



# COGGESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

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13<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Via email – [a120study@jacobs.com](mailto:a120study@jacobs.com)

Dear Sir/Madam

## RE: A120 Essex

With regard to the above consultation, please find below the comments of Coggeshall Parish Council.

### Option A comments:

Of all the routes, Option A will have the most significant impact on Coggeshall and is the **least preferred route**. This is based on a number of concerns:

- Projected increase in traffic volume around and through Coggeshall
- Increased difficulty in accessing the current and new A120
- Further isolation of members of the Parish who live on the north side of the A120 from the rest of the community
- Increased difficulty accessing existing footpaths
- Further separation with Earls Colne, making the junction with the main road to Earls Colne even more difficult to cross
- Reduced air quality and greater levels of pollution on top of what is already currently caused by the existing A120
- Severe damage to the environment as a result of this option being the longest and also the amount of countryside that would be dug up for the road - this would be greater than if routes D or E were chosen

In addition to this, the route is the most expensive and will only use around 5 kilometres of the existing road. This means it is likely to be as disruptive as the other routes, if not more, given it will have to work on some of the current road at the same time.

There is also some concern that the bends in the road as it bypasses Coggeshall and Bradwell could cause safety issues when travelling at speed and these areas could become accident blackspots such as the Haughley Bends on the A14.

Additionally, by using this route, there is no contingency available should an accident occur on part of the new road. If this should happen, then the traffic would be directed through the villages of Bradwell and Coggeshall.

At the public exhibition of the proposed routes in the village hall on Saturday 25 February, Coggeshall Parish Council carried out an exit poll. This asked people visiting the exhibition to fill in a small piece of paper, stating their preferred route and also their least preferred route. Of the people who completed the survey and ticked just one route for each of these options, the response showed that the majority felt that Option A was the least preferred. There were 300 complete responses for the least preferred route and of this number, 69.3% said Option A was their least preferred. Of the 309 people who completed the poll for their preferred option, only 8.7% said it was their preferred route.

### **Option B and C comments:**

There is also concern from Coggeshall Parish Council that options B and C would pose a number of issues:

- Both routes would cross the river, meaning a viaduct would need to be built that would be expensive and could increase the flooding risk to Coggeshall and Kelvedon. The viaduct would, due to its elevated position, cause an unacceptable amount of traffic noise.
- The routes would need to cross the roads between Coggeshall and Kelvedon, which would be expensive and disruptive should bridges or tunnels be built, increasing the traffic on alternative routes during construction - if the new route went straight through the road, then this would sever the communities and cause significant traffic build up at the junctions
- The routes both cut through a larger area of countryside in comparison to routes D and E

Based on the poll carried out by Coggeshall Parish Council, of the people who completed the survey and ticked just one route for each of these options, the routes B and C were also not popular. For the 300 complete responses for the least preferred route, 3.3% selected B, 2.7% chose C and 21.3% said either B or C. This meant that a total of 27.3% consider B or C to be their least preferred route.

With the 309 responses received for the preferred route, 2.3% said it would be B, 5.5% stated C and a further 3.2% said B or C. This totals 11%.

### **Option D and E comments:**

These are the two preferred routes for Coggeshall Parish Council. They are the shortest, therefore less expensive and also cut through the smallest amount of open countryside. They provide a quick route to get to the A12 and overall, would have the lowest impact on increasing traffic volume in Coggeshall. Furthermore, there is the potential for these to link up to the work that will be carried out on the A12 and Coggeshall Parish Council would like to suggest that either of these routes are incorporated to the changes that will be made to the A12, with limited junctions off the new route before it reaches the A12. All junctions connecting the new A120 to the A12 should be developed to avoid the issues that have been made in the past. The design of the junctions should focus on safety and also reducing traffic build up.

In Coggeshall Parish Council's poll, of the people who completed the survey and ticked just one route for each of these options, the routes D and E had the lowest percentage of being the least preferred. For the 300 complete responses for the least preferred route, just 1% selected D, 1.7% chose E and 1.3% said either D or E. This meant that a total of only 3.3% considered D or E to be their least preferred route.

