

Dear MrXXXX

Thank you for your expressed interest in connection with the new A612 Gedling Transport Integration Scheme and the general traffic issues arising from the expected implementation of the associated 'bus plugs'.

You raise concerns in relation to the operational effectiveness of the newly constructed 'bus plugs' which are associated with the overall provision of the A612 scheme. Whilst I do respect your opinion, please allow me to be at variance with your points of view, which may possibly misinterpret the overall strategic picture in relation to the provision of the new A612 highway and that they perhaps lack the specific evidence of the observed and/or predicted traffic flows in the wider area, as derived from our Traffic Appraisal methodology conducted in accordance with government guidelines.

To this end, I would like to respond in a more comprehensive way regarding the justification and the specific statutory steps taken for the provision of the new A612 highway together with its associated integral design features of the bus plugs and their effectiveness into the overall highway network. Whilst considering my response, please bear in mind that without the integral bus plugs, our efforts to secure central government finance for its implementation would most certainly, in my opinion, not have succeeded. Hence, our County's highway network would have been financially deprived from an essential development to assist thousands of motorists in the community of SE area of Gedling and the wider Nottinghamshire. Consequently, this community would have still continued to suffer with the intolerable traffic congestion at Shearing Hill junction and the resultant detrimental environmental and safety effects. Therefore, no bus plugs, no government finance, no new road. Hence perpetual continuation of intolerable conditions of this community. But thankfully, this has not been the case, due to the strategically important role of the bus plugs.

In order to appraise you better, I can firstly confirm that the A612 forms part of the Strategic Road Network for Greater Nottingham and is a main radial route into the City of Nottingham. The existing conditions prior to the implementation of the new A612 road were giving rise to several concerns as follows.

The junction of the A612 Burton Road with the A6211 Shearing Hill; the narrowing of the A612 Burton Road under the former Gedling Colliery railway bridge close to its junction with the A6211; the well used pelican crossing on the A612 Burton Road near its junction with Stoke Lane and high traffic volumes continued to produce long queues and delays on this section of the A612. This was a particular problem in the morning peak when traffic queues could stretch as far back as the village of Burton Joyce 2.5 kilometres east of Gedling. Inbound peak journey times over this length were averaged 7½ minutes, however, this time was varying considerably and delays could be up to 16 minutes. In particular, public transport services were very much delayed by queuing traffic.

This congestion also created unpleasant environmental conditions and access difficulties for local residents. There was also conflict between vehicular traffic and the large numbers of pupils walking and cycling to/from the Carlton le Willows Comprehensive School and Technology College which is situated on the northern side of the A612 Burton Road between its junction with Stoke Lane and Whitworth Drive. There have been 6 accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists in the last 5 years. Generally conditions for cyclists were considered poor.

One of the main thrusts of the County Council's approach to tackling the problems of congestion and traffic growth in Greater Nottingham was to increase the attractiveness of public transport. In respect of the A612/B686 corridor there were longer term proposals for rail services and associated park and ride facilities, but if progress towards influencing modal shift was to be made, measures which could be implemented in the short to medium term to assist bus travel were considered essential.

As such the newly constructed A612 road was promoted in order to enhance the highway network and further alleviate or reduce most of the above problems in the area in a balanced and equitable way for all, whilst still safeguarding and promoting the overall transport objectives of the Central Government.

The new A612 road, being approximately 2.0 kilometres of 10.0m wide single carriageway with associated street lighting and improvements to existing highways, concentrates on improving conditions for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists. Public transport is expected to benefit with faster journey times by utilising the "bypassed" lengths of the existing A612 Burton Road and Stoke Lane. This will be achieved by the current construction of the 'bus plugs' at strategic points, which will have the effect of removing the existing through traffic redirected onto the new A612. A "bus plug" is a section of highway closed to all vehicles except buses and cyclists and also exempting emergency vehicles. The focus of the new A612 is to provide priority for public transport and encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport and the operation of the 'bus plugs' in this scheme are integral to this sustainable aim. It is anticipated that traffic flows on the old A612 would be reduced from 21,000 to 2,900 vehicles AADT (Annual Average Daily Traffic) just because of the inclusion and full operation of the 'bus plugs' within the overall scheme. What is important to appreciate in this case with the recent opening of the new A612 road and the associated operation of the bus plugs is not the number of bus services that have been operating in the area thus far, but rather the created opportunity by this Highway Authority for future sustainable environmental changes to take place under the currently enhanced and safer environment, which can effectively promote walking, cycling and bus travelling, instead of having to continuously rely onto the inefficient way of travelling and environmentally damaging private car motoring.

Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) were required for the implementation of the bus plug restrictions and these were authorised by the County Council. The consultation and advertisement of the proposed bus plug restrictions took place concurrently from 28 July to 24 August 2005. The following organisations and individuals were consulted: Nottinghamshire Police, Gedling Borough Council, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, East Midlands Ambulance Service, Midlands Postal Board, Nottingham City Transport, Trent/Barton Buses, Road Car, Railtrack, Stagecoach, Road Haulage Association, Freight Transport Association, the AA, the RAC, Nottingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry, National Farmers Union, Cyclists' Touring Club, Pedals, East Midlands Auto Cycle Union, Streamline Taxi Association, TGWU, Federation of Small Businesses, Nottingham Private Hire Association, Burton Joyce Parish Council, Stoke Bardolph Parish Council, Carlton le Willows School and County Councillors Mrs S Smedley, J O'Riordan, J Clarke, B Laughton and K Rigby.

Whilst there was an overwhelming support for the bus plugs by the residents around Burton Road, there were 7 objections received to the proposed bus plugs. The objections concerned the extra distance to be travelled by residents of Linden Grove when they travel to Burton Joyce, as well as when residents of Stoke Bardolph travel to Carlton. None of the objectors saw the need for the bus plugs as they assumed that the majority of traffic will automatically use the new road anyway. This was unlikely to be the case. There were also concerns regarding the enforcement of the bus plugs. The Nottinghamshire Police Authority strongly expressed their views over enforcement in support of 24 hours a day, 7 days a week restriction, without which they were to consider objecting to the bus plug TRO implementation.

I can confirm therefore that following appropriate public advertisement and consultation on the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) regarding the implementation of the bus plugs, the only 7 No received objections were overruled in October 2005 and consequently the 24hrs/7days operations of the bus plugs were set out for implementation. You can not therefore object now to the implementation of the bus plug legal Order. Such legal process has been properly implemented and this legal Order can not be easily revoked. Revoking this legal Order would need the precise reverse justification that currently does not exist and is unlikely to exist prior to the inception of the Gedling Access Road, and in any event, if such a Revocation was to be a theoretical reconsideration, it would require the same legal process of public involvement that is likely to set deep divisions amongst the same community members. Any consideration to shorten the operation

time of the bus plugs would most probably be opposed by the Notts Police Authority, as it did happen earlier, and therefore without their support as a statutory consultee such a Revocation Order would not proceed further. Additionally, since the same Order of the bus plugs has also authorised a new regime of speed limits to come into force, where notably the pre-existing 40mph speed limit on Burton Rd at the frontage of the Carlton-le-Willows School has been proposed to be lowered to a safer 30mph, this is expected now to take effect very soon with the full operation of the bus plugs. If Revocation of the above Order is to be considered, then this would also be linked to the reversal of the 30mph speed limit outside the school, which will create very justifiable and strong objections by the wider public in the whole area.

Also, please remember that on completion of the bus plugs construction the layby adjacent to the bus plug at Burton Road will still be available to parents or anyone else driving from the north end of the A612 and dropping off their school children there. In other words, this bus plug is currently being constructed inbound of the layby facility, which will be accessible to all, if they so wish to use it in the future. However, the extra 2 miles driving along the new A612 Road necessitated by the operation of the bus plugs can be viewed, in comparison, as a rather small inconvenience to some private motorists, that is well outweighed by the overall benefits offered by the new road to the wider community of the area, whilst conforming very well with government guidelines for the New Approach To Traffic Appraisal in implementing new roads nationally. In absence of the specific operation of the bus plugs, therefore, I am most convinced that there would not have been the required traffic relief at the Shearing Hill junction, nor would there have been the government funding forthcoming for the creation of the new road to facilitate around 20,000 commuters every day in a more environmentally sustainable measures. As you know, such measures offer immense relief to congestion with the consequent environmental benefits to the whole SE Gedling community, normalising traffic safety standards and speed limits, promoting walking, cycling and bus travelling and enhancing the general residential environment by the creation of the new road as a 'bypass'.

