

DSE 200/09/TR 34/T 020  
34/S 020

Secretary of State for the Environment  
(Regional Controller, Guildford)

BRIDGE BY-PASS

REPORT OF PUBLIC INQUIRIES

Held at

Bridge Place, Bridge, Kent on  
8, 9 and 10 May 1973

Inspector:  
F A ADAMS CB

I APPEARANCES

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr R Hammond CEng MICE

Mr L C Waters CEng, Chief Town Planner

Mr L D Kramer AILA

Mr D H Ritchie BSc MICE MIMunE

Mr J M Vince BSc MICE MIMunE AMIHE

Kent CC

Landscape Architect, Department of  
the Environment

Kent CC

Kent CC

BRIDGE-BLEAN RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr D C Foreman

Mr S L Grainger

BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Mr L J F Sherley

BISHOPSBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs E C Champion

PATRIXBOURNE PARISH MEETING

Mr E P Greenwood

EAST KENT ROAD CAR CO LTD

Mr J S Paul BA MCIT

Area Manager

THE A2 GROUP

Mr J H Goulden

Solicitor, Furley, Page, Fielding  
and Pembroke, Canterbury

Mr J Purchase

Chairman

Mr B A Lewis

Secretary

HIGHLAND INVESTMENT CO LTD

Mr J H Goulden

KENT FEDERATION OF AMENITY SOCIETIES

Mr E Freshman MB FRCS

BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY

Brigadier J H Slade-Powell DSO OBE

RESIDENTS

Mr K A Bailey MIM

Professor R E Pahl

Mr R J Hocke

Dr D G Pratt MB BS  
and Mrs Pratt

Mr R T Watson

Mr G F Stoneham

Mr L H Young CEng MIEE

Mr W D Stewart BA VetMB MRCVS

Mr P T Collingwood

Mr E A E Wotherall

Mr B R Mummery

Mr and Mrs J Quine

Colonel G G Elliott

St Marys Road, Patricbourne

Patricbourne Lodge

White Gates, Patricbourne

The Old Vicarage, Patricbourne

Bourne Corner, Bekesbourne Road,  
Bridge

20 Conyngham Lane, Bridge

28 Conyngham Lane, Bridge

36 Bridge Down

28 Bridge Down

27 Bridge Down

Great Petts Farm

The Old Palace, Bekesbourne

The Faddock, Bishopsbourne

THE LONDON - CANTERBURY - DOVER TRUNK ROAD (BRIDGE BY-PASS) ORDER 197

THE LONDON - CANTERBURY - DOVER TRUNK ROAD (BRIDGE BY-PASS  
SIDE ROADS) ORDER 197

THE LONDON - CANTERBURY - DOVER TRUNK ROAD (BRIDGE BY-PASS) COMPULSORY  
PURCHASE ORDER (DSE No. ) 197

I held Public Local Inquiries at Bridge Place, Bridge, Kent on 8, 9 and 10 May 1973 in connection with the above draft Orders which relate to the proposed construction of a Bridge By-Pass on the A2 London - Dover trunk road. The Inquiries were held concurrently, but those present were informed that they were free to speak to any of the Orders separately if they wished.

The relevant section of the A2 trunk road through Bridge runs generally in the direction north-west to south-east. At the Inquiries, the north-western termination of the by-pass was commonly referred to as the "west" (or Canterbury) end and the south-eastern termination as the "east" end. Similarly, the area to the north-east of the A2 and Bridge was referred to as the "north" side, and the area to the south-west as the "south" side.

## II. THE DRAFT ORDERS

2.1 The first two draft Orders dealing with the line of the By-Pass and with the consequential changes to side roads, footpaths and access to premises were published on 10 November 1972. An Explanatory Statement published at the same time said:

"The existing trunk road through the village of Bridge passes through an almost continuous built-up area with side roads and private access which are a source of danger to through traffic. The single carriageway varies in width between 23 feet and 17½ feet and the footpath is only 4 feet wide in the shopping area.

In June 1971, the Secretary of State for the Environment, Mr Peter Walker, announced plans to improve the environment and to stimulate economic development by means of a comprehensively improved trunk road network which would divert long-distance traffic from towns and villages. The network would, in addition, provide adequate access to the major ports, in most cases by the mid-1970s.

As part of those plans and in furtherance of the intention to improve the A2 to dual-carriageway standard between Dover and the end of M2 at Brenley Corner, it is proposed to by-pass the village of Bridge by constructing a new trunk road on the north side. The proposals also provide for the necessary alterations to side roads and footpaths affected by the new route.

The new trunk road would be about 2 miles long. Dual two-lane carriageways would be provided with grass verges 12 feet wide and a 15 feet wide central reservation. The new road would leave the existing A2 trunk road east of Canterbury City boundary and rejoin it to the east of the Bishopsbourne Road. There would be no access to the by-pass except at its terminal points where it joins the existing trunk road.

The length of trunk road to be superseded by the new by-pass would cease to be part of the trunk road.

Alterations would be required to existing roads and public footpaths affected by the construction of the new by-pass. The existing trunk road west of the access to Renville Farm would be stopped up to the point where the new trunk road joins it.

A slip road would be constructed to take Canterbury bound traffic from the existing trunk road on to the proposed by-pass. A length of farm track running from the existing trunk road to Hode Farm would be stopped up where it is crossed by the by-pass, and a new length of track provided alongside the existing footpath from Bekesbourne Road which would be improved and carried over the by-pass by a bridge. A new length of highway would be provided from the northern boundary of the by-pass to the improved part of Bekesbourne Road, enabling eastbound traffic to travel into Bridge Village.

The access to Bifron's Park from Bekesbourne Road would be stopped up where it is crossed by the by-pass, and a new length of access would be provided along the northern boundary of the by-pass to connect with Bekesbourne Road.

Lengths of Bridleway No. 299, and Footpaths Nos. 297 and 318 would be stopped up where they would be affected by the by-pass and they would be diverted along new lengths of bridleway and footway which would be constructed on either side of the by-pass and would be connected via an agricultural subway.

Patrixbourne Road would be improved where it would be crossed by the by-pass. Bridleways 268 and 325, and an unnumbered bridleway would be stopped up where they would be crossed by the new road. A new length of bridleway would be provided along the southern boundary of the by-pass to connect the unnumbered bridleway with Bridleway No. 268. A length of bridleway would also be provided along the northern boundary of the by-pass to connect the severed parts of Bridleway No. 268. This new length of bridleway would join Bridleway No. 268 south of the by-pass by way of a bridge which would also carry the eastern private access to Highland Court Annexe over the by-pass. The western private access to Highland Court Annexe would be stopped up where crossed by the by-pass.

A grade-separated junction would be provided at the south-eastern end of the proposed by-pass. A length of the existing trunk road would be stopped up and new lengths of highway constructed to provide access to and from Bridge Village from the south. Lengths of Coldharbour Lane and Frog Lane (the Bishopsbourne Road) would be stopped up. They would be improved and realigned to pass under the by-pass, and would be connected to the new highway linking the existing trunk road to the by-pass.

Ultimately it is envisaged that a full by-pass of Canterbury will link the north-western end of the proposed Bridge by-pass with the proposed Upper Harbledown by-pass".

2.2 The third draft Order - Compulsory Purchase Order - was published on 16 February 1973. An Explanatory Statement with it said:

"1. The Secretary of State proposes to construct a by-pass of the existing London - Canterbury - Dover Trunk Road A2 avoiding the village of Bridge in the County of Kent. This road, together with the M2 Motorway acts as a main route for vehicles travelling from London and areas to the north of the River Thames (by way of the Dartford Tunnel) to the cross channel port of Dover and the holiday resorts on the east Kent coast.

2. The village of Bridge lies astride the A2 trunk road in the Nail Bourne Valley, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-east of Canterbury. The existing road to be improved has an average carriageway width of 23 feet with a minimum width of  $17\frac{1}{2}$  feet in places and includes a steep hill on each trunk road approach to the village. The public footway varies in width and is only 4 feet wide in some places in the central area where there is a considerable amount of frontage development. There are a number of accesses, both private and public, onto the trunk road in the village and these generate many dangerous turning movements. The village acts as a shopping centre for surrounding villages and the pedestrian/vehicle conflict in the main shopping street which also comprises part of the trunk road is consequently high. This together with the inadequate widths of both the carriageway and footway and the turning movements generated by side roads and private accesses causes congestion in the village and results in numerous accidents.

