

Information Further to Ministerial Answers

Information further to OAQ36343, issued by Andrew Davies, the Minister for Economic Development and Transport, on 10 August 2004

To Mark Isherwood:

During Plenary on 23 June I promised to write to you about transport issues with particular emphasis on the A550 trunk road.

The A494/A4950 is being widened from a dual two lane to a dual three lane between the Deeside Park interchange and Drome Corner, and to a dual four lane between Drome Corner and the river Dee bridge. The £14.5m design and build scheme is expected to be completed later this year.

The Assembly Government plan to continue the upgrading of the trunk road network from the Cheshire border in a south-westerly direction after this scheme with the construction of the A494 Drome Corner to Ewloe (Aston Hill) scheme and the A55/A494 Ewloe interchange improvement. These latter schemes will be subject to the completion of the statutory consent procedures and the availability of finance.

The Drome Corner to Ewloe scheme was the subject of public consultation in 1992 following which the preferred option was chosen in 1993. We will publish draft orders under the Highways Act 1980 when there will be an opportunity for any interested party to comment, make representations or object to the proposals. If appropriate, a local public inquiry before an independent inspector would then be held to consider the objections before a decision is finally made on the orders.

A consultation on the options for the A55/A494 Ewloe interchange improvement was held in 1996 following which the two options were withdrawn. This will now be subject of further public consultation before we adopt a preferred route option which will then be subject to the same statutory procedures as for the Drome Corner to Ewloe scheme.

These schemes will be complemented by the Highways Agency A5117 Deeside Park junction improvements scheme in England to improve the route and junctions on the A5117 between the A550 to the M56. In May/June 2001 there was a local public consultation on options followed by a preferred route announcement in April 2002. The Highways Agency's scheme will replace two existing roundabouts, a signal controlled junction at Woodbank junction resulting in an improved road alignment. This will make the road safer, less congested and will improve access to the Deeside Park industrial area together with providing a free-flow link between the M56, via the A5117, to the A550 in north Wales. Planning of this scheme is continuing with draft Orders expected to be published in early 2005 when the public will have the opportunity to make representations. Following successful completion of the statutory procedures stage the Highways Agency expects construction work to begin in 2006-07, with completion by 2008-09.

All our new road schemes take into account future growth in traffic. This is generally taken to be range of scenarios between low and high growth, forecast on a national basis. This will cater for most circumstances where development occurs. We examine unitary development plans to identify any particular circumstances which may affect the scenarios but it is obviously not prudent to plan for exceptional development if it does not have planning consent. If there are traffic implications, say at junctions, for subsequent major developments then we collaborate with the developers where possible, to ensure adequate capacity is provided.