

Proof of Evidence

To

Public Inquiry

Regarding

A380 SOUTH DEVON LINK ROAD

(KINGSKERSWELL BYPASS)

COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDERS

And SIDE ROAD ORDERS 2008

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1. Introduction.

1.1 My name is Thomas Frith. I have lived in Kingskerswell since 2001 having moved to Devon from Basingstoke. I am a sixth form student finishing AS level education before going on to study A2 levels. I became aware of the controversial SDLR proposal and took an interest in the issues being debated.

1.2 I regularly travel to and from school in Ashburton by car, so use the road in peak times. I also use public transport. I did not recognise the description of the congestion and long delays on the A380. The road is busy but I did feel that the huge sums of money to be invested were unwarranted and not in keeping with the research on Government Policies on climate change and environmental protection I had done during my studies.

1.3 I read some of the Major Schemes Business Case at the time it was published in 2007. My main thought was building a road was not necessarily the way to bring jobs and investment to South Devon. The Economic Case appeared to agree with this view. (SQL Economic Supplementary Report November 2007 see 24 Para 4.5.) that other investments should be made. I wonder how likely that is to happen during a global recession. Nothing has been stated about the impacts of that since the MSBC was published.

1.4 Indeed, the Eddington Transport Study Main Report Volume 1 p30 Para 2.39 says this too. (Page 45 Para 3.22 cautions against speculative projects that do not deliver the promised benefits). I thought the comment made on page 17, The Case for Action Executive Summary Eddington Transport Study Para 1.32 was relevant to the approach to the issues with the Torbay economy. I felt so much time, money and effort had been spent on trying to get a road built (it was first suggested in 1970s) that no one had the courage to call a halt and look at Alternatives. What Eddington called a 'grand projet' could definitely be applied to this scheme...

1.5 I understand that some other options were reported on in 2000, but no refreshing of this had taken place in spite of all the research on modal shift, sustainable travel etc which has become more relevant as petrol prices have soared and people are more aware

of the impact of climate change.

1.6. No one seems particularly concerned by the impact on the playing fields and children's play area of the Compulsory Purchase Orders. My young sister and I also like to walk to Kerswell Down. Both open spaces used by the young people in the village are going to be affected. Somehow, the idea of a 4 lane highway cutting through this quiet wooded area means it won't be a great place to go anymore. I understand Devon County Council is going to give some land in exchange but it will not harbour the same variety of wild life. Anyway, during the time I will still be living here, neither of these places will be accessible due to the construction activity, noise mess and fumes. When for health benefits I am being urged to 'get on my bike', and away from the computer, I find my options to do so will disappear.

1.7 I asked my father, who is a qualified accountant to help me understand the costing for the project that appeared in the new documents the Council posted on their web site on 29 May 2009. We could not understand why the following changes had taken place;

2.0 The SDLR Value for Money Case

2.1 The costs, benefits and BCR (benefits to cost ratio) have changed between the earlier Major Scheme Business Case document dated Dec 2007 and the new KKBP-Economic Report for the scheme that has just been issued in May 2009.

2.2 The Executive Summary in the original report included a value for money case with benefits by cause, cost and the appropriate BCR ratio, but the details in the new report are not compared against it or presented in the same format. The explanation provided in Section 10.1.5 "The BCR of 7.46 is of the same magnitude to that calculated in previous work on the A380 South Devon Link Road (8.17), with the difference mainly attributable to *increased construction costs*". Has the cost risen or not?

2.3 Tables 17 and 28, do provide a benefits matrix which enables the new format to be stated in the same manner as the original. It looks like this:

| | | | | | |
|--|----------|--|----------|--|--|
| | Table 17 | | Table 28 | | |
|--|----------|--|----------|--|--|

| | Quat Travel | Quat Voc | Tuba Travel | Tuba VOC | Total |
|-----------------|-------------|----------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| Original | | | | | |
| Consumer | £12,678 | £482 | £375,847 | £(12,808) | £376,199 |
| Business | £7,999 | £291 | £363,834 | £17,540 | £389,664 |
| New | | | | | |
| VOC | | £773 | | £4,732 | £5,505 |
| TT | £20,677 | | £739,681 | | £760,358 |

2.4 This enables a comparison to be made with the original:

| Original Analysis | Dec 2007 Document | May 2009 Document | % Change |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Noise | £(14,100) | | -100% |
| Local Air Quality | | | |
| Greenhouse Gases | £(3,500) | | -100% |
| Journey Ambience | | | |
| Accidents | £48,019 | £60,858 | +26.7% |
| Consumer Users | £285,785 | £376,199 | +31.6% |
| Business Users and Providers | £440,622 | £389,664 | 11.6% |
| Reliability | | | |
| Option Values | | | |
| Present Value of Benefits (see notes) (PVB) | £756,826 | £826,721 | +9.2% |

| | | | | |
|---|----------|----------|--------|--|
| Public Accounts | £94,833 | £118,257 | | |
| Tax Revenue | | £(7,370) | | |
| Present Value of Costs (see notes) (PVC) | £94,833 | £110,887 | +16.9% | |
| Tax Revenue | | | | |
| Net Present Value (NPV) NPV=PVB-PVC | £661,993 | £715,834 | +8.1% | |
| Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) BCR=PVB/PVC | 7.98 | 7.46 | -6.6% | |
| * No tax credit information on original, so present value can only be compared at Net level | | | | |

The new document does not comment on the cost basis so this may not be exactly like for like, but certainly shows that changes to the business case are not restricted to just costs.

2.5 Comparing the statements using the same format does prompt some new questions.

1. Why are the adverse effects of Noise and Greenhouse gases now being ignored ?

2. The benefit to business users appear to have dropped by over 11%, This is inconsistent with the claim that the SDLR is supposed to bring business back into the area.

3 The large increases in the benefits due to accident (27%)and to consumers (32%) are surely worth an explanation as to how these changed so dramatically in 2 years.

3.0: I am still not sure what is happening about Kerswell Down as very late in the day, I think Devon County Council are changing what they want to do. I think some more Orders are going to be published. As the road project has been in process for so

many years, I do not think it is very fair nor transparent to make changes so close to the deadlines for members of the public to have their say. I know issues have to be kept up to date but a lot of the Business case has not changed in years, but with a few days to go, some really key issues for the village are being altered. Even with access to the Internet to find out, it is very difficult to keep track. I am not sure this is a high degree of public consultation. It feels as if Devon County Council are 'steam rolling' ahead in spite of the furore in the village.