

On behalf of Lingwood and Burlingham Parish Council.

Deadline 5. 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2021

Re: Highway England's documents REP 023 and REP 024.

TR010040. Vol 6,

6.1 : Environmental Statement

Chapter 12 – Population and Human Health. Sept 2021

The people most affected by the proposed dualling of the A47 at North Burlingham are those who live within the parish of Lingwood and Burlingham. Our parish is divided by the A47 and the proposed dualling will increase the severance affect further.

We, the people of Lingwood and Burlingham, welcome the dualling of our stretch of the A47, but we have consistently requested the scheme includes an underpass, or suitable bridge, for walkers, cyclists and horse riders who wish to access essential amenities or roam within our parish. We have also requested a footpath/cycleway between Lingwood, Burlingham and Acle so our children are able to cycle to school. We are supported by Norfolk County Council, Broadland District Council, other local parish councils and interested parties. However, Highways England consistently deny the need for either an underpass at the point of FP3 or a footpath to Acle. It would appear Highways England has not bothered to consider the evidence provided in our previous submissions but has continued to repeat misleading statements.

I am not able to produce a glossy spreadsheet so, for the sake of clarity and speed, I have copied Highways England's remarks in italics followed by my observations. I have quoted mainly from REP 023, although my remarks also apply to the same statements carried over to REP24 and other error-strewn documents which have been submitted by Highways England.

1) There appears to be confusion over the definition of the 'Study Area' and this may have led Highways England to repeat incorrect, statements. It is not known whether these statements are the result of a naive desk-top exercise, or whether they are made deliberately with the intention of confusing and misleading.

The 'Study Area' for the Proposed Scheme was defined in HE's submission, 'Walking, Cycling and Horse riding Review', (REP2-012):-

*1.3.1: As indicated, the scheme fits the definition of a large scheme, which requires the adoption of a study area which extends to 5km around the scheme, as shown in Figure 1-1 below. The study area includes the A47, the villages of Blofield, North Burlingham, Lingwood and the small market town of Acle. The study area also includes the countryside to the north and south of the A47.*

However, REP4-024, 'Population and Human Health', which purports to include the concerns of walkers, cyclists and horse riders, states:

*“ 12.5.1: The study area for the assessment of impacts on land use and accessibility extends 500m from the red line boundary (including the construction footprint), in line with DMRB LA 112, paragraph 3.6. This has been selected as significant effects are unlikely to occur outside of the 500m study area as a result of the Proposed Scheme. The study area is shown in Figure 12.1 (TR010040/APP/6.3). ”*

Figure 12.1 is referenced as APP-069. Please note, the map in question conveniently excludes the

villages of Lingwood and Acle.

In total contrast, the next sentence extends the study area to over 5 miles!!!

*"12.5.2: The study area for human health includes the following communities which are located within the Broadland district, adjacent to the Proposed Scheme: Blofield with South Walsham, North Burlingham and Acle. This study area is based on the extent and characteristics of the Proposed Scheme, and the degree to which these communities are likely to be affected by the Proposed Scheme, in line with paragraph 3.23 of DMRB LA 112. The study area extends beyond these communities where relevant, for example for the noise and air quality assessments."*

*Also, "12.6.33: All three communities (Blofield with South Walsham, Burlingham and Acle) are considered to have a high sensitivity to change."*

Blofield with South Walsham, Burlingham and Acle are not communities 'adjacent to the proposed scheme', but are electoral wards of Broadland District Council. Indeed, Blofield with South Walsham is a vast area which extends around five miles north of the A47 and includes five separate parishes! Only part of one of these parishes, Blofield, lies within the study area defined by Fig.12.1 TR010040/APP/6.3.

It would appear this study has published data appertaining to Broadland District Council's electoral wards which is broadly irrelevant to communities within any defined study area. Therefore the results of the study are meaningless.

*2) "12.6.11: As indicated above, the village of Lingwood located to the south of the A47 has assets located within the village. Residents of Lingwood ..... are likely to use the local highway network to the south of the existing A47. .... These routes are not anticipated to be significantly impacted by the Proposed Scheme and therefore, this village has not been assessed any further."*

It is presumed this document, 'Populations and Human Health', is not about the benefit of traffic routes south of the A47, but about the health of the people affected by the proposed scheme. Lingwood is under one mile from the A47 and is part of the same parish as North Burlingham. The people of Lingwood are affected by the proposed scheme more than any other community, apart from North Burlingham, inasmuch as we are separated from our parish woodland walks, and our cyclists will never be able to cross the A47 safely. Highways England includes South Walsham in its study area (by default) although this village is over two miles from the A47, so why was it decided not to include Lingwood?

