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Mr Morton
A30/A35/A31 RMS
Hyder Consulting Ltd
70 Redcliffe Street
Bristol B S1 6 A L

8th February 2002

Dear Mr Morton

A30 / A35 / A31 Route Management Strategy
Public Exhibitions

" For safety's sake, a bypass must be built" Inspector John Moore 15. 12 95

Mr David Radway of the Highways Agency, in his letter of the 15th January 2002, has suggested that I write to you. I have also received Mr Ian Crockford's letter of 31st January 2002. The situation therefore appears to demand a reply from me!

In contrast to Mr Radway's opinion, it is my understanding that the A35 Chideock-Morcombelake bypass was abandoned in 1996, despite the Inspector's plea quoted above,¹ because the Highways Agency failed find a way round the National Trust's objection. I enclose a copy of a letter² in which Sir James Spicer MP gives his explanation. The Department of Transport had been aware, throughout the 1994 public inquiry, that the National Trust intended to declare 15 acres of land, along the northern boundary of the Golden Cap Estate, inalienable. The land was essential for the Morcombelake section of the bypass but, without an Act of Parliament, could not be purchased. Against such a threat it was a mistake for the Highways Agency to issue an order for the bypass and, even more lamentable for Chideock, that John Major's Government did not have a large enough majority to force the necessary Bill through Parliament! Comments on the joy of the National Trust and the Morcombelake Action Group in defeating the Highways Agency were published in July 1999³

I note with some satisfaction that a Chideock only bypass is now listed in Table 6, on page 16, of the Seminar Summary Report, dated March 2001. It may be timely to remind Hyder Consulting that, throughout the 1994 inquiry, neither the National Trust nor any other national organisation offered objections to a Chideock only bypass.

I am concerned that representation of local residents at the Seminars appears to have been restricted to Mr Murray, Ms Geraghty, Prof. Brunsdon, Dr Peacock and Mr and Mrs Bridle. Mr Murray was not a resident of Chideock in 1994 and has limited experience of the long standing traffic problems of the A35 ; all the others were objectors at the bypass inquiry! The archives show that Mr Bridle, of the Morcombelake Action Group, has strong NOBY views and Dr Peacock, a resident of bypassed Charmouth, claimed that local accident figures were miscalculated and, in support of his anti-road activities, apparently attempted to cast doubt on the traffic statistics. Neither of these gentlemen nor Professor Brunsdon,

¹ Bridport News 15.12.96

² 12 December 1996

³ Dorset Echo 12.07.99

representatives of the communities in which they reside! Ms Geraghty, whose lengthy objection was also rejected, has made no secret of the fact that she is an anti-road activist who "joined in the protests held all along the South Coast"! At the inquiry each objector received a detailed reply from Mr Eric Phillips of the Department of Transport and was mentioned individually by Mr David Smith in his closing speech on behalf of the Highway Authority. In stark and grossly unfair contrast, none of the local residents who presented evidence in support of the bypass even knew that the Seminars were to be held. The choice of local representation at the Seminars must be condemned as it appears to have been determined in an unfair and unreasonable manner and, in comparison with the even-handed judgment of Lord Whitty, who as Minister for Roads, had been happy in 1999, to meet both pro and anti bypass deputations from Chideock!

The National Trust was also well represented at the Seminars. Before the inquiry in 1994 I had for many years been a Volunteer Warden on the Golden Cap Estate. I can confirm that the local membership was not consulted about the bypass. More recently the undemocratic methods that the Trust has used to make policy decisions has received very severe local and national criticism⁴

When I met Mr Beaumont, at the Public Exhibition in Bridport, I pointed out that there was time for the excellent Exhibition to be staged in Chideock. In reply Mr Beaumont said that it would be difficult to arrange because other villages along the route might also ask for the exhibition! My reply to Mr Beaumont is simple:-

(i) Chideock is the **ONLY** community along the entire A30/ A35/ A31 route that was identified in Hyder report with a **key issue** that **recommended action** for a relief road with minimal environmental impact ("Environmental bypass")!

(ii) No other village has had to fear for so long such a dreadful traffic problem.

