

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [A303 Sparkford to Ilchester](#)  
**Cc:** [shappsg@parliament.uk](mailto:shappsg@parliament.uk)  
**Subject:** A303 Consultation Ilchester to Sparkford  
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Dear Secretary of State for Transport,

## A303 CONSULTATION – ILCHESTER/PODIMORE TO SPARKFORD

We live in the village of West Camel immediately south of the section under consideration for upgrade.

Having lived in the village for over 30 years we have been involved in previous consultations and do appreciate all the complexities.

The initial advice given locally for this consultation was that as Option 2 appeared to be such an obvious choice that it was – “a no brainer” because:

It is cheaper, quicker to build and safer as requires little in the way of entrance and exits.....so why would anyone looking at the options choose Option 1 ?

Unfortunately the consultation process allowed for votes worldwide and it appeared a successful Facebook campaign from the smaller community north of the A303 called in votes from as far away as Australia to “Save our Vale”, not realising that almost as much ‘new land’ would be carved up to dual along the (broadly) existing route for Option 1 but causing abject misery and chaos for the whole build, particularly past the new primary school in Queen Camel, which Highways England didn’t initially know had been recently built.

Option 1 appears to be the only section of the A303 not bypassing local communities. Ilminster, Wincanton, Sparkford and Mere to name just a few.

Over time we have raised a number of concerns about process with those running the consultation –it appears that the planners can flex the area they consider as ‘local’ and in this case, they chose to flex the local boundary to as far away as 7 miles from the planned route. It appears that this flexing lent favour to Option 1. If the data is cut in a more “reasonable” manner then the opposite view of local opinion can be demonstrated.

We consider this part of the planning process to be seriously flawed and misleading to you as someone who is only able to make a judgment about ‘local’ needs based on the information provided to you.

Finally, only last week there was a hay lorry fire on the Ilminster bypass causing it to be closed for several hours – fortunately, as it was a bypass, the old road was available to maintain the integrity of the traffic system during the busy summer holidays.

We consider that the most sensible decision that could be made would be to refuse the application and ask for a review of the whole consultation process.

Yours sincerely,

Paul and Linda Heathcote