Incidentally, because of the additional 2 miles driving along the new A612 Road necessitated by the operation of the bus plugs, it has been recently suggested by some residents as having a detrimental environmental effect from extra traffic emissions and therefore this can play a net worsening role to the air quality of the whole area. Such assertions, however, are not supported by the scientific results and findings contained in the scheme's Environmental Statement. I would like therefore to attach here for your perusal two pages as extracted from the A612 Environmental Statement of January 2004 summarising the results of a quantifiable analyses under the government's methodology, that produced by private Independent Consultants on behalf of the Authority, and which clearly show the overall net benefit of the new A612 road in terms of both total traffic emissions and localised air quality. One should be able to observe such general environmental benefits, which when they are also coupled with the significant noise reduction offered to the bypassed built up area of the community, then the total environmental gains are overwhelming indisputable. On balance, therefore, for the large gains provided to the wider community, the small loss of extra 2 mile travelling, (but in a much lesser time now than before), is considered to be entirely equitable for the overall benefit of us all.

I can strongly reiterate that from the outset, the provision of the bus plugs has been an integral part of the overall A612 scheme. If the bus plugs were not provided it would be likely that traffic would continue to use the bypassed section of the A612 and Stoke Lane in order to reach the Shearing Hill junction. The provision of the bus plugs will provide an enhanced environment for residents along the bypassed sections, in terms of less traffic, lower vehicle speeds and improved public transport links. If the bus plugs were not to be introduced it would have undermined one of the fundamental elements of the scheme and therefore would have reduced the benefits. If the bus plugs had not been approved the funding for the entire scheme could have been withdrawn by the DfT or as a minimum the viability of the scheme would have been called into question. It should be recognised that central government funding for the scheme has been successful due to the strong operational restrictions made by the bus plugs to the general traffic, which promoted the overall merits of the scheme according to the central government objectives. It is therefore considered

doubtful as to whether the central government funding would have been forthcoming should the proposed bus plugs operation was to be rather relaxed. However, it is entirely possible of course that the bus plug operation is reviewed in the future, when traffic patterns would have been well established in the area and the environmental benefits enhanced. Such a review though should not undermine the County Council's or the central government's objectives for the whole A612 scheme that have been strengthened by the full implementation of the bus plugs. A realistic future time for reviewing the 24 hours operation of the bus plugs can be justified when the proposed Gedling Access Road between Burton Road and Mapperley Plains, as promoted by the East Midlands Development Agency, proceeds to implementation and at which time traffic patterns in the area will probably change significantly.