(iii) No other village has endured such horrendous traffic accidents as Chideock. I attach a photograph of the unfortunate lobster lorry⁵ which killed the driver and demolished two houses. Other terrifying incidents such as the brick lorry that overturned at the entrance to Duck Street, the fast moving wheel off a coach carrying French tourists and the flaming load of straw. More such accidents are inevitable so long as the Trunk Road traffic is allowed to use our main street!

(iv) No village in Dorset has been promised a bypass that was subsequently revoked!

(v) No other village along the entire route has TWO speed cameras.

(vi) No village has neither such long stretches of A35 without a pavement for pedestrians nor so many houses with front doors directly opening onto the road!

(vii) No other village, without a bypass for trunk road traffic, has a beach within the designated World Heritage Jurassic Coast. Unique beds of belemnite and ammonite fossils are often exposed by the sea on Seatown beach and will no doubt bring even more visitors and traffic into the village!⁶

I suggest that the Public Consultation Questionnaire that we have been asked to complete is not applicable to the traffic problems of Chideock; the Key Issue of a bypass is not even mentioned!.

⁴ Bridport News 16.11.01

⁵ Photo of Lobster lorry from top of St Giles Church tower - August 1991

⁶ Bridport News 01.02.02 - New visitor guide - World Heritage Coast

I was a member of Chideock Parish Council from 1990 to 1999 and I know that, during the past 24 years, the residents of Chideock have been asked to attend 2 Exhibitions in the Village Hall and complete, by questionnaire, 4 official surveys on the A35! A summary of these questionnaires is attached for your information.⁷ The response was variable but a majority of the those taking part have always been in favour of a bypass! My request that the Exhibition be brought to Chideock is therefore following the excellent example that the Ministry of Transport set in 1987 when the first exhibition was held in the Village Hall and all residents allowed to record their opinions.

I draw your attention to the result of the simple ballot, organised by the Parish Council in 1991; an overwhelming majority voted in favour of a bypass⁸.

In 2002, as in the 1991, I suggest only one simple question need be asked:-

“Do you want a relief road with minimal environmental impact (“Environmental bypass”) - - Yes or No?”.

With regard to the other matters that I raised in my letter, of 30th November 2001, I estimate (using information which Mr Oliver Letwin MP obtained at my request⁹) that the AADT in Chideock was increasing at a rate of about 3.25% per year between 1998 and 1999 and, if this rate of increase continues, by 2006 the AADT will be over 17000. This figure, as I show in the table below, far exceeds the comparable AADTs that existed in other towns and villages on the A35 when their bypasses were approved! Hopefully this information may help you to understand why so many residents of Chideock feel so deeply aggrieved, frustrated and depressed.

Bypass	Year of approval	Estimated AADT in year of approval	A35(T) traffic at
Bridport	1985	8200	Miles Cross
Charmouth	1986	8300	Miles Cross
Axminster	1991 (?)	6000	Greenway Head
Puddletown and Tolpuddle	1994	12000	In the villages
Chideock (my estimate of AADT in 2006)	?	17000	In the village

Perhaps you would care to comment on my estimate of the AADT that we may expect in the year 2006?

The major problem for Chideock, as confirmed by Mr Crockford, is caused by the huge increase in tourist traffic during the months of June, July and August. Dorset County Council, as you will know from my letter of 30th November 2001, has published figures showing that the average daily traffic flow during these months in 1999 exceeded 20000. I estimate a fearful daily average of over 25000 could be reached by 2006!

⁷ attached as 6 a,b & c

⁸ Bridport News 13 .08 .93

⁹ House of Commons answer 08 .03 .00

I understand that equipment to measure traffic flow was installed on the A35 near the London Inn several years ago. May I enquire whether it is the intention of Hyder Consulting to publish, in their survey not only the actual AADT's for 2000 and 2001 but also the daily traffic flows during the months of June, July and August together an estimate of the same figures for the next five years? Such estimates should, I suggest, include the increase in tourist traffic that is to be expected from the new attractions of the World Heritage Coast and holiday seasons free from the restrictions of Foot and Mouth Disease.