(In fact, Lingwood is part of Burlingham ward, so it appears Lingwood may have been 'assessed' after all!)

*3) "12.6.9: Blofield is the main source of community assets within the study area, providing assets such as supermarkets, places of worship, schools and GP surgeries, as shown on Figure 12.1 (TR010040/APP/6.3). There are also some community assets in Acle (such as a train station, schools, shops and GP surgeries) and some assets in Lingwood (such as a train station, schools, shops and places of worship). The sensitivity of community assets in Blofield is classified as high."*

If the study area is defined in Fig.12.1 TR010040/APP/6.3, then Blofield is, indeed, the 'main source of community assets within the study area', since this study area covers only half the village of Blofield and part of the tiny community at North Burlingham!!!

Obviously, Highways England has not read our previous submissions, so I wish to emphasise again that Blofield is NOT 'the main source of community assets' within the originally defined study area. Nor is it the main source of community assets within the study area defined by district electoral wards. Acle is!

Contrary to Highways England's assertions, there are NO 'supermarkets' in Blofield, just a convenience store and a small farm shop. In contrast, Acle has a supermarket and an M&S food supermarket.

There is only one 'places of worship' in Blofield – an Anglican church. Lingwood has Anglican and Methodist churches. Acle has Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic congregations.

There is only one 'schools' in Blofield, a primary school which serves the village. The designated primary school for North Burlingham is Lingwood Primary Academy. The designated secondary school for both Lingwood and North Burlingham is Acle Academy.

4) "12.6.15: The majority of businesses within the study area are located in Blofield, however there are a number located along this section of the existing A47, including (refer to Figure 12.1 (TR010040/APP/6.3)):"

Again, this study area covers only half of Blofield and part of North Burlingham. The majority of businesses within the properly defined study area are NOT situated in Blofield but in Acle and elsewhere!

There is little point in my repeating everything that has been said in our previous submissions since it would appear Highways England are intent upon misleading everyone about the truth of the area.

Please see our previous submissions, RR-005, RR-061, REP2-016, REP3-026 and REP4-059.

5) "12.9.53:..... In the future, users making a trip between Lingwood and North Burlingham via Burlingham FP3 would be required to divert to the proposed WCH route running west to east parallel to the proposed agricultural access track to connect to the proposed Blofield Overbridge and then continue their journey via the overbridge and the proposed new combined footway/cycleway to be provided on the northern side of the former A47, which would be de-trunked. Alternatively, users could follow the proposed WCH route to the east as far as the B1140 junction and access North Burlingham via the new footway/cycle track links. Although both the Blofield Overbridge and the B1140 junction would facilitate the safe crossing of the new A47 alignment for users, the resulting increases in journey length would be in excess of 500m. The sensitivity of Burlingham FP3 has been classified as medium due to observed usage being very low and the trips being for recreational purposes only. The magnitude of the impact is major as severing the route would result in a permanent increase in journey length in excess of 500m for users. Effects are therefore assessed as permanent Moderate adverse given the very low usage of this unsurfaced, recreational route which does not provide direct access to community assets."

The increase in journey length over the proposed B1140 overbridge from the point where FP3 meets the A47 is approximately 2.2 miles, or 4.4 miles for a round trip. This detour will take the walker along a path adjacent to a busy dual carriageway, then across an overbridge used by up to 700 heavy goods vehicles per day in peak season on their way to Cantley Sugar Factory (each of which has to make a return journey over the overbridge), then back along the other side of the A47. The return journey will be the same in reverse. (Re. the HGVs, please see confirmation from British sugar at REP2-016.) Highways England seems to assume this 4.4 mile detour will be acceptable for

someone who has set out on a 6 mile ramble through Burlingham Woods! (The distance using the Blofield overbridge would be about the same, assuming paths alongside the A47.)

As explained in previous submissions, the '*very low usage*' recorded on FP3 is because walkers can no longer cross the A47 safely and, therefore, most choose to drive to North Burlingham woods, which has a high usage.

It is incorrect to say FP3 '*does not provide direct access to community assets*'. It is the shortest route from North Burlingham to the school, station, bus stops, village hall, etc. which are well within walking distance if parishioners were able to cross the A47 safely. An underpass would provide access to FP3 and to Lingwood Road, which is only about 250m from the point where FP3 meets the A47 and provides an alternative walkable route into Lingwood.

Highways England has chosen to ignore the petition signed by well over 1,000 people who said they would use an underpass. It has also chosen to ignore the Parish Council's submissions (RR-005, RR-061, REP2-016, REP3-026, REP4-059) and the 59 people who sent in their comment (RR-016 to RR-075).