3. The average daily flow in August 1971 was about 14,000 vehicles per day and it is anticipated that by 1990 this will have increased to about 20,000 vehicles per day, assuming the M20 is open to traffic. In the three years from October 1969 to September 1972 there were 26 personal injury accidents along the relevant section of the existing trunk road in which 43 people were injured, one fatally.

4. It is proposed that work on the improvement of the adjacent section of the trunk road at the south-eastern end of the proposed by-pass by the construction of a second carriageway alongside the existing one will be put in hand during 1973 subject to completion of the statutory procedures. At the north-western end it is envisaged that the new road would ultimately link with a by-pass of Canterbury.

5. The proposal is to construct a dual 24 feet carriageway by-pass partly in cutting and partly on embankment to the north-east of the village. The new road, about 2 miles in length, would leave the existing A2 about 200 yards south-east of the Canterbury City Boundary and rejoin it immediately to the north-west of the junction with B2055. Access onto the new road would be prohibited except at the terminal points where a surface junction at the north-western end and a grade-separated junction at the south-eastern end would be provided to give access to the village. The routes of the Bokesbourne Road and Patribourne Road would be maintained by the construction of bridges over and under the new road respectively whilst all other side roads, public footpaths and private accesses which would be affected by the proposal would be stopped up and re-provided, improved or diverted as necessary.

6. The scheme is intended to improve the environment of the village and reduce accidents by removing all through traffic from the existing narrow, congested main village street. It will also increase the capacity of the trunk road and provide a fast route to a good standard of design for through traffic. The scheme would form part of a comprehensive programme of improvements for the whole of the A2 trunk road between Brenley Corner and Dover.

7. In general the Department would undertake normal accommodation works, erecting fences and planting hedges. Landscaping would be carried out where necessary.

8. All the land shown in the Schedule to the Order is required for these proposals".

2.3 After publication of the draft Orders, and before the Inquiries, the Department proposed a modification of the published Plan for the eastern end of the by-pass at junction with Coldharbour Lane and Frog Lane. The Local Authorities and persons affected by the modification were informed. If the modification were adopted the draft Orders, as published, would require amendment.

### III CASE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Mr R Hammond read a statement which had been previously circulated. In it he explained the purpose of the Inquiry and referred to the Statutory Authorities which gave power to the Secretary of State to make the proposed Orders. He drew attention to the various plans and Orders exhibited. The London - Canterbury - Dover trunk road was the main trunk route from London to Dover passing through Dartford, the mid-way towns, Sittingbourne and Canterbury. There was direct access to the Dartford Tunnel giving an approach to and from East Anglia, the Midlands and the north of England. The motorway M2 by-passed the Medway towns, Sittingbourne and Faversham and re-joined the A2 at Brenley Corner about 3 miles east of Faversham. Because of its importance as a road to the Channel ports, it was the general policy to bring this trunk route up to a standard suitable for the traffic it must carry now and in the future and the map at exhibit C showed the length of the route between Brenley Corner and Dover which it was intended should be comprehensively improved by the early 1980s.

3.2 It was envisaged that the Bridge by-pass would eventually link a proposed Canterbury by-pass with the improved section of the trunk road to the south-east of Bridge. From Ropersole Farm at Barham, to Iydden Hill, the existing road had been improved to a good standard dual carriageway. The section between Iydden Hill and the approach to the docks and town centre at Dover was under consideration following a Public Inquiry in 1972. The sections between Ropersole Farm and the end of the projected Bridge by-pass was programmed for improvement by the construction of a second carriageway, where only one existed, in the present financial year. Subject to the outcome of this Inquiry, and the availability of funds, it was hoped that work would start on the Bridge by-pass in 1974. Proposals for a mid-Kent motorway linking London with Folkestone were published in June 1972. This motorway, if constructed, would become the main access route to the channel ports and a Channel Tunnel terminal, if this were also built. It would attract much of the cross-channel traffic which now used the A2 trunk road.

3.3 The existing trunk road through Bridge, part of the old Roman road, descended into the village at a gradient of about 1:18 and climbed out of it by Bridge Hill at a gradient of about 1:13. Through the village the trunk road was continuously built up on both sides for a distance of 0.6 miles; the carriageway averaged 23 feet wide, but narrowed to 17 feet 6 inches in the built-up area. Parking on the road was prohibited in the village, but it was difficult for delivery vehicles to stop on any part of the trunk road without causing congestion. Conditions for pedestrians were inadequate, footways existing only in places and were generally too narrow. Along the section of the trunk road to be by-passed there were 13 road junctions, 5 junctions with public rights of way and 33 private accesses.

3.4 A traffic census in August 1971 showed the average traffic, during a 16-hour day, was 16,292 pcu's. Of these 6% were heavy goods vehicles. A previous census in August 1965 showed 10,367 pcu's per day, an annual increase of about 5.1%. At such a rate of increase it was expected that by 1980 the trunk road would be required to carry approximately 22,000 vehicles a day in August. Traffic flows on the A2 route would be reduced if and when the Channel Tunnel and the mid-Kent motorway were built. At the present time no decisions had been taken about these, but if they were in operation by

1980 it was estimated that the traffic on the A2 would be reduced by about 23%. This would leave approximately 17,000 vehicles per day; a flow that would still be well beyond the capacity of the existing road through the village. The combined effect of high traffic volumes and adverse road conditions had been reflected in the accident record. Exhibit E showed the sites of personal injury accidents recorded in the 3 years ended 31 December 1972. This showed 29 accidents as a result of which 49 people were injured, 2 fatally. The village of Bridge had developed over the years alongside the old Roman road and was, in consequence, unsuitable for the requirements of modern traffic. The increase in freight traffic to and from the continent, combined with the larger number of holiday-makers travelling to Canterbury and Dover, had resulted in ever-increasing congestion, accidents, damage to property and difficulties for pedestrians. All local traffic had to join the trunk road at one point or another, and the community life of the village suffered as a result. As an alternative to a by-pass for the village, the widening of the existing road would destroy a number of attractive buildings, many of which were on the statutory list. The village of Bridge had been designated as a conservation area. The widening of the village street was not therefore a true alternative; what was needed was clearly a new road.

3.5 A new road would generally be designed to have a life of at least 20 years and in the case of Bridge the predicted traffic flow on the trunk road in 1994 was approximately 26,000 vehicles or 31,000 pcu's a day. This would require a dual 2-lane carriageway. The plan, exhibit H, showed that the road would be about 2 miles long, would leave the existing A2 trunk road just to the south of Milestone Farm, cross Bifrons Park on the north side of the village, pass between the Bridge Down Estate and Highland Court Hospital to re-join the existing A2 at the junction with Coldharbour Lane and Frog Lane. It would pass under Bekesbourne Road in a cutting, transfer to an embankment, with a maximum height of 33 feet, to cross Patrixbourne Road and then again go into a cutting through the high ground behind the Bridge Down Estate. Beyond Highland Court it would return to ground level to cross Coldharbour Lane by an overbridge. The road would pass houses at Bridge Down at a minimum distance between the nearest house and the centre of the road of 230 feet, though at this point the new road would be in deep cutting. In Conyngham Lane the nearest house would be 380 feet from the centre of the road. At this point the road would be changing from cutting to embankment. A route for a by-pass on the north side of the village of Bridge was shown on the County Development Plan 1967. The road now proposed was based on this line except that the alignment had now been moved approximately 100 yards further east between Conyngham Lane and Highland Court so that its effect on residential property could be minimised as far as possible, having regard to severance and the effect on other property and land to the east of the by-pass.

3.6 The scheme as published in the draft Orders would require commercial vehicles making local journeys to continue to use the existing roads through and at the southern end of the village. It had been proposed, therefore, to the Local Authorities and all persons affected, that the published scheme should be modified to enable these vehicles to join the by-pass at the eastern end and avoid the village so far as possible. This modification, shown as exhibit J, would connect slip roads from Coldharbour Lane and Frog Lane with the by-pass. The modification was before the Inquiry for consideration.

3.7 After summarising the advantages of the proposed by-pass, Mr Hammond said that other routes had been considered for the by-pass and were shown on the plan exhibit M. The route marked "B", widening the road on its present alignment, had been rejected, but the route marked "C" was investigated in more detail. (Route "C" would pass to the south of Bridge between the village and the disused railway; its terminal junctions with the A2 would be at approximately the same points as the proposed road). The alternatives were rejected in favour of the present proposal on grounds of greater

damage to amenity, more visual intrusion, severance of land, length and cost. The main disadvantages of Route "C" were that the visual intrusion along the valley, viewed from the village would be greater than that for a northern route. It would have greater adverse effect on an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and would seriously affect Bourne House, a Grade I listed building set in a notable 18th century parkland landscape. The route would also involve greater severance of both Renville and Great Pett Farms with greater length and cost of new road required.