Of the 309 responses received for the preferred route, 10.4% said it would be D, 25.9% stated E and 44% said D or E. This means the response was overwhelmingly in favour of D or E, at a total of 80.3%.

### **Question 8) Do you have any other comments or suggestions about a preferred route for the A120 between Braintree and the A12?**

#### **Additional comments:**

While Coggeshall Parish Council has reached a consensus in the response to the consultation, this response has had to be developed around the framework of the

questions posed. Unfortunately Coggeshall Parish Council believes that the questions themselves fail to address the real problem and the five routes are limited in being able to provide a true solution. The decision was also difficult to make given the recent consultation on the A12, as a final decision on changes to this road have not yet been announced and this is likely to have influenced the response from Coggeshall Parish Council. An example of one potential issue is that if an all route junction is built at Feering to link to the A12, then the B1024 may become extremely busy.

If a new A120 route is built, Coggeshall Parish Council has concerns that this will not reduce traffic on the existing A120. As a result, further improvements still need to be made and can and should be done ahead of any new route being built.

Below are additional comments Coggeshall Parish Council would like to make and would urge Essex County Council to take into consideration.

**Question 5** asks which statement best reflects our opinion. Coggeshall Parish Council chose the response of A: "I believe the A120 needs to be completed upgraded to a dual carriageway between Braintree and the A12 to meet current and future demand". This was chosen as the A120 needs significant improvements in order to improve safety and address issues of traffic. However, Coggeshall Parish Council considers that while this statement 'best reflects' our opinion, it is not the solution that Coggeshall Parish Council would have offered had there been an open question. It is simply the closest to what Coggeshall Parish Council believes is required. As the other statements are even further from the ideal solution, Coggeshall Parish Council felt it had no choice but to select the first response. Coggeshall Parish Council would like to express disappointment that the questions appear to be worded in such a way to encourage a response that is clearly being sought, rather than providing other solutions that could more effectively address the problem.

Were the question to provide alternative answers or be an open question, Coggeshall Parish Council would have responded that its preferred option would be to upgrade the A12 to three lanes, which would make use of the existing road, and help to service the ports. It would reduce the need to create a new A120 route, which will severely impact the environment and inevitably and irreversibly disrupt some of the communities in the local area.

**Question 6A** asks for an opinion on whether the A120 should be upgraded to reduce queuing at junctions. Coggeshall Parish Council strongly agrees with this statement, and calls for the focus be on safety. Queuing at a number of junctions on the existing A120 can be dangerous, often due to their layouts. This has resulted in a number of accidents, and tragically many of these have been fatal. Regardless of any new route that is built, immediate action must be taken to address queuing at existing junctions with improved safety as the ultimate goal. If a new route is introduced, all new junctions must be designed in a way to avoid the current problems.

**Question 6C:** Coggeshall Parish Council strongly agrees with the statement that the A120 should be upgraded to improve pedestrian/cycling/equestrian facilities. At an extraordinary general meeting to discuss Coggeshall Parish Council's response to this consultation, several members of the public expressed the view that regardless of the outcome of the consultation, efforts should be made to improve the footpaths that cross the existing A120. This should also be taken into consideration with the footpaths that will be impacted by any new route.

**Question 6D** asks whether the A120 should be upgraded to reduce the need for HGVs to travel through villages. Coggeshall Parish Council strongly agrees with this statement but would like to provide a warning that with certain proposed routes, such as option A, there may be an increase in HGVs travelling through Coggeshall. Many vehicles currently come off the A120 at the north or east sides of Coggeshall and travel down Colne Road or the B1024, to then go through Feering and onto the A12. Many may still continue to do this, particularly if Route A is selected. Regardless of which route goes ahead, steps need to be taken to provide disincentives for vehicles to take this route.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Debbie Morgan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Debbie Morgan  
Clerk to Coggeshall Parish Council  
For and on behalf of Coggeshall Parish Council