I appreciate the difficulty of determining the destination of traffic on the A35. In 1994 the Highways Agency issued a most helpful diagram¹⁰ which gave forecasts of the AADT flows on all the roads around Chideock. At that time Chideock appears to have generated only 5.8% of the A35 traffic. I ask whether similar diagrams will be included in Hyder survey?

It is probable that about 75% of the 20000 daily summer season traffic flow reported in 1999 passed through the village during the 12 hours from 8 am to 8 pm, if that is so, it means that during these hours vehicles may be passing through at an approximate rate of one every 3 seconds! Under these conditions not only pedestrians have difficulties but much more important potential customers cannot draw up in the main street. In comparison with other coastal villages, say Charmouth, Chideock appears to have fewer businesses, particularly Guest Houses for tourists, that are successful.

This feature of Chideock's traffic problem was well illustrated in August 2001. On several occasions it was necessary for lorries to park outside Rose Cottage in the Main Street in order to unload building materials. One carriageway was temporarily blocked and traffic quickly built up in both directions. I noted on the Bridport side that the line often stretched to Miles Cross, a distance of 1.25 miles. I understand that the western side had a similar tail back. With a space of 10m per vehicle I estimate that the two lines of congestion contained in total about 400 vehicles!

I do hope I have provided sufficient information for you and your colleagues to be convinced that your survey cannot be considered complete unless the Exhibition is brought to Chideock. If you wish to inquire about hire of the Hall I suggest you contact Mr. John McMorrnan, he is Chairman of the Hall Committee and, I am sure you will find him most helpful, on 01297 489838.

Yours sincerely



TWC Fisher

Copies to:-

Councillor Col. Geoffrey Brierley OBE., Dorset County Council.
Mr Adrian Beaumont
Mr David Radway

¹⁰ Highways Agency - 24 hour AADT flows for 1994 by-pass enquiry

List of enclosures

1. Bridport News 15.12.96 Result of 1994 Inquiry.
2. Letter from Sir James 12 12 96.
3. Bridport News 06.11.01 re the National Trust.
4. Photograph Lobster lorry.
5. Bridport News 01.02.02 West Dorset's latest visitor guide.
Features World Heritage Jurassic Coast.
6. Results of previous Questionnaires:-
 - (a) Village Appraisal 1978 Result - 320 participated 81 % thought a bypass desirable but thought it should be well north of the village
 - (b) 1987 10th-13th October MOT Exhibition in Village Hall. Questionnaire Result published 22nd February 1989. 599 participated 74% preferred the northern route.
 - (c) 1997 Questionnaire by Mr Oliver Letwin MP . Some confusion: the response was lower than usual.
Chideock residents voted - Yes (for a bypass) - 173 No - 80 .
7. Bridport News 13.08.93 Parish Council Ballot 1991 Result 435 participated 94% Yes.
8. House of Commons reply 08.03.00
9. Highways Agency AADT's 1994 - Chideock without a bypass

BRIDPORT & LYME REGIS NEWS,

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1995

For safety's sake, a bypass must be built



□ INSPECTOR John Moore.

ONE OF the main considerations which convinced inspector John Moore that Chideock and Morcombelake must be bypassed was that of safety.

"I am in no doubt that all sections of the road are seriously substandard and inadequate," he said.

"In particular, I take the view that the road does not offer pedestrians, motorists or other road users the level of safety or facility which they may reasonably expect. I consider that the situation would deteriorate with increased levels of traffic.

"A matter for special concern is the substantial number of side roads and accesses in both villages which have wholly inadequate visibility splays. The combina-

tion of parked vehicles, local traffic, through trunk road traffic and pedestrians, is manifestly unsatisfactory."

Mr Moore said that because of a lack of visibility and safe overtaking opportunities, vehicles often proceeded, very slowly, in "platoons" which creates frustrated drivers and leads to ill-judged overtaking.

"A further significant problem in the tourist season is that vehicles waiting to turn right cause delays until a gap is found in on-coming traffic.

"I am quite sure that these deficiencies and problems need to be addressed and resolved," he concluded.

Reports by ANNE KING



2. Letter from Sir James 12 12 96.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

12 December 1996

Ceri Fisher
St Mary's, Pettycrate Lane
Chideock
BRIDPORT
Dorset DT6 6LB

2

I was saddened to receive your letter because over the last five years no-one could have done more than I have to try and get a bypass for Chideock and Morecombelake.