3.8 The relation between the present proposal and a prospective Canterbury by-pass was considered. Studies had made it clear that an outer by-pass for the City of Canterbury would ultimately be required and various routes for this by-pass had been considered. Detailed preparation and consideration of such a scheme would take a considerable time and it was unlikely that a Canterbury by-pass could be completed before the early 1980s. It was clear that a scheme to by-pass Bridge and relieve the village of through traffic could not be delayed until the time when a Bridge by-pass could be combined with a by-pass of Canterbury. In any case, a combined by-pass, if one were built, would have the disadvantage that much of the local traffic, including heavy goods vehicles travelling between Dover and Canterbury, would remain on the existing road through Bridge.

Evidence of Mr L C Waters, Kent County Council

3.9 Mr L C Waters, a Chartered Engineer and Chartered Town Planner, Assistant County Planning Officer, said that a by-pass for Bridge had been under consideration for many years. After discussion with the then Ministry of Transport a route for the by-pass passing on the north-east side of the village was shown in the Kent Development Plan published in March 1952. This route was also shown on the 1967 revision of the plan. The route was safeguarded in 1954 on an application for development in Conyngham lane and again in 1958 on the application for development permission at the Bridge Hill Estate. The proposal for a by-pass on the north-east side of the village had therefore been known since 1952 and had been disclosed in land charges searches and other enquiries.

3.10 The Development Plan had defined much of the locality as an Area of Great Landscape Value and in 1968 the National Parks Commission designated a smaller area as of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Commission also submitted proposals for a long-distance footpath which, in July 1969, became the North Down Way. There were a large number of buildings listed as of special architectural or historic interest and the area of about 800 yards on both sides of Bridge High Street had been designated as a Conservation Area. A similar Conservation Area had been designated for Patricxbourne and one proposed for Bishopsbourne. After describing the physical conditions on the trunk road in Bridge, Mr Waters said that the County Council, as both Highway and Planning Authority, considered that a by-pass for Bridge should have very high priority.

3.11 The choice of route for the by-pass between a northern and a southern route was by no means clear cut, though it was the opinion of the County Council that a northern route would cause the least damage to the environment. The Council would strongly oppose any suggestion for widening the existing High Street and Bridge Hill. In 1951 and again in 1970 when a northern and a southern route were examined in detail the major influence on the selection of a route was the position of Bourne Park in relation to Bridge. Bourne Park was a fine example of high quality 18th century landscape, the setting for an important Grade I listed building with an ornamental lake. The park extended from the trunk road to the disused railway line and Bishopsbourne Village lay on the south-eastern edge. The park was traversed by a highway and two public foot-paths and, in addition to its intrinsic value, provided an important amenity for

visitors to enjoy in comparative seclusion. Bifrons Park, on the north side of Bridge, was also a fine parkland area though the intrusion of a new road through it could be reduced by selecting a route nearer to the High Street as was first proposed in 1951. Of the two areas of attractive landscape, Mr Waters considered that the northern route would cause the lesser damage to the total environment.

3.12 In considering the present proposals the County Planning Committee had raised no planning objections but had asked for further consultation on (1) the landscaping of the new route including the treatment of banks and slopes and (2) the bridge carrying the new route over the stream and Patricbourne Road which should be a single-span structure to retain an open view down the valley. The road embankment across the valley rising to a maximum height of about 35 ft would cause visual intrusion and the treatment of the slopes of this embankment was very important. He hoped that the owners of the adjoining parkland would cooperate in this; the County Council would assist with tree planting proposals. Intrusion would be less to the east of Patricbourne Road where the by-pass would enter a deep cutting which would give adequate protection to the houses on the Bridge Hill Estate. There would be environmental disadvantages to some houses including several at the north end of Conyngham Lane. Some of these houses were in existence before 1951. The County Council would reserve its position on the landscaping proposals, but Mr Waters considered that the route proposed was the optimum one having regard to all the environmental considerations which had to be taken into account in the locality.

3.13 Turning to a possible southern route, Mr Waters said that this had been re-examined in some detail in 1970. The conclusion reached was that because of the constraints imposed by Renville and its farm, Field House, Great Pett Farm and by Bourne Park all the possible routes would be severely damaging to the environment, would introduce major severance and could not be recommended in planning terms in preference to a northern route. There was only 650 feet between the buildings of Renville and the existing trunk road and between them and the old railway track. Between Great Pett Farm and the railway track the space was reduced to 500 feet. A by-pass would need to pass through two of these gaps which were far too narrow to accommodate a new highway without very serious consequences. At first sight the use of part of the old railway track appeared attractive. West of Bridge the new road might leave the existing trunk road between the Gate Public House and Milestone Farm to join the track without serious difficulty, but very strong objections would arise when the new road had to leave the railway track to rejoin the trunk road east of Bridge. There appeared to be three possibilities (which he described) but any of these alternatives would be so seriously damaging to the environment as not to be considered as offering an alternative to the northern route.

#### Evidence of Mr L D Kramer AILA

3.14 Mr L D Kramer, a Landscape Architect to the Department of the Environment, described his proposals for landscaping the new road and exhibited plans and drawings of cross-sections of the road which were also projected on the screen. He said that the details should not be regarded as final at this stage as the detailed proposals were more readily and accurately assessed when the line of the road had been established on the ground. At this stage there was difficulty in deciding which views should be screened and which should be opened up. He hoped that by the time the line of the road could be walked, the Local Authority and individuals would have given their views and comments on the draft proposals. In addition to the planting of trees and shrubs, which he described, there were possibilities of regrading the embankment slopes to merge with the adjoining land and earthworks to soften the visual impact at the

transition from the cutting to the embankment near the top of Conyngham Lane. These works would require the cooperation of the owners of the adjoining land. Great care would be taken to preserve existing trees and it was most desirable to ensure that as far as possible the existing vegetation was preserved so that the corridor through which the by-pass ran maintained its landscape character. Tree Preservation Orders could help to achieve this.

3.15 In reply to questions Mr Kramer said that tree planting in itself would not have much effect on the noise, though it might have some psychological effect if the source of the noise was no longer visible. Contouring of the slopes also would not have much effect on noise except perhaps at the junction between the cutting and the embankment to which he had referred.

Evidence of Mr D H Ritchie BSc MICE MIMunE

3.16 Mr D H Ritchie, Assistant County Engineer, giving evidence about the possible level of noise from the new by-pass, described the measurement of sound levels on the decibel scale and defined what was meant by the "L10 index" and the "L90 index" as measures of the average level of noise referred to a normal 18-hour day. He discussed the maximum values recommended in the Wilson Report 1963 and the recommendation of the Noise Advisory Council in 1971 that no existing development should be subjected to more than 70 dBA on the L10 index. This must be regarded as the maximum for new housing or the imposition of noise on existing housing. Measurement of existing noise levels at three sites in Bridge (by methods which he described) showed that this level was reached only at the second site in the middle of Bridge High Street. There the average level was 77.5 dBA reaching 80 dBA for most of the daylight working hours. The other two sites, at the top of Conyngham Lane and at Bridge Down were very quiet, with averages of 49 dBA and 51 dBA. At the first site there was a rise between 7 and 8 in the morning due to bird song and at the latter a sharp rise to over 70 dBA between 5 and 6 pm caused by the local lawn-mowers.

3.17 The prediction of future noise levels depended on estimates of the traffic flow, the percentage of heavy goods vehicles, speeds and gradients, with adjustments for ground attenuation and screening effects. Mr Ritchie exhibited a large plan on which he had drawn adjacent to the line of the by-pass, the 70 dBA contour and the 65 dBA contour. The only houses within or near to the latter were those at the top of Conyngham Lane. When the by-pass was opened the present level of 49 dBA could be expected to rise to 63 dBA though houses lower down Conyngham Lane would be partially screened and have lower levels. This was an extremely quiet area at present and 65 dBA would be a normal index for a residential through road in a suburban area. The second site, in the High Street, would benefit substantially from the construction of the by-pass. The present L10 average of 77.5 dBA would drop to 67.5 dBA when the by-pass was opened. The third site would show virtually no change as a result of the by-pass. This also was a very quiet area with an existing L10 index of 51 dBA such noise as there was being due to traffic on the existing A2 and to noise generated on the estate itself. The by-pass, although closer than the existing A2, would be in a deep cutting which would act as a substantial barrier. No properties were expected to fall within the 70 dBA contour of the by-pass; all properties on the existing A2 would obtain substantial reductions in noise and, with the exception of a few houses at the top of Conyngham Lane, the majority of the remaining properties between the existing A2 and the eastern edge of Bridge were expected to experience either no change or a slight reduction in noise levels.

