

3rd November 2025

Graeme King
Midlothian Planning Dept.
Fairfield House
Dalkeith

Dear Graeme,

Damhead & District Community Council Objects to the planning application 25/00521/DPP for the A701 relief road for the following reasons:

1. The cost to benefit cannot be justified especially as now any benefit from Easter Bush is being met by the new roundabout at Bush Loan alone. The cost of the road conservatively stated as £55M will increase substantially now that the new proposed route not only will go too close to the Scottish Gas main at Straiton but also the new roundabout on the A703 sits on top of Scottish Water's two 16" mains supplying Edinburgh.
2. The loss of prime Agricultural land is of serious concern and a priority in the NPF4 to be maintained if at all possible.
3. No meaningful traffic surveys have been carried out to reflect all the recent changes to the area. Current updates such as the traffic lights at the triple junction and Hillend Destination have not been included.
4. The new Beeslack High School lies directly in the path with predicted increased traffic flow. This creates a serious safety hazard. It is contradictory to promote active travel while simultaneously constructing a road that will make such travel unsafe.
5. Multiple aspects of this scheme that are described within this application are reliant on additional applications of the delivery of the strategic aim. Such reliance requires cumulative effect assessment at all levels. Eg EIAR, Water framework directive, transport and climate net zero target.
6. Policies 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 14, 21, 22, 25, 30 of NPF4 that we believe are being impacted.
7. A701 Relief Road EIA – EIA not fit for purpose see below:

We believe that there are severe deficiencies in the EIAR documentation presented in support of planning application 25/00521/DPP, such that the application cannot be decided.

These inaccuracies include:

- Assessment of the incorrect development site and road route in EIAR chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 16, and appendixes 7.5 and 8.A. As shown by the maps in these chapters and the description of the road alignment and connections into the local watercourses.

- Transport modelling that is based on 2022 data, despite the existence of 2024 data, and includes the effects of the proposed (by not granted) planning application for level separation of the Sheriffhall roundabout. This makes interpretation of the effects of this road impossible.

"A second series of traffic surveys was carried out along the corridor in November 2024, to identify what (if any) traffic growth there had been in the corridor between 2022 and 2024, and to see if traffic patterns had changed. . A comparison of the survey data is presented in A701 Relief Road & Active Travel Corridor – 2022 and 2024 Traffic Survey Comparisons, SYSTRA, January 2025"

- The assessment of the economic benefits of this road include the benefits of development of the A702/Bush Loan roundabout (that already has planning). This makes interpretation of the effects of this road impossible.

"The 2030 scenario reflects Local Development Plan (LDP) housing and employment allocations and anticipated infrastructure changes to 2030 (such as the grade separation of Sheriffhall interchange). "

We are also attaching our GAP report showing the many inaccuracies and deficiencies identified through our review of the EIAR. This is still progress and our final report will be ready by the 24th November being the date you agreed for final comments. We would be happy to arrange a meeting should you require any clarification on any points.

We appreciate that many of the items will require further investigation but we believe this is essential to enable you to make an informed decision. As you can see from the GAP report many members of our community have spent a considerable time preparing these documents for your consideration which I hope you can see the strength of our concerns.

Constance Newbould
Chair
Damhead & District Community Council