Throughout that time, I have made clear my concern that the obstructive tactics of the National Trust and the non-cooperation of most people in Morecombelake put the whole scheme at risk. You will no doubt know that the National Trust had made up their minds to fight tooth and nail rather than give up even the small amount of land that was necessary. Given their massive resources and the very lengthy delays that they could have imposed by using the legal system to the full, there is no doubt that another two or three years could have been spent before there was any chance of the full bypass being completed. That is the background against which the decision to withdraw the scheme had to be taken (not least because of properties that would have been blighted for years ahead).

The question is, what can be done now? I am a practical person and will deal with problems in a practical way. You may much admire John Gorst and others who operate on the "pork barrel politics" principle but I am afraid I don't. If every single MP in this country tried to hold the Government to ransom over any one constituency issue, then our whole system of government would be put at risk.

I prefer to operate in a decent and honourable way to achieve the results that we all hope for. That I will be doing and in due course, after I have had consultations with Councillor Tony Terrett and with the Parish Council and with the Minister, I will be making public just what those steps are.

I would hope at that point that you will be able to accept that mine is the honourable way and, indeed, the only way given the difficulties that have been imposed by some of my constituents.

SIR JAMES SPICER

Parliamentary Secretary: Jennie Watt: 0171 219 4195 (8am to 1pm)
Constituency Secretary: Mrs Angela Charles
01308 456307 (Monday/Friday) and
West Dorset Conservative Association: 01300 321188 (Tues/Wed/Thurs)

DORSET ECHO Monday, July 12, 1999

Trust joy at bypass ruling

THE National Trust has welcomed news that the proposed A35 Morcombelake bypass has been formally revoked by Lord Whitty, Minister for Roads.

Patrick Woodford, the Trust's property manager for West Dorset said: "This move marks the culmination of a successful campaign mounted by the National Trust and the Morcombelake Action Group.

"It protects the National Trust's beautiful Golden Cap Estate from a potentially damaging road scheme, and removes the blight suffered by a number of property owners in the area."

The Golden Cap Estate, over 2,000 acres and including eight miles of coastline, has been pieced together by the National Trust over the years from 30 different purchases.

LORDS BLAST FOR TRUST

By RENE GERRYTS

THE WAY the National Trust is run was debated in the House of Lords this week, in the wake of the Golden Cap affair.

The discussion was prompted by the proxy votes system, which resulted in the failure of a resolution put forward by West Dorset members at the trust's AGM last month.

In the Lords, the trust was described as "over-centralised, over-bureaucratic and unresponsive" - and accused of not listening to locals.

The issue was highlighted in West Dorset by members appalled at the handling of management changes on the Golden Cap estate.

As reported in the News, they put a resolution to the trust's AGM deploring the way in which the organisation failed to communicate or give weight to local views.

Protestors lost the resolution but

only because chairman Charles Nunneley used 24,861 proxy votes - without those the resolution would have been carried by 42,449 to 19,405.

It is the chairman's use of these proxy votes that has prompted unease not only among National Trust grassroots members but others higher up the political spectrum, leading to Monday's debate in the Lords.

The chairman of the trust's Golden Cap Centre, Roland Moss, told the News: "I am continuing to pursue this matter with the National Trust's director general, Fiona Reynolds, as I suspect they now think our problem is 'done and dusted' - it isn't.

"They do seem to have the attitude 'let's forget the past and go forward'. I want to forget the past too but I want to get the problems sorted out first. I am all for doing a lot of good things. There is a lot of paper going around but I am not sure about the action. They are still not much good at communicating."

Mr Moss said the trust had managed to upset members again by producing

a magazine called West Dorset Property News but only distributing it in Chideock and Charmouth and not to all members.

"Even though it is called the West Dorset Property News and had special features on the Golden Cap Estate. It has upset quite a few people. Communication is still not perfect."

This year is the first time voting at the AGM has been broken down into direct and proxy voting, highlighting what a difference it makes when the chairman casts his proxy votes. The House of Lords debate heard from many members who were unhappy about how the trust was being run.