3.18 In reply to questions, Mr Ritchie said that the effect on the noise level at the primary school would probably be nil; there would be some noise from traffic on the by-pass but a considerable reduction in that from the A2. He agreed that the degree of screening enjoyed by houses in Conyngham Lane would vary; those at the top would have less, those at the bottom would have more and would also enjoy a considerable reduction of noise from the High Street.

#### IV REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE A2 GROUP

##### Bridge - Blean Rural District Council

4.1 Mr D C Foreman, Deputy Clerk, said that the Council had given full consideration to the proposals for the by-pass and were in agreement with them. They were also satisfied that the proposed modification at Coldharbour Lane at the eastern end would be a distinct improvement on the published proposals and they supported the suggestion that this modification should be recommended. Mr S L Grainger, a member, said that he gave general support to the northern route and would also express his appreciation of the efforts of Mr Kramer in landscaping the road.

##### Bridge Parish Council

4.2 Mr L J F Sherley said that a Parish Meeting in December 1972 had passed a resolution by 127 votes to none approving the construction of the Bridge by-pass as presented. Their resolution did deplore the refusal of the Ministry to consider the provision of an M2 motorway extension from Brenley Corner to Dover, and it objected to a proposed lay-by and asked for the road to be moved to the north-east as far as discretion would allow. The Parish Council gave their full support to the proposals. They had considered the traffic forecasts, as quoted by Mr Hammond, and were convinced that whatever might be done in the building of motorways or the Channel Tunnel a by-pass for Bridge would be needed in any case. He understood that the proposed lay-by had been deleted from the plan.

##### Bishopsbourne Parish Council

4.3 Mrs E C Champion said that her Council were fully satisfied with the proposals and hoped that the by-pass would be completed quickly. She said she thought the evidence of Mr Waters on the planning considerations which led to the choice of a northern route was convincing.

##### Patrixbourne Parish Meeting

4.4 Mr P Greenwood, Acting Clerk, referred to a resolution passed at a Parish Meeting on the 14 December 1972 which expressed concern for the environmental consequences and the impact upon residents of Patrixbourne which would result from the construction of the proposed Bridge by-pass. The Meeting could not support the proposed northern route without further information on alternative routes being given and it was not convinced that all possible alternative routes had been thoroughly examined. The voting was 22 for and 7 against this resolution. He had sent copies of this resolution to the appropriate authorities but he had not been authorised to make any objection to the proposals on behalf of the Parish Council. He agreed that the evidence given at the Inquiry showed that the alternative routes had been examined. He gave his personal view that the evidence in favour of the northern route would be convincing to his Council.

## The A2 Group

4.5 Mr Goulden, Solicitor, on behalf of the Group said that they had been promoting a campaign for a Bridge by-pass for at least 10 years. The case they had put forward had been largely accepted by the Department of the Environment. The Group could, if necessary, produce scores of witnesses as to the noise, the dirt, the fumes and the dangers to residents. Everyone was agreed that a by-pass was required and that the need was urgent. This had been a very active campaign for years; no-one could have been in doubt about the Group's intentions and the present opponents of the scheme had always known their aims. The northern route was in fact the only route which had ever been put forward or advocated. The Group had conducted its own traffic census over a 24-hour day for 4 days. Their results fully confirmed the figures given by the Department and although the Group accepted the predictions made for future traffic, it had to be pointed out that projections made on a straight line basis could not take account of other factors such as the Common Market, and the growth of commercial lorry traffic through Dover. The only question left was whether the by-pass should go north or south of the village, but it was now too late to consider alternatives. The need of Bridge for the by-pass was too great and too urgent for further time to be wasted in considering alternatives to the proposed scheme. Mr J Purchase and Mr D Lewis said that the historic route for the by-pass was on the north side of Bridge. This had always seemed to the Group to be the route of choice because it involved less interference with agriculture, would give less rise to noise and visual intrusion since much of the road would be in cutting and would probably be cheaper. The Group therefore gave full support to the present proposals.

## V OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSALS

### The Compulsory Purchase Order

5.1 Mr J H Goulden, Solicitor, on behalf of the Highland Investment Co Ltd said that the Company carried on the business of farming at Highland Court Farm and had a large cold-store housed in the annexe to Highland Court. This had a capacity of 4,000 tons with facilities for cooling, processing and packing produce. It was regularly visited by heavy lorries up to 32 tons so that in addition to the problems of land-take and severance caused by the scheme, there were problems of access for these heavy vehicles. Under the proposals as published many of these lorries would have had to go through Bridge to reach Highland Court, but if the modification to the junction of Coldharbour Lane now put forward by Mr Hammond were adopted, the lorries would be able to use the by-pass. This, together with the widening of Coldharbour Lane envisaged in the Side Roads Order, made the proposals acceptable to the Company and their objections would be withdrawn.

5.2 The objection made on behalf of S W Mount and Sons Ltd, farmers, having been discussed and agreement reached, it was understood that the objection had been withdrawn.

5.3 Mr W D Stewart, of Bridge Down, appeared therefore as the sole remaining objector to the Compulsory Purchase Order. He said that he shared with the protagonists of a southern route the view that the Inquiry had been presented with very scanty information. If the Ministry had presented full plans of a southern route with full information about embankments, cuttings, tree planting, noise levels and effects on visual amenity and on the farms as they had done in the case of the proposed route, the Inquiry would have had a real choice between the two routes and might have suggested possible improvements to either. His objection to the proposed route was that it came so close to his house that he would lose part of the field which adjoins his garden and which he owned jointly with Mr R J Good. Beyond the loss of the land which was in

effect a playground for his own and his neighbours children, his objection was that the road ran much too close to all the houses at the top of the Bridge Down Estate, with the inevitable intrusion of noise and fumes. It would sever bridleway BR268 which was part of the newly opened North Downs Way and destroy the splendid belt of woodland which was one of the attractions of the path. Mr Stewart submitted that if the centre line of the proposed road could be moved 100 yards further to the east there would be several advantages. It would leave the line about equi-distant between Highlands Court and the nearest homes at Bridge Down. This would be an obvious benefit to the residents of the Bridge Hill Estate without significantly increasing the noise or intrusion at Highland Court. The effect on agricultural land would be small since the severed portions of orchard and arable land would be easily accessible. Above all, an outstandingly impressive part of the recently designated North Downs Way would be preserved for walkers and riders instead of disappearing under the by-pass. If, moreover, a footbridge could be provided across the by-pass at this point the existing line of the North Downs Way could be preserved and the rather boring new piece of footpath proposed along the east edge of the by-pass could be avoided. A petition signed by 80 residents had been submitted to the Department objecting to the published proposals and suggesting modifications on the lines that he had proposed. Mr Stewart added that the children on the estate could get access to the footpaths, and to the woodland, from their own or their neighbours gardens and they could be left in this area to play in complete safety. When the road was built access to the paths and country north of the road could be gained only by a circuitous route which would not be possible for unaccompanied small children.

Residents of Patricxbourne, Bekesbourne Road etc

5.4 The resolution passed by the Patricxbourne Parish Meeting in December 1972 opposing the choice of a northern route for the by-pass is referred to in the previous Section.

5.5 Mr K A Bailey MIM said that the proposed road would cross the most beautiful area of Birrons Park and bring the new road within about one-quarter of a mile of the village of Patricxbourne. The village dated back to the 12th century, had many ancient buildings and was of almost unique character. A large modern road crossing this landscape would be there for always; it was essential that it should be in the right place. A line to the south of Bridge would be in the more direct line from Canterbury to Dover, could use the old railway line and would probably save costs and land with less damage to the environment. They all wanted a by-pass, but it must be in the right place.