6) *"12.8.12: A new combined footway/cycleway would be incorporated into the A47/B1140 grade seperated interchange allowing the safe crossing of the new A47 for pedestrians and cyclists between South Walsham Road and the B1140."*

(The South Walsham Road IS the B1140!) The route for cyclists travelling between North Burlingham and Lingwood, using the proposed B1140 overbridge, will NOT be safe! Cyclists are expected to negotiate the overbridge next to a convoy of HGVs.. Arriving on the Lingwood side of the bridge, they may have to negotiate the HGVs turning left across their path. They will then have a choice. They could travel down Acle Road which is a winding country lane with hairpin bends and no footpath. This road is already dangerous for cyclists, given the speed and volume of traffic, and, when Lingwood Road and Lingwood Lane are blocked off, the volume of traffic will increase. Alternatively, the cyclists will be able to turn right along a cycle path and access Lingwood Lane, a quiet country road. However, Lingwood Lane joins Acle Road right on the most dangerous bend, and cyclists will still have to negotiate further sharp bends in a busy road with no footpath. The alternative, using the proposed Blofield overbridge, would deposit cyclists on Blofield Road, another narrow country lane with hairpin bends, no footpath and no speed limit. Cyclists have been killed here.

Local cyclists will confirm no-one ever cycles along Blofield Road, Acle Road or the B1140 unless forced to do so because of the obvious dangers. If they need to cross the A47, they usually cycle down Lingwood Road and cross at FP3. An underpass would provide access to Lingwood Road for cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians.

7) May I be permitted to comment on Highways England's response to Broadland District Council and Norfolk County Council?

REP3-022. *"35. The walking distance between the centre of North Burlingham and the centre of Acle is approximately 3.8km. The Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT) document, 'Providing for Journeys on Foot (2000)', indicates that the preferred maximum walking distance to common facilities is 1.2km and up to 2km for commuting, or walking to school."*

And: *"The walking distance between the centre of North Burlingham and both the primary school and village hall at Lingwood, via Burlingham FP3 and the footways provided as part of the local*

highways, is approximately 2.5km. The walking distance to the railway station is 2.3km via the same route. The Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT) document, 'Providing for Journeys on Foot (2000)', indicates that the preferred maximum walking distance to common facilities is 1.2km and up to 2km for commuting, or walking to school. The walking distances to the facilities at Lingwood exceed the preferred maximum walking distances."

As previously advised, the IHT document quoted by Highways England appears to be either out of date or incorrect. The Government's document "Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance, July, 2014" explains Parliamentary legislation concerning maximum walking distances to school.

**"1.3.16 - Statutory walking distances eligibility • provide free transport for all pupils of compulsory school age (5-16) if their nearest suitable school is: • beyond 2 miles (if below the age of 8); or • beyond 3 miles (if aged between 8 and 16)"**

This indicates the official maximum walking distances to school are 3.2 km – 4.8 km and not the 1.2 km – 2 km quoted by Highways England.

Also, most residents of North Burlingham live in Main Road adjacent to the A47 and not the centre of the area. The distance between Main Road and Lingwood Station using footpaths is approximately 1.7 km as opposed to the 2.5 km quoted. Thus most residents of North Burlingham are well within the maximum walking distance to their amenities in Lingwood, but only if an underpass is provided. Using an underpass to Lingwood Road, and continuing along established roads to the school rather than unmade footpaths, the distance would increase to around 3 km. If this journey followed footpaths to the school which are already used by school children every day, the journey would be shorter and would fall within 'maximum walking distance'.

Local residents are within statutory walking distance of Acle Academy high school, but only if a path is provided along the A47, at least as far as the Windle.

8) There are many more comments I wish to make but, perhaps, 6 pages is enough. Our thoughts about the proposed scheme are well documented in previous submissions.

In the end:- The document states, "*Table 12-15: Physical inactivity is a primary contributor to a wide range of chronic diseases including, but not limited, to coronary heart disease, stroke and diabetes. Physical activity is important for the mental health of the population and helps to prevent obesity, therefore any temporary stopping up of paths during construction would potentially have negative impacts to human health.*"

This refers to 'temporary stopping up of paths'. But Highways England wants to stop up our paths permanently. We are expected to continue driving in order to access woodland which is within our own parish. Or we can take a walk which includes a 4.4 mile detour along a major trunk road, sharing a bridge with HGVs pumping out fumes. Or we can continue to cycle along dangerous country lanes and fight for space with HGVs..

Highways England can have the last word:

*"Stress and Anxiety The implementation of the Proposed Scheme is not anticipated to have an impact on the stress and anxiety of local residents. Neutral."* (?????)

Cathy Pye  
Chairman Lingwood and Burlingham Parish Council