The debate was initiated by Lord John Patten. He had received "a veritable snowstorm" of correspondence and faxes on a "perceived democratic deficit in the electoral affairs of the National Trust, particularly in the use of what one might term the block vote". He told the Lords: "Some have represented to me that, because of that block vote, the inner circles of the

● Continued on back page

● Continued from Front Page
National Trust are becoming a bit too close to a self-perpetuating oligarchy for comfort.

"There are regional councils of the National Trust, but they are nominated by the centre and there is no local election to them. That seems wrong. Take the recent cause celebre - some would say scandal - over the Golden Cap estate in the National Trust's care in Dorset.

"I am told that the story is repeated time and again across the country."

Baroness Mallalieu said: "In recent years, since 1996, the style and direction of the trust's leadership has changed. What has gone wrong - and something has gone very wrong - needs to

be debated not only in the carefully orchestrated confines of stage-managed AGMs but publicly and in Parliament.

"The trust appears, perhaps as a result of its own success and its growth, to have stopped listening to locals, to its tenants, to its members and to its volunteers. It has become over-centralised, over-bureaucratic and unresponsive.

"After many years of pressure, this year at the AGM the numbers of those proxy votes and how they were cast have for the first time been made public. It makes disturbing reading because it is clear that for some time the council has managed to defeat critical resolution after critical resolution. I give one

example of the Golden Cap estate. A motion by members critical of the trust's handling of that estate was defeated by 1,500 votes. But when the matter is examined, of the members who cast their votes themselves, 42,000 voted against the council's handling and 19,400 in favour of the council. But by throwing his 24,861 proxy votes behind the council, the chairman was able to defeat his critics."

Lord Mancroft said the trouble with the trust was that it was so busy communicating its vision to the outside world that it had become unable to communicate within its own organisation.

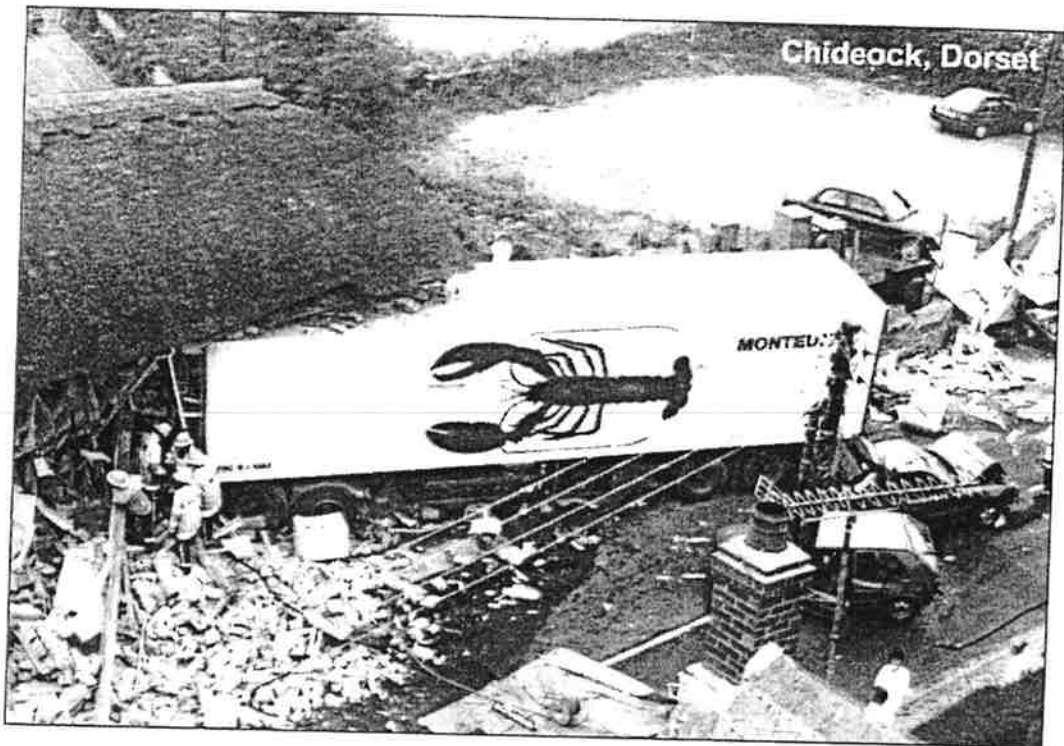
"A substantial group of members and supporters of the trust in west Dorset proposed a reso-

lution at the last AGM criticising the trust's management in respect of its activities on the Golden Cap estate. I do not know the ins and outs of that issue, but one thing is absolutely clear. The issue, which I am sure is difficult, has been hopelessly mismanaged by the trust."