5.6 Professor R E Pahl emphasised the importance of public participation in the decisions about the by-pass. Mr Waters had said that the choice between a northern and a southern route was not "clear cut" but the Department had acted as if the choice were quite clear even on environmental grounds. The case for a by-pass to Bridge was indeed clear enough, but the case for a road on this line had not been made out. There were doubts about the degree of intrusion on the landscape, the generation of noise and the economic evaluation of the route in comparison with the possible alternatives. Too much weight appeared to have been given to the importance of preserving Bourne House and Bourne Park; there were houses and a park on the north side of Bridge which merited equal consideration. There had been no discussion of the scenic effects and possible landscaping of alternative routes. The 35 ft embankment and bridge over Patricxbourne Road would throw the traffic noise over a considerable area and he suggested that noise levels would rise above those recommended in the Wilson Report. Noise intrusion might well be less from a by-pass south of Bridge; there was no evidence. In the economic evaluation the relation between the Bridge by-pass and the Canterbury by-pass had to be taken into account. The Canterbury by-pass was a

new feature in the planning and although Bridge could not wait for Canterbury it could be that a different route for the Bridge by-pass would be adopted if the line of the Canterbury by-pass were taken into account. On the face of it, a by-pass for Canterbury passing to the south of the City would lead naturally to a by-pass passing to the south of Bridge. The Inquiry had not been given the evidence on which to judge these matters. There were many objections to the proposals, but people were afraid to come forward because they felt that the by-pass was urgently needed and that objections might delay its completion or even postpone it.

5.7 Mr Hammond said that if the by-passes for Canterbury and for Bridge had to be treated as one problem the effect would be to postpone the Bridge by-pass for many years. If either by-pass depended on the other, neither could go ahead until both were ready and Canterbury would not be ready for some time to come. What could be said was that the point chosen for the beginning of the Bridge by-pass was a reasonable point for the Canterbury by-pass to terminate. A combined by-pass for Canterbury and Bridge, even if it were sound and feasible, would be a mistake since it would leave a large volume of residual traffic going to and from Canterbury continuing to pass through Bridge.

5.8 Mr Ritchie, re-called, said that the recommendations in the Wilson Report referred to the noise levels inside dwellings. More up-to-date recommendations were those of the Noise Advisory Council in 1971; he would not, however, regard the predicted levels from the by-pass anywhere as inconsistent with the Wilson Report recommendations with the possible exception of one or two houses at the top of Conyngham Lane. At the school most of the noise came from the High Street traffic. The school was some distance from the proposed by-pass and it was unlikely that there would be any change in the present noise levels either inside the school or outside it. He agreed that noise was generated by the steep hills on either side of Bridge and that the effect on the present A2 was considerable. On the by-pass there would be a freer flow of traffic at a more nearly constant speed.

5.9 Mr R J Hooke said that he was wholly in favour of a rapid solution to the problem of the Bridge by-pass. There had been a failure of planning when the M2 was built and terminated at Brenley Corner - the need for extending the motorway to the coast had not been foreseen. They now had to find a second best solution and although he was anxious to avoid delay, a little delay could be justified if it led to the right answer to the problem. The problem of Bridge could be solved equally well by a route to the north or to the south. The merits of either route were "by no means clear cut" as Mr Waters had said; amenity was a subjective test, very illusive as a decisive factor and so far as cost and engineering difficulties were concerned, the routes were roughly equivalent. The northern route had been on the map since 1952 with a slight alteration in the Revised County Plan and it seemed that it had been adopted as a fait accompli; no proper case had been made for it. This was not a very democratic procedure nor was it satisfactory to those affected by it. Perhaps the fact that there was only one (absent) land-owner on the north side had led the Department to prefer a northern route in the expectation that the land acquisition would be easier than on the south where the land-owners might give more trouble. Mr Hooke remarked that there had been letters in the press accusing the opponents of the proposals as moved by "selfishness and self-interest". He was sure that this was not the case; so far as he was concerned, his house stood between the two possible routes and would be out of sight and out of hearing of either so that he had no personal interest to pursue. The objections were not aimed at delaying the by-pass - it was not a matter of whether the by-pass went by particular houses - but there was proper concern that the planning of the by-pass should be right.

5.10 It was plainly desirable that there should be a link between the Bridge by-pass and the Canterbury by-pass and the other improvements on the A2. If the three by-passes between Brenley Corner and Bridge were dealt with together it would make for a more workman-like design and would lead to economies in construction. It would not be necessary to postpone the Bridge by-pass until the Canterbury by-pass was ready; the route should be looked at as a whole and the Bridge by-pass fitted into the pattern even if the actual construction of the Canterbury by-pass was deferred for some years.

5.11 Dr D G Pratt MB BS also advanced this view of a total conception linking the Harbledown, Canterbury and Bridge by-passes in one design. The alternative route shown on the map exhibited was one of three routes drawn over 20 years ago and would not be his choice; if one studied the wrong route one would of course find good reasons against it. The route proposed in the scheme produced conflict with the existing roads that crossed it and difficult interchanges at the two ends. That at the west end would become worse when the Canterbury by-pass had to be fitted in. The possible level of noise at the primary school gave concern; 65 dBA was a high level of noise and even intermittent noise at this level could interfere with the schoolwork. The effect of noise had also to be considered at Highland Court which was a mental hospital and at the houses in Bridge Down. The 35 feet embankment across the valley at a point near to the village would have an unfortunate visual effect in severing the valley. It was not possible to screen this. These disadvantages, said Dr Pratt, would have to be accepted if there were no alternatives but in his view there were several alternative, and better, lines to the south of Bridge even if the extension of the M2 had to be ruled out.

5.12 Mr Hammond said that the proposed M20 motorway would provide the main access route between London and the channel ports and it was for this reason that the M2, which was a valuable by-pass to the Medway towns, would not be extended beyond its present termination at Brenley Corner. Some traffic would eventually transfer from the A2 to the M20, but Bridge would still need its by-pass. The Department had, of course, considered a link by-pass for Harbledown, Canterbury and Bridge but the Harbledown by-passes were ready to start in 1974 and it was hoped that Bridge would also start in that year; there was no need to wait for the Canterbury scheme which must inevitably take some years yet. There was an important argument against a comprehensive scheme from the west of Harbledown to beyond Bridge in that it might fail to achieve the main object so far as Bridge was concerned. Canterbury attracted a good deal of traffic and would continue to do so when the by-passes were built; Bridge must not be linked with Canterbury in a way that continued to bring much of this traffic through Bridge. A small by-pass was likely to be much more effective in taking all the traffic out of Bridge.

5.13 Mrs Pratt referred to the dangers to children and the concern of mothers and other residents for the relief from traffic in the High Street which a by-pass would give. She looked forward, however, with apprehension to the difficult period of construction when the side roads would be muddy, noisy and dangerous for years. She felt that the benefit of relief in the High Street would be diminished by the continuing presence of the ugly 35 feet embankment across a beautiful valley. It seemed that the worst aspects of the construction period and the permanent damage to the landscape were unnecessary when a good alternative route to the south of Bridge was available. Fewer people would be affected by that route, but it seemed that the avoidance of Bourne Park had been the determining factor. Bifrons Park on the north side was, in her view, equally beautiful, it was more accessible and much more important to the residents.

5.14 Proposals for routes for the by-pass to the south of Bridge were made by the above and other speakers - these are discussed in the next section.

#### Residents of Conyngham Lane

5.15 Mr G F Stoneham said that those interested in this Inquiry fell into three groups. The first comprised those who had been pressing for a by-pass passionately for many years and were prepared to accept the present proposals as providing the quickest solution despite the many defects. The second group included people like himself who had much to lose in amenity value from the construction of the by-pass and were appalled at the scale and scope of what was intended. Thirdly, there were those who were convinced that an alternative route could be found which would have considerably less effect on the environment and were prepared to accept a small delay while this alternative was studied. He had been aware for many years that the likely route for the by-pass would be north of the village and that it must affect his environment. He and his neighbours in Conyngham Lane accepted this situation taking the broad view that the needs of the village were greater than their own peace and tranquility. They were however appalled by proposals put forward only last November to run an elevated motorway to a standard greater than anything achieved on the M2 and to do this without properly preparing an alternative route. The 13 residents concerned had all bought their houses without knowledge of this motorway; the solicitors searches in 1964 when the houses were bought had given no indication of a motorway on this scale. Right up to the time of this Inquiry, it was the general belief in the village that the line of the by-pass was to be moved 100 yards further to the east. It was an additional blow to find at this Inquiry that this was a misunderstanding and that the Department had no intention of altering the published proposals. He did not suggest that it was the Department's intention to mislead, but the fact remained that both the statement of the Bridge Parish Council and the unqualified acceptance of the proposal by the A2 Group was based on this misunderstanding. All the residents of Conyngham Lane were deeply concerned at these proposals, many were elderly or unwilling to speak at a Public Inquiry, but he knew that he could speak for them. A consideration that had not yet been mentioned was the proposal to build old people's homes at the back of Conyngham Lane. It seemed particularly unfortunate that old people in need of peace and quiet should be disturbed by the noise and bustle of a motorway.

