

**Speech by Ken McCall on behalf of Campaign for A Better Trowbridge  
to Westbury Area Board on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012  
re: Westbury Bypass Resolution**

The resolution before you, ladies and gentlemen asks for a bypass for Westbury.

Fine – people think the town needs one. But the resolution before us today says that the aim is to identify an appropriate and practical route, as though the 2008 Westbury public inquiry *had never happened!*

I wonder if this might be some kind of torture for those countless Westbury Residents and Wiltshire folk who have objected so long to an eastern bypass. In 2007, the public outcry was so gigantic that a 'call in' was signalled from London. A full planning inquiry was to be held. Wiltshire Council were gob-smacked.

Two Inspectors, one very senior and particularly experienced, looked in detail at the scheme. They took over 10 weeks to examine every detail of the the case and visited every locality. They heard both sides of the argument and looked at all from every angle. They then recommended very firmly against an eastern bypass for exactly the same reasons that everyone had been saying for so many years before. Wiltshire Council were in utter disgrace. The transport portfolio holder, Fleur Rhe de Philip and her officers, had simply been *wrong* to progress an eastern route.

Very, very few major road schemes are refused by planning Inspectors. It has to be a very bad scheme to go down. But the eastern bypass was a very bad scheme. It was reported in the national, regional and local press. It has notoriety... *as a mistake!*

So back to the resolution today. The wording needs to be quite clear – an eastern bypass will NOT be re-visited. Only then will you get real co-operation from stakeholders, and real results.

Meanwhile, the Inspector's report makes it very clear that he thought a western route was better. It was, he said, better value from a transport and planning point of view, more popular, less environmentally damaging and better for the economy. Here are some of his words on the subject:

***Para 8.208 - A Far Western Route:*** *'would remove significant volumes of HGVs and, without a weight ban, be more effective than the application scheme at reducing HGVs on Station Road. It would also significantly reduce the volume of HGVs using the A361/C234 route through Southwick and North Bradley.'* *The benefits of the FWR would be spread more widely and could be expected to contribute to the scheme objectives of facilitating regeneration and easing the transport of goods to and from commercial employment areas as well as providing a significant measure of relief within Westbury.*

So you have your answer. If you want to ask the county to look again, say a route to the West. The environmental campaigning groups are much more accepting of a road to the west; the people of North Bradley, Southwick, Rode, West Ashton and Yarnbrook will support the notion as they get traffic relief as well as Westbury. And you will have the people of Westbury behind you. People will understand. You won't be laughed at.

There are already jokes about Wiltshire being full of country bumpkins. Please, lets not pass this resolution as it stands. Surely we can do better.