New West Dorset NT property manager Patrick Woodford said: "The director general seems to have already announced a national review about the way various parts of the trust work.

"There are probably very good reasons to review these things. The National Trust needs to shake itself up sometimes. The trust has taken on board a lot of what was flagged up at the AGM and around the country."

5. Photograph Lobster lorry.



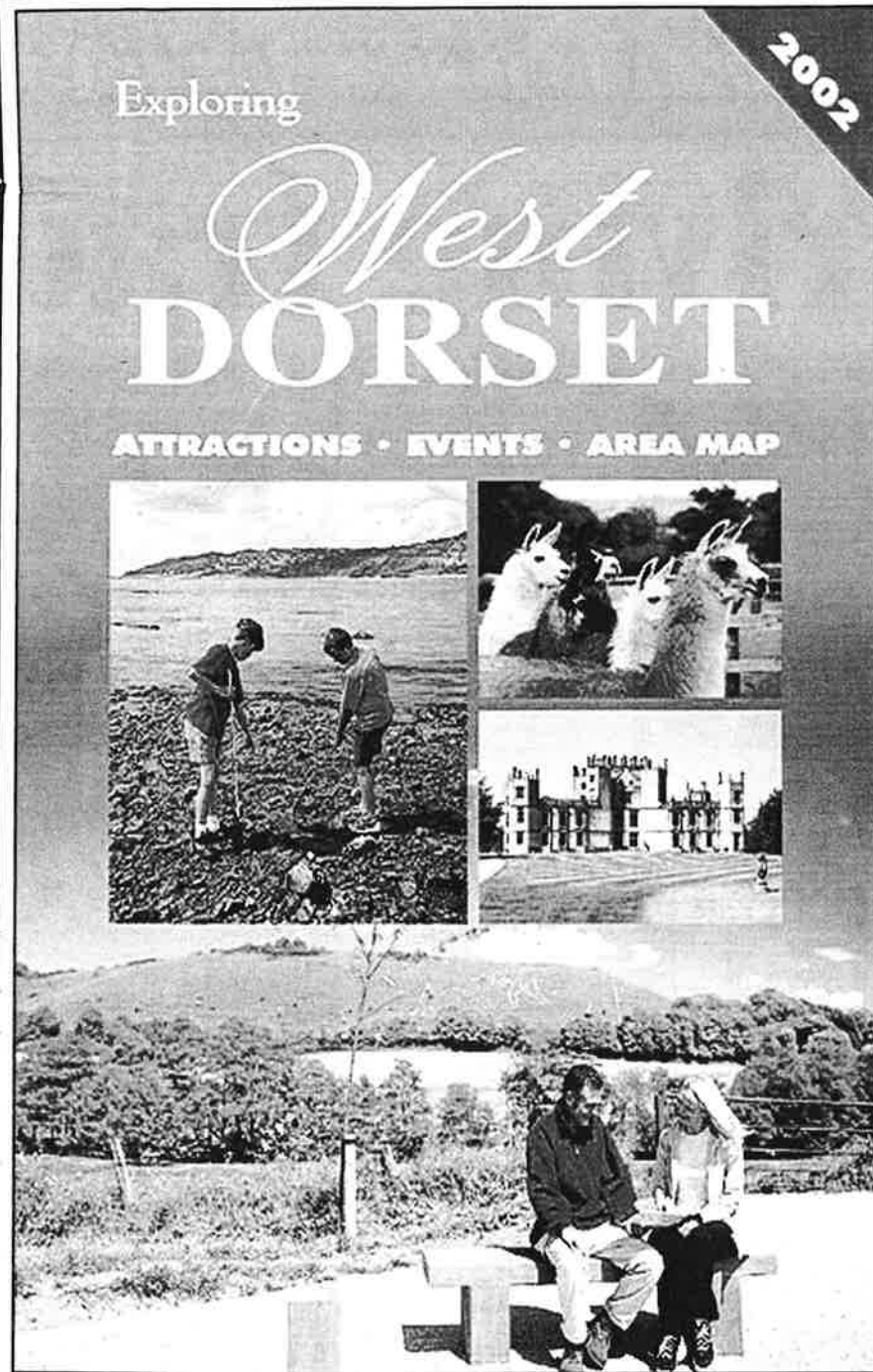
THE TIMES SATURDAY AUGUST 10 1991

6 HOME NEWS

Driver killed

A juggernaut driver was killed when his lorry hit six cars and a caravan before careering into two holiday homes on the A35 at Chideock in Dorset yesterday. The driver, who has not been named, was trapped in his cab for three hours. Twelve people from the cars suffered minor injuries.

New visitor guide features a Jurassic theme



BRIDPORT'S tourist industry is set to enjoy another boost thanks to a new visitor guide published this week.

Containing some stunning photographs of the Jurassic Coast – part of the newly designated world heritage site – some 200,000 copies of the new-look Exploring West Dorset leaflet 2002 have been printed.

They will be distributed to tourist information centres and other outlets within a 50-mile radius of West Dorset to encourage visitors to explore what the area has to offer.

The leaflet, produced by West Dorset district council's tourism team, portrays West Dorset to a range of key target markets.

It includes around 40 attractions, plus key events – such as West Bay trawler race day, Beaminster festival and the Melplash show.

There is also information on market days and an introduction to West Dorset's towns, along with a range of other ideas for great days out.

Amanda Park, tourism development manager said: "We are hoping for a positive year for our tourism industry in 2002. This leaflet is being launched hot on the heels of UNESCO's award of world heritage site status, which covers the entire stretch of West Dorset's coastline.