5.16 He would put 3 questions to the Inquiry. First, was such a grandiose proposal justified in view of the development of the M20 motorway. Second, was there not still time to integrate the Bridge by-pass with the Canterbury by-pass. Third, could the previous proposal to move the by-pass 100 yards further to the east be revived to the great benefit of the residents of Bridge.

5.17 Mr L H Young CEng MIEE pointed out that the nearest house in Conyngham Lane would be only 300 feet from the centre line of the by-pass. In his written objection he had also pointed out that at the end of Conyngham Lane the road would be on an embankment of 18 feet rising to 35 feet at Patricxbourne Road. Noise and pollution from traffic on this raised embankment would spread over a wide area, which included the local school, and would be much worse than that from the present A2 which lay lower down and was well screened.

5.18 In reply to the point made about solicitors searches, Mr Hammond said that there was of course no Order for the road in 1964 and the solicitors would find no reference to it. But the line of the road had been shown on the County Plan in 1952 and the line had been safeguarded in 1954 when a planning application had been made for the development of what was now Conyngham Lane. Solicitors would be aware of this.

## Residents of Bridge Down

5.19 Mr Stewart's remarks are set out above where mention is made also of the petition signed by 80 residents of the Bridge Hill Estate.

5.20 Mr P T Collingwood said there must be concern about the impact of a road on this scale on private houses. Noise and pollution would be increased and would be spread over a wider area, a degree of intrusion which seemed unnecessary when the road could be taken further away from the residential area. At the present time the valley between Bridge and Patricxbourne was unspoilt by any of the paraphernalia which accompanied the age in which we live; there were no pylons, railways or main roads. It was true that the area to the south of Bridge was equally beautiful, but it did contain pylons and a railway and there were fewer houses there to be affected by noise or pollution.

5.21 Mr E A E Wotherall referred again to the misunderstanding that the line of the road was to be moved 100 yards to the east. He said that everybody had been misled by this statement although the Department had now made it clear that there had been no change made in the published proposals. It was nevertheless a very attractive suggestion which could give considerable relief to the residents of Bridge Down without affecting other interests and he asked that it might again be considered.

## Junction and Diversion at West End of By-Pass

5.22 Mr J S Paul BA MCIT, Area Manager, East Kent Road Car Company Limited, said that the Company operated three bus services through the main street of Bridge. These were services between Canterbury and Dover and Canterbury and Folkestone, but many passengers were picked up on this part of the A2 and in Bridge Village itself so that the buses must still continue to operate via Bridge Village. The proposed modification at the south-eastern end of the by-pass shown on exhibit J would be convenient for buses entering or leaving Bridge at that end and was fully acceptable. The arrangement of the junction at the Canterbury (west) end of the by-pass, however, would create considerable problems for the buses and required modification.

5.23 Buses travelling towards Canterbury through Bridge could continue on the existing A2 and get through the junction with the new by-pass at the west end without difficulty. Buses from Canterbury on the A2 would have to turn onto the by-pass for a few hundred yards, leave it again by a slip road to the left, turn right into Bekesbourne Road, cross the new bridge and then go down the (unnamed) spur road to rejoin the A2 on the hill leading down into Bridge. This would have several adverse affects. The proposed diversion would add an estimated quarter of a mile to each journey, including two additional "T" junctions. This would add to bus-journey time as well as making the diversion very noticeable to passengers so reducing the attractiveness of bus travel. The additional mileage would add to the time required to cover the journey, but the negotiation of the two "T" junctions would also add to delays in bus services. Moreover the spur road was only 15 feet 6 inches wide in places which was not enough to allow the wide buses to pass other large vehicles. The "T" junction at the A2 was particularly difficult since it was so shaped that a bus emerging from the spur road would block traffic both ways on the hill out of Bridge. Taking these difficulties into account, together with the additional mileage, it was estimated that the cost of the diversion of the three bus services would be over £980 a year. This cost could only be recovered by an increase in fares.

5.24 The Company appreciated the need for a Bridge by-pass and agreed with the proposals with the exception that it was considered that Bekesbourne Road, including the spur road, was unsuitable for bus services involving at least 3 journeys an hour. It was

suggested that the problem could be overcome by leaving a break in the central reservation of the new by-pass so that buses could keep to the right and continue down the existing A2. If a deceleration lane were added, it would prevent buses blocking the carriageway and, if necessary, the break could be restricted to "buses only".

5.25 Mr R J Hooke said that the case for the buses was clear, but he thought it applied also to all the other heavy vehicles visiting Bridge and the neighbourhood for which Bekesbourne Road and the spur road were quite unsuitable. Mr Paul said that this might be so but that he would claim a certain priority for public transport. Mr R T Watson thought the Bus Company had made a good case for a break in the central reservation at the west end of the by-pass which would permit access by local traffic without offering an attraction to through traffic. Bekesbourne Road was already used necessarily by all the traffic from Patricxbourne, including heavy vehicles, and it was now proposed to put onto it all the traffic from Canterbury to Bridge and to the farms and villages lying south of Bridge. It was too narrow for this purpose and the spur road was even narrower, dangerously so. Widening of these roads would not be easy because of the downfall of the land, an expensive reconstruction would be required. These were substandard lanes which were quite inadequate for the traffic proposed; it would be more costly to bring them up to standard than to make a simple rearrangement of the junction with the A2. It would be simple by suitable signposting and design of the filter lane to keep through traffic out of Bridge. He thought that in any case the simple junction proposed would be a hazard to traffic passing from the fast by-pass to the slow section of the A2 towards Canterbury, and to traffic emerging from Bridge, and that a roundabout should be provided. This would solve the problem of the buses and would serve to discourage through traffic from entering Bridge.

5.26 Mr Hammond said that the calculation of additional cost to the Bus Company should perhaps take account of the time that would certainly be saved by the buses in passing through Bridge High Street. The object of the proposed diversion was to keep the through traffic out of Bridge and if a right-turn were permitted at the junction it would both increase the hazard and defeat this object. It might be difficult to keep other traffic out even from a "buses only" lane. The improvement of Bekesbourne Road and the spur road might well prove to be necessary, but this would be a matter for the Kent County Council and was not part of the present proposals.

## VI ALTERNATIVE LINES SOUTH OF BRIDGE

6.1 Exhibit M before the Inquiry showed three alternative routes. Route "A" being the route proposed north of Bridge, route "B" a widening of the High Street on the line of the existing A2 and Route "C" a line beginning and ending at approximately the same points as route "A" but passing to the south of Bridge between the village and the disused railway. The disadvantages of route "C" having been set out by Mr Hammond, a number of objectors argued that there were other possible lines for a southern route which did not show the same disadvantages and might have considerable environmental advantage. Mr Bailey suggested that the road should follow the old railway line which would save land and be less damaging to the environment. Professor Pahl said that the southern route had been dismissed, but the Inquiry had been given no real evidence about it. They knew that the route proposed would generate a lot of noise and that the 35 ft embankment would be visually intrusive, but no evidence had been given to disprove the assertion that a southern route would be quieter and less visually intrusive. A route to the south would conform with the Canterbury by-pass which must also pass to the south of the City and although it had been suggested that the costing differences were marginal, it might be that if the Canterbury by-pass and the Bridge by-pass were dealt with together a southern line would be substantially cheaper. The

Inquiry did not have the evidence to make the economic evaluation. Mr Stewart said that if the southern route were properly studied, planned and presented in the same detail as the northern route it would be possible for the residents to choose between them and perhaps suggest improvements.

6.2 Mr Hooke said that route "C" was clearly not the most satisfactory line to the south. The line should start earlier at the western end, cross to the disused railway, thus avoiding Great Pett Farm and avoid the more attractive part of Bourne Park. His advice was that the land south of Bridge was less valuable agriculturally than that north of the village and in any case the severance of farmland at Renville and Great Pett Farm would be minimised if the railway track were used. The only scenery affected by a road on this line would be in Bourne Park which contrasted with the two miles of beautiful country crossed by the proposed northern route. He did not accept the suggestion of Colonel Elliott that this part of the Nailbourne Valley was a frost pocket or that a road here would be more subject to frost and fog than on any other route. In reply to Mr Mummery he thought it would not be necessary to demolish the two houses near the old station. The fact that the railway was a single track on a narrow embankment was not material. Dr Pratt suggested that the road on Mr Hooke's line could be placed on the far side of the railway embankment; this was now covered with trees and it would provide a useful screen and baffle for the road. His solution for the problem of getting back from the railway to the A2 would be to take the road across the corner of Bourne Park to a roundabout on the A2 at the top of Bridge Hill near the entrance to Highland Court. There would be more acute curves but they would be acceptable in this environment. The road would then go nowhere near Bourne House, there would be fewer intersections, landscaping would be easier and there would be no extra cost.