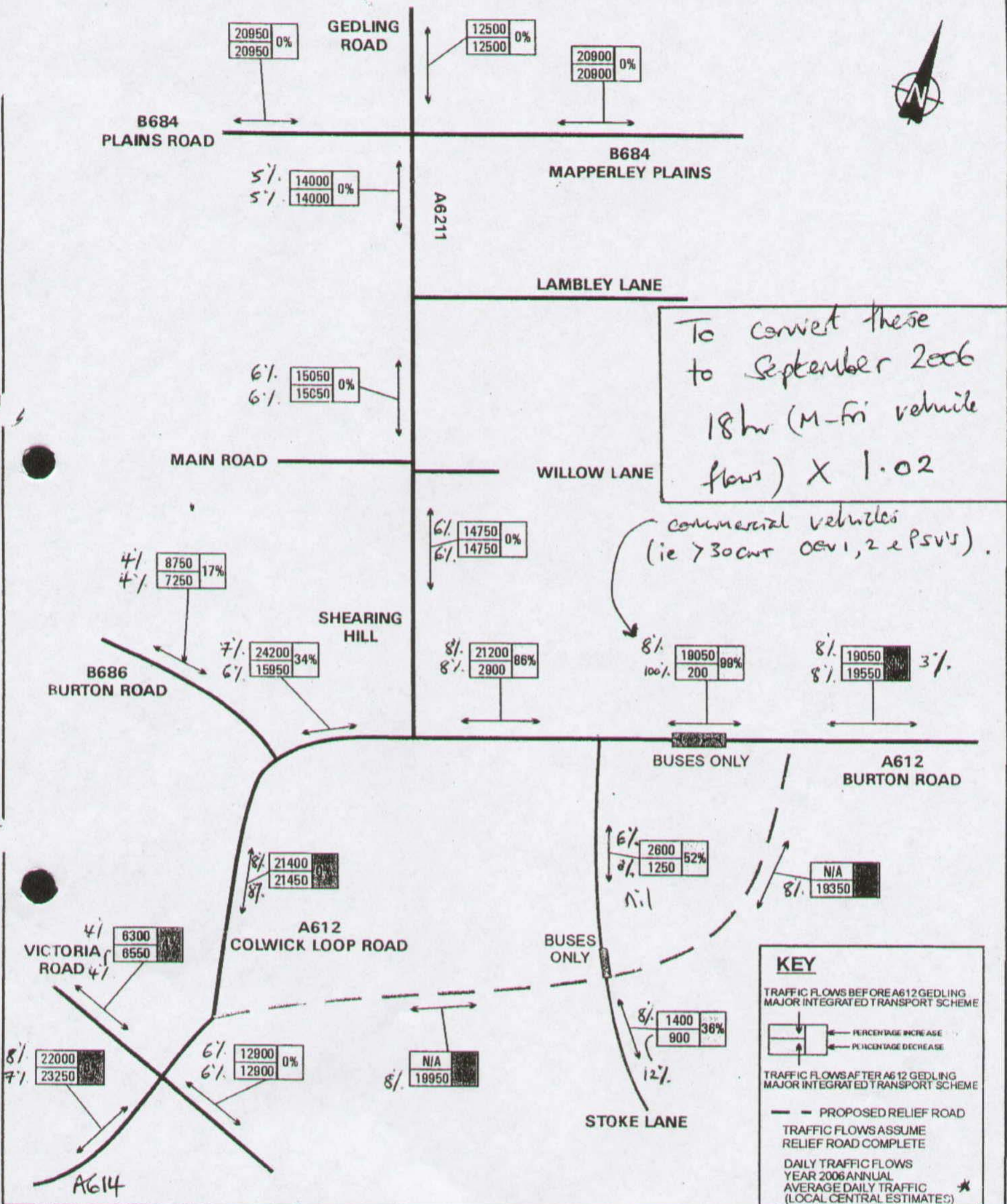
As a consequence of all the above, I would like to invite you to carefully examine the observed and/or predicted Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) traffic flows of the highway network diagram in the area that I attach herewith in an effort to demonstrate to you the exhibited traffic patterns showing the percentage changes, (constituting of significant traffic flow betterments in most cases), as it can be compared between the pre-existing conditions and those after the completion of the new A612 road. Please note the 86% and 99% betterment in terms of daily traffic flows along Burton Road, and also note the 36% and 52% betterment along Stoke Lane. But more importantly, please observe the 0% impact change on the surrounding highway network to the NW and as far as Mapperley Plains Road between the pre-existing conditions and those currently operational after the opening of the new A612 road together with the fully operational bus plugs. Additionally, it can be demonstrated further that, if the bus plugs were not to be provided at all or if their operational times were to be even slightly relaxed, then inevitably the corresponding daily AADT traffic flows in the highway network would have still been adversely affected by the resultant congestion at Shearing Hill. The resultant traffic conditions and any environmental benefits would then be so much diluted to the extent that any of their effectiveness would be highly questionable or dubious. Under such circumstances central government funding would not have been provided. I consequently therefore hope that you will be able to carefully examine and discern the crucial engaging role of the bus plugs to the whole area of the A612 scheme as put forward with a 24/7 operation and that by means of their carefully selected strategic position they can indeed create an environmentally sound and effective scheme.

I hope the above explanation has been helpful to you in discerning both the overall and the specific objectives as promoted by central Government and the County Council, as well as being able to understand the balanced approach that has been adopted by this Highway Authority in the implementation of the new A612 road and its bus plugs.

Yours sincerely

Sakis Papadopoulos  
Communities Department  
County Council

[Attachments follow.....]