"We are making the most of every opportunity to promote how spectacular our coastline is and this leaflet, which features stunning photography of our coast, as well as a section of information about our real Jurassic Park, will be supported by local advertising in key holiday magazines to attract potential visitors to really explore our area."

■ Tourism is worth around £210 million to the West Dorset economy and supports more than 7,000 jobs.

BRIDPORT AND LYME REGIS NEWS, August 13, 1993

Ballot showed overwhelming support

CHIDEOCK Parish Council tested public opinion on the proposed Chideock/Morcombelake bypass in November 1991, by holding a confidential ballot of all persons then on the local register of electors.

The ballot posed the simple question: "Do you want a bypass — yes or no."

Of the total electorate, 79 per

cent voted and of those 94 per cent — 407 people — voted yes.

In view of the outcome of that ballot, this parish council has accordingly registered its support for the proposed bypass.

Nevertheless, the parish council is mindful of anxieties expressed by some local residents and has made observations and suggestions to the

Department of Transport following discussion in a meeting held in public, specifically regarding the height of the crossing over North Road, diversions to footpaths and a possible exit at the western end of Morcombelake.

A J ALLAN
Clerk to the Parish Council
Humbers, Chideock.



Mr Oliver Letwin (Con - West Dorset)

41N To ask the Secretary of the State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions what AADT figures were recorded for the Chideock section of the A35 in 1998 and 1999; and what percentage increases are projected for the years 2000 to 2010. (113576)

Mr Hill

The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) figures in 1998 and 1999 were 13,186 and 13,618 respectively.

DETR forecasts indicate that by 2010, a central traffic growth estimate (which represents an average of low and high estimates) would add a further 20% to traffic levels.

In the case of the A35 at Chideock this would mean estimated AADT figure in the region of 16,500 vehicles per day by the year 2010.