6.3 In reply to these points and suggestions, Mr Hammond said that he was in some difficulty because, although they had been invited, no plans had been lodged and he was not in a position to offer evidence about lines that had not been defined. The Department had looked at the alternatives, including the use of the railway but had been forced to conclude that none of the alternatives gave as satisfactory a line as the proposed northern route. In designing a route for a road, one could pick on features to avoid such as buildings, farms or fine landscape, and end with a line that was quite unacceptable to the engineers. The more practicable course was to design a satisfactory line and then examine it to see if it would be acceptable on environmental, planning and economic considerations.

6.4 Mr J M Vince BSc, Assistant Engineer, Kent County Council, exhibited a large plan on which he had drawn a line for the road using the railway track together with the various alternatives that had been suggested. At the west end it would be possible to get a satisfactory line from the existing A2 to the railway track at the expense of somewhat greater length and further intrusion into farmland, though farm buildings could be avoided. Difficulties arose when the road came to leave the railway. The trouble was that the railway ran away from Bridge and from the A2 so that the more one used the railway track the greater the difficulty of getting back to the A2. The lengths of the two feasible routes, using part of the railway track, would appear to be 14,500 feet and 17,000 feet respectively. This compared with a length of 12,000 feet for the proposed northern route so that a southern route on either of these lines would be longer and more costly. It would not be impossible to design a line, using part of the railway, which conformed to acceptable highway standards, but it would use only a bit of the railway, would be very twisty and would probably demolish Bridge Place. It would not be acceptable, in order to minimise intrusion into Bourne Park, to adopt the acute curves implied in Dr Pratt's suggestion. His roundabout on the A2 at Bridge Hill, even if it were acceptable on traffic grounds, would involve the demolition of houses there. A road on route "C", or any of the variants, would have to be on almost

continuous embankment across the valley - rising to 50 feet on one line - and there was a technical problem in that the cutting and filling did not balance so that it would be necessary to import a large proportion of the fill required.

6.5 Mr L C Waters, Assistant Planning Officer, Kent County Council, replied to a number of questions on the planning aspects of the route. He explained what he had meant when he had said, in his evidence, that the choice between a northern and a southern route was not "clear-cut". He had no doubt that the northern route was the correct choice but a lot of consideration had been given to the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two routes and in particular to the possibility of using the old disused railway track. The disadvantages of a southern route were environmental, the interference with agricultural land and the intrusion into Bourne Park. It would be wrong, on planning considerations, to choose the second-best route. He agreed that Bourne Park and Bifrons Park were comparable in landscape value, and one had to make a choice, but Bifrons Park was better able to take the road which, in any case, would intrude there far less than a similar road in Bourne Park.

6.6 Objections to any route south of Bridge were made by Mr B R Mummery, a farmer, and by Mr E Freshman MB FRCS on behalf of the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies. Mr Mummery said that about 66 acres of the land he farmed lay across the line of the proposed road and would be severed. He also farmed the considerable area on the south side of the A2. He was satisfied that farming interests had been properly considered in the proposals; most of the objectors to the proposals were strangers to farming problems and it seemed that the voice of three farmers carried little weight though it was they who created the scenery for others to enjoy. The severance of his holding on the proposed road was not serious and was manageable and the severance at Highland Court was also manageable. On the other hand, the severance created by a southern route would be so severe as to make Great Pett Farm uneconomic. There would be many small areas of 10 to 15 acres which would be quite unworkable; the position was similar at Renville Farm. People spoke as if the railway were on the edge of civilisation; it was not, people lived and worked land there. Mr Freshman said that the Federation had given a lot of consideration to the Bridge by-pass which had been under discussion for many years. They gave full support to the proposed northern route which seemed to them, on balance, to be much to be preferred on grounds of amenity and environment. He also referred to the risk that a southern route would be more subject to frost and fog. He did, however, have doubts about the proposal to close entry to the A2 at the west end of the by-pass; he would support the request made by the bus company and asked if the road could be left open for a time in order to see whether the risk of through traffic entering Bridge was in fact a real one. Letters were read from Messrs Finn and Petley, Chartered Surveyors, on behalf of property owners at Bourne Park and in Bishopsbourne indicating that strong objection would be made to any proposal to a road through Bourne Park or near to the village of Bishopsbourne.

## VII CLOSING ADDRESS ON BEHALF OF THE DEPARTMENT

7.1 Mr Hammond said that it had been common ground at the Inquiry that a by-pass for Bridge was badly needed. And it was generally accepted that the need was urgent both to cut down traffic congestion and, more particularly, to relieve the inhabitants of Bridge of traffic noise, pollution and danger. Despite the urgency, some objectors would tolerate a "short delay" so that other routes could be studied. Others wanted the Bridge by-pass to be fitted into plans for extending the M2 motorway or for a combined by-pass of Harbledown, Canterbury and Bridge. He had explained why the M2 motorway was not being extended and how the inclusion of the Bridge by-pass in a larger scheme might defeat one of the main objects of the proposals which was to keep through traffic going to and from Canterbury out of Bridge Village. In either case, a "short delay" was not on; rejection of the present proposals would inevitably postpone

a start on the new road for up to 2 years. This was not a threat, or blackmail, but merely a realistic assessment of the time required to design a new road, negotiate for the land required and complete the necessary statutory Orders.

7.2 Delay might be acceptable, though hardly to residents in Bridge High Street, if it could be clearly demonstrated that a route to the south of the village was clearly superior. The Department had investigated the possible lines south of the village as had the County Council though only one - route "C" - was shown on exhibit M. Route "C" was an acceptable line from the point of view of traffic and engineering and was comparable in length and probable cost with the northern route proposed, but it had been rejected on environmental grounds and it had found few supporters at the Inquiry. The variations on it, using part of the old railway track, either failed to meet the traffic and engineering requirements of a major road or, if acceptable in that respect, could not be fitted into the landscape. It was now clear that a southern line, if feasible as a highway, was not acceptable on environmental grounds. If the environmental conditions were met, the road was not practicable on engineering and to meet traffic needs. The evidence given had been quite conclusive about this in addition to the objections of severance of agricultural land, continuous embankments, greater length and greater cost. No line on the south side could avoid intrusion into Bourne Park. To minimise this it had been proposed to adopt the very sub-standard alignment for the road and the junction with the A2. He would find this quite unacceptable for a 70 mph road forming a permanent section of the London - Dover trunk road.

7.3 The objections to the proposals in themselves were not substantial. Concern had been expressed about the effects on houses, the school and the Nailbourne Valley, but there had been few schemes (in his experience) where the effects on people and property would be so small. The school and the projected old people's home would be well away from the road and would be unlikely to get more noise or pollution that came from the present High Street. The road came nearest to houses at Bridge Down and the Department had studied the line to see whether it could be moved farther to the east at this point. The line had already been moved farther out than that shown on the original County Plan, but to move it further would be to intrude on Highland Court and, to a lesser extent, on Patricbourne. The road would be in a deep cutting at this point and noise levels on the estate, which was a very quiet area, would hardly be affected. Residents at the top of Conyngham Lane had, perhaps, the most cause to object because they were near a point where the road emerged from the cutting and passed onto the embankment. The design would try to minimise the effects by altering the profile of the road and by landscaping and Mr Kramer in his evidence had referred to other possibilities. The visual intrusion into this quiet area was regrettable though necessary as part of the price of a by-pass. The predicted noise level would be well within the accepted standard.

7.4 Given the need for a by-pass for Bridge, and no-one had disputed this, the road proposed would have a minimum effect on the environment or on people, would be less damaging to agriculture than other possible routes and was an economical solution to the outstanding problem of Bridge.

## VIII SITE INSPECTION

8.1 In the course of the Inquiry I visited Bridge High Street, Patricbourne, Bishopsbourne, Bakesbourne Road and Patricbourne Road, the two ends of the proposed by-pass and the lanes on the south side of Bridge.

8.2 In company with the parties, I paid formal visits to the Bridge Hill Estate, including the footpaths and woodlands adjoining, to Great Petts Farm and the disused railway, and to Conyngham Lane. I also inspected the approaches to Highland Court Hospital and the possible location for the junction of a southern route with the A2 at the top of Bridge Hill.