**KEY**

TRAFFIC FLOWS BEFORE A612 GEDLING MAJOR INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SCHEME

TRAFFIC FLOWS AFTER A612 GEDLING MAJOR INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SCHEME

--- PROPOSED RELIEF ROAD

TRAFFIC FLOWS ASSUME RELIEF ROAD COMPLETE

DAILY TRAFFIC FLOWS YEAR 2006 ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (LOCAL CENTRAL ESTIMATES) \*

|  |              |   |  |             |            |        |           |
|--|--------------|---|--|-------------|------------|--------|-----------|
| <p><b>Nottinghamshire County Council</b><br/>Environment<br/>Director Peter Webster<br/>Trent Bridge House, Fox Road,<br/>West Bridgford,<br/>Nottingham NG26BJ<br/>Tel: 0115 9823 823</p> | Project      | <b>A612 GEDLING MAJOR INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SCHEME</b>   |  | Drawn       | <b>GWL</b> | Date   | JULY 2001 |
|  | Title        | <b>PREDICTED TRAFFIC FLOWS (AADT) OPENING YEAR 2006</b> |  | Ch'kd       | <b>DGP</b> | Date   | JULY 2001 |
|  | Scale        | <b>N.T.S.</b>   |  | Auth.       | <b>DGP</b> | Traced |           |
|  | Property No. |   |  | Project No. |            |        |           |
| <b>Diagram 2</b>   |              |   |  | Rev.        |            |        |           |

\* Source Ctr Notts LTP (opened at ... Existing diagram 1

Extract from

emissions are forecast to fall considerably below existing levels.

Table 3.1  
 Localised Air Quality Assessment.

| Receptor Point Location     | Scenario | Benzene Annual mean ug/m <sup>3</sup> | Carbon monoxide Annual mean g/m <sup>3</sup>         | Butadiene Annual mean ug/m <sup>3</sup> | Nitrogen Dioxide Annual mean ug/m <sup>3</sup> | Particulate Matter Annual mean ug/m <sup>3</sup> |
|-----------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| 1<br>Opposite Shearing Hill | 2002     | 1.4                                   | 0.98   | 1.05                                    | 48.08  | 35.17  |
|                             | 2006 DM  | 0.93                                  | 0.59   | 0.59                                    | 41.69  | 30.22  |
|                             | 2006 DS  | 0.73                                  | 0.44   | 0.36                                    | 37.18  | 26.5   |
|                             | 2010 DM  | 0.81                                  | 0.46   | 0.48                                    | 35.29  | 25.38  |
|                             | 2010 DS  | 0.61                                  | 0.31   | 0.22                                    | 28.67  | 21.57  |
| 2<br>11 Conisbrough Ave     | 2002     | 0.81                                  | 0.49   | 0.4                                     | 36.97  | 25.49  |
|                             | 2006 DM  | 0.61                                  | 0.32   | 0.25                                    | 32.43  | 22.65  |
|                             | 2006 DS  | 0.53                                  | 0.26   | 0.15                                    | 27.28  | 20.17  |
|                             | 2010 DM  | 0.56                                  | 0.25   | 0.2                                     | 27.74  | 20.85  |
|                             | 2010 DS  | 0.49                                  | 0.19   | 0.12                                    | 23.78  | 19.3   |
| 3<br>207 Curzon St          | 2002     | 0.75                                  | 0.44   | 0.35                                    | 35.52  | 23.87  |
|                             | 2006 DM  | 0.68                                  | 0.31   | 0.23                                    | 31.32  | 21.89  |
|                             | 2006 DS  | 0.68                                  | 0.3  | 0.23                                    | 31.32  | 21.89  |
|                             | 2010 DM  | 0.53                                  | 0.23   | 0.18                                    | 26.77  | 20.33  |
|                             | 2010 DS  | 0.53                                  | 0.23   | 0.16                                    | 26.2   | 20.08  |
| 4<br>Mile End Rd            | 2002     | 1.09                                  | 0.67   | 0.74                                    | 43.61  | 29.86  |
|                             | 2006 DM  | 0.77                                  | 0.42   | 0.46                                    | 38.32  | 27.15  |
|                             | 2006 DS  | 0.79                                  | 0.43   | 0.49                                    | 38.6   | 27.39  |
|                             | 2010 DM  | 0.69                                  | 0.33   | 0.36                                    | 32.36  | 23.14  |
|                             | 2010 DS  | 0.7                                   | 0.34   | 0.38                                    | 32.59  | 23.28  |
| 5<br>Carlton Hill           | 2002     | 1.02                                  | 0.63   | 0.48                                    | 39.33  | 26.48  |
|                             | 2006 DM  | 0.77                                  | 0.42   | 0.3                                     | 35.12  | 23.9   |
|                             | 2006 DS  | 0.75                                  | 0.4  | 0.28                                    | 34.67  | 23.59  |
|                             | 2010 DM  | 0.69                                  | 0.32   | 0.23                                    | 30.21  | 22.03  |
|                             | 2010 DS  | 0.68                                  | 0.31   | 0.22                                    | 29.9   | 21.85  |
| 6<br>183 Burton Rd          | 2002     | 1                                     | 0.68   | 0.61                                    | 40.52  | 28.45  |
|                             | 2006 DM  | 0.71                                  | 0.42   | 0.37                                    | 35.05  | 25.02  |
|                             | 2006 DS  | 0.64                                  | 0.36   | 0.24                                    | 30.66  | 22.36  |
|                             | 2010 DM  | 0.64                                  | 0.33   | 0.29                                    | 30.15  | 22.37  |
|                             | 2010 DS  | 0.58                                  | 0.28   | 0.2                                     | 27.88  | 21.11  |
| 7<br>45 Linden Grove        | 2002     | 0.59                                  | 0.34   | 0.2                                     | 28.4   | 20.96  |
|                             | 2006 DM  | 0.48                                  | 0.24   | 0.14                                    | 25.63  | 19.66  |
|                             | 2006 DS  | 0.5                                   | 0.25   | 0.16                                    | 27.2   | 20.28  |
|                             | 2010 DM  | 0.45                                  | 0.18   | 0.11                                    | 22.34  | 18.88  |
|                             | 2010 DS  | 0.46                                  | 0.19   | 0.12                                    | 23.54  | 19.27  |
| 8<br>New Works Cottage      | 2002     | 0.6                                   | 0.36   | 0.22                                    | 29.6   | 21.35  |
|                             | 2006 DM  | 0.49                                  | 0.25   | 0.15                                    | 26.57  | 19.85  |
|                             | 2006 DS  | 0.57                                  | 0.33   | 0.26                                    | 33.18  | 23.04  |
|                             | 2010 DM  | 0.45                                  | 0.19   | 0.12                                    | 23.13  | 19.06  |
|                             | 2010 DS  | 0.52                                  | 0.26   | 0.2                                     | 28.29  | 21.07  |
| STANDARDS                   |          | 5<br>By Dec<br>2010                   | 8hr mean<br><10mg/m <sup>3</sup> *<br>By Dec<br>2003 | 2.25<br>By Dec<br>2003                  | 40<br>By Dec<br>2005                           | 20<br>By Dec<br>2010                             |