Wednesday 8 March 2000
Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions

113576/99/00
(23)

10. Highways Agency AADT's 1994

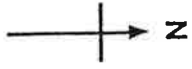
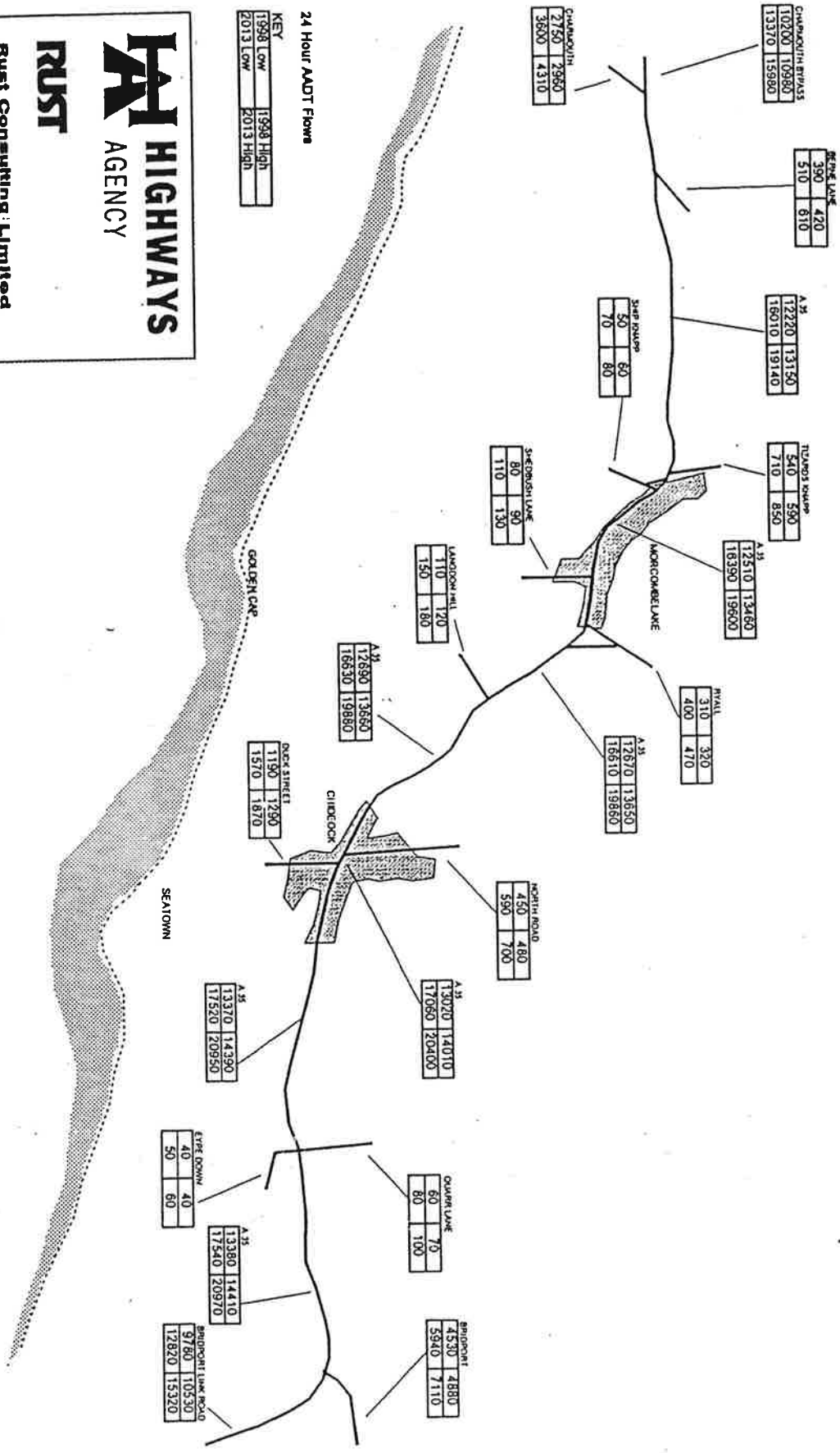
HIGHWAYS
HA
 AGENCY

RUST

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 CALYX HOUSE
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 Tel. 0823 253291
 Fax. 0823 259554

24 Hour AADT Flows

KEY	1998 Low	1998 High
	2013 Low	2013 High



CHIDEOCK MORCOMBELAKE BYPASS
 FORECAST FLOWS - WITHOUT BYPASS
 DO MINIMUM

FIGURE 1
 updated Fig. 5 of PE 2