. Safety Improvements:**

- There were 100 accidents on the A428 between St Neots and the Caxton roundabout in the period 2010 to 2014. The Orange route will ease traffic flow on the existing A428, making junctions on this road safer.
- Rat running and speeding in local villages will reduce with the Orange route.
- The many local people who cycle to work will benefit from the reduction in heavy traffic.
- Fog in the low lying areas around Abbotsley could seriously affect safety on the Pink and Purple routes.

## **4. Support Local Economic Growth:**

- St Neots is earmarked for a flagship Regenerative Programme. Only the Orange route will directly benefit and support the business connection aspects of the programme.
- As the largest town in Cambridgeshire, St Neots needs improved travel links which only the Orange route would bring to the eastern side of the town and the Railway Station.

## **5. Environmental protection:**

- The least damaging solution environmentally is provided by the Orange route. It does not cross undisturbed rural areas of great beauty.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest are located within 3.1 miles of both Pink and Purple routes.

- Grade 2 agricultural land will be lost to the Pink and Purple routes, but not to the Orange route.
- Pollution impact (air, light and noise) on the villages of Great Gransden, Abbotsley, and Waresley will be greatest if the Pink or Purple routes are chosen. The Orange proposal will have the least effect in this area.
- Cycling to work should be encouraged for all the known reasons. We believe only the Orange route will facilitate this.
- The Campaign to Protect Rural England “would opt for the Orange route” and we believe that the Orange route will safeguard the greatly valued traditional character of our local villages.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, based on expressed public feeling and the arguments given above, the Great Gransden Parish Council supports the Orange Proposal for the Expressway and Option A or Option C for the Black Cat Roundabout improvement. Adoption of the Pink or Purple Proposals for the Expressway would not be supported by this village, nor would Option B for the Black Cat roundabout.