\* If the annual mean is less than 2mg/m3 the standard is very unlikely to be exceeded

*Extract from*

Nottinghamshire County Council  
A612 Gedling Transport Improvements  
Environmental Statement JAN 2004

Table 3.2  
Net effect of the new road on Total Traffic Emissions

| Pollutant  | TOTAL EMISSIONS |                 |                             |                              |                                 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|  | CO<br>(Kg/yr.)  | THC<br>(kg/yr.) | NO <sub>x</sub><br>(Kg/yr.) | PM <sub>10</sub><br>(Kg/yr.) | CO <sub>2</sub><br>(tonnes/yr.) |
| Do minimum<br>Network 2002                             | 262,306         | 39,682          | 138,216                     | 4,923                        | 22,762                          |
| Do something<br>Network 2006                           | 140,929         | 20,706          | 105,708                     | 3,570                        | 22,296                          |
| Percentage<br>Change                                   | <b>-46.3</b>    | <b>-51.17</b>   | <b>-23.5</b>                | <b>-27.5</b>                 | <b>-2.05</b>                    |
| Do minimum<br>Network 2006                             | 146,148         | 21,360          | 104,510                     | 3,628                        | 22,042                          |
| Do something<br>Network 2006                           | 140,929         | 20,706          | 105,708                     | 3,570                        | 22,296                          |
| Percentage<br>Change                                   | <b>-3.57</b>    | <b>-3.06</b>    | <b>+ 1.15</b>               | <b>-1.60</b>                 | <b>+1.15</b>                    |
| Do minimum<br>Network 2021                             | 118084          | 16388           | 52023                       | 1558                         | 21538                           |
| Do something<br>Network 2021                           | 114047          | 15923           | 52790                       | 1537                         | 21836                           |
| Percentage<br>Change                                   | <b>-3.42</b>    | <b>-2.84</b>    | <b>+1.48</b>                | <b>-1.35</b>                 | <b>+ 1.38</b>                   |
| Negative results indicate reduced percentage emissions |                 |                 |                             |                              |                                 |