## IX FINDINGS OF FACT

9.1 Bridge is a long village on the A2 trunk road about 2½ miles south-east of Canterbury. It is flanked on either side by attractive open country of a park-like character. The village lies across the valley and is approached at either end down quite steep hills. The trunk road through the village has an average width of 23 feet with a minimum width of 17½ feet at some points. At these places it is difficult for two heavy vehicles to pass without risk of collision or encroachment on the narrow pavements.

9.2 The average daily flow of traffic in August 1971 was about 14,000 vehicles a day (16,292 pcu's) showing an increase since 1965 of approximately 5.1% a year. 6% of the vehicles were heavy goods vehicles. It is predicted that by 1980 the average flow in a 16-hour day may rise to 22,000 vehicles.

9.3 In the 3 years to 31 December 1972 there were 29 accidents involving personal injury in which 49 people were injured two of them fatally.

9.4 The proposed by-pass will be a modern road with dual, two-lane carriageways and central reservation. It will run for about 2 miles from the existing A2 trunk road just to the south of Milestone Farm to rejoin the A2 about 400 yards beyond Coldharbour Lane. Access to the by-pass will be limited to the two ends and at the bridges at Bekesbourne Road and Coldharbour Lane which are close to the west end and the east end respectively. The cost of the road is estimated at £1,174,000.

9.5 38 objections were received to the draft Orders after they were published; four of them related to the Compulsory Purchase Order but three of these are withdrawn. The draft Compulsory Purchase Order referred to 14 items of land, or rights over land, required for the construction of the by-pass and the alterations to side roads etc. Four farms will lose land to the road, the total area involved being about 55 acres.

9.6 Demolition of one house was involved in the proposals as published, but this house will be avoided if the proposed modification is adopted. No other buildings are affected.

9.7 Six bridle-roads or footpaths crossing the line of the by-pass will be stepped including the North Downs Way (twice). Three of these tracks can be connected by short diversions to the agricultural underpass in Bifrons Park. A new bridle-road proposed on the north-east side of the by-pass will reconnect the severed parts of BR 268 (the North Downs Way) and will also give access (via the new accommodation bridge at Highland Court) to the other paths on the north side of the road.

9.8 The by-pass will run on an embankment, about half a mile long, from the top of Conyngham Lane across Patricbourne Road. It will reach a height of 33 feet and will be clearly visible from houses in Bridge and from some houses in Patricbourne. Most of the remainder of the road will be in cutting.

9.9 Average noise levels on the Ll0 scale will reach 65 dBA at houses at the top of Conyngham Lane. All other houses, including those nearest to the road at Bridge Down, the school, and the projected old people's home will lie outside the 65 dBA contour. Noise levels at houses in the High Street will be substantially reduced.

9.10 The volume of traffic using Bekesbourne Road and the (unnamed) spur road will be affected by the proposal to close entry to the A2 at the west end of the by-pass. Bekesbourne Road will continue to carry the traffic from Patricbourne to Canterbury

but traffic in the reverse direction will use the by-pass. All traffic, including buses, from Canterbury to Bridge and to farms and villages south of Bridge will have to use Bekesbourne Road and the spur road. This will be additional to the existing traffic between Patrizbourne and Bridge. The spur road is winding and narrows to 15 feet 6 inches in places. Passing is difficult for heavy vehicles and the exit from the road is awkward for long vehicles.

## X CONCLUSIONS

10.1 It is declared policy to bring the whole of the A2 trunk route from the end of the M2 to Dover up to a standard suitable for the growing traffic it has to carry; widening to modern dual carriageway standards is now complete or in progress over much of the route. Of the unimproved sections, Bridge High Street - narrow, congested and dangerous - must be one of the worst. To the residents of Bridge, and to those who go to its shops and school, the problem of traffic needs seems secondary to the human need for relief from the unending flow of cars, container lorries and tankers. There is truth in the assertion made at the Inquiry that most of the inhabitants want a by-pass, now, whatever its defects and disadvantages.

10.2 It is, of course, a strong argument for the present proposals that they give the prospect of early relief to Bridge and that, if they are rejected, there must be a delay, perhaps up to 2 years, before an alternative scheme is brought forward. But this argument should not be allowed to prevail over consideration of the merits of alternative schemes; if one or other of them can be shown to be clearly superior to the proposed route it requires consideration even at the risk of some delay. Various lines suggested for a road passing to the south of the village are open to this test.

10.3 On merits, it cannot be said that any of them show clear advantages over the "northern" line proposed. Route "C" was put forward on exhibit M as one that would be practicable from the point of view of engineering and traffic. It would begin and end at the same points as the northern route and would, therefore, not be much longer or more expensive. It had the disadvantages of greater visual intrusion, greater severance of farms and serious intrusion into Bourne Park, and it found few supporters.

10.4 There was more support for a line farther out, making use of part of the disused railway embankment which runs roughly parallel with the A2 at a distance of one-quarter - three-quarters of a mile to the south-west. The attraction of this old railway track is obvious enough and it has not escaped the attention of highway planners in the past. The trouble lies in the geography of the railway which means that, if the by-pass is to be reasonably short and of acceptable standard, only a short section of the railway could be used. Even so, at the west end, the direct line from the A2 to the railway would interfere seriously with the Renville Farmstead. Mr Hooke suggested that the road should start farther west. This would avoid the farmstead, though not the farmland, and would enable more of the railway to be used, but it would add half a mile to the length of the by-pass and consequently to the cost.

10.5 All the "railway" routes, and any other feasible road passing south of Bridge, must make a deep incursion into Bourne Park. It was proposed that this could be minimised by adopting sub-standard curves and bringing the by-pass out to a junction with the A2 near the drive to Highland Court Hospital. It was shown, however, that a junction in the residential area would cause great difficulties and that this, with the poor alignment, would make the by-pass unacceptable for a section of the A2 trunk road. The intrusion into Bourne Park would, therefore, have to be accepted if a southern route were adopted.

10.6 Against the technical and environmental objections to a southern route must be set the advantages claimed for it;

It would take the road right away from the important village of Patricxbourne without putting it nearer to Bishopsbourne than is the existing A2.

By moving further out into the country it would diminish noise and pollution in Bridge.

It could use part of the disused railway.

It would affect fewer people.

If the Canterbury by-pass is to run south of the City and the A2, it would be more natural, and possibly more economic, for Bridge by-pass also to run on the south side.

It would avoid Bifrons Park and a beautiful part of the Nailbourne Valley which were more important to the local inhabitants than Bourne Park.

10.7 It would be a bold outsider who ventured a judgement on the relative beauty of Bourne Park and Bifrons Park - Bridge is fortunate in having lovely country on both sides - but on this particular aspect, the advantage would seem to lie with the proposed route. By keeping closer to the built-up area it causes less disturbance to Bifrons Park than a southern route would, inevitably, do to Bourne Park. The opinion of the County Planning Officer that any route through Bourne Park would be so seriously damaging to the environment as to rule it out of consideration is relevant.

10.8 Suggestions that a start on the Bridge by-pass should be deferred until it can be considered as part of some larger scheme, such as a Canterbury by-pass or the extension of the M2, raise questions of wider policy. Delay would not be welcome to most of the residents of Bridge.

10.9 I must conclude that the published proposals offer an acceptable scheme for a by-pass for Bridge. Noise and pollution will nowhere exceed tolerable levels and over most of the village will be greatly reduced. Visual intrusion, although considerable on one stretch, will be restricted over much of the length by the deep cuttings in which the road will lie. As was said, the choice on environmental grounds between a "northern" and a "southern" route is by no means clear cut, but I am satisfied that there is no balance of advantage on environmental, economic and technical grounds that would justify rejection of the published proposals.

10.10 Three proposed modifications of the published plans require comment. At the west end of the by-pass access to the down-lane of the A2 will be stopped and all traffic diverted onto the by-pass. Traffic for Bridge etc will then leave by a slip road and go along Bakesbourne Road and the (unnamed) spur road back to the A2, a diversion of about one-quarter of a mile. The spur road is admittedly inadequate for heavy traffic. The problem of tankers and heavy lorries in narrow country lanes is general and not confined to Bridge, but in this case the problem will be aggravated by the addition of all the Canterbury - Bridge traffic to the existing traffic to and from Patricxbourne. The East-Kent Bus Company made a strong case for continued entry to the A2 at the west end which could be confined, if necessary, to "buses only" as had been done successfully at other by-passes. A "buses only" lane would meet only part of the problem, but the Company's case deserves consideration. The reasons for the diversion are clear enough - to discourage through traffic from passing through Bridge. It is possible, however, that the same object could be achieved by re-design of the