



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-955  
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/00903/20

Janet Finch-Saunders AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

17<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Thank you for your letter of 16 March regarding 'Petition P-05-955 Objection to proposal by Costain to implement Option B in the rerouting of the A465 Brynmawr.'

Costain are undertaking a significant change in the temporary road layout in the construction of the A465 Section 2 project which is essential to the completion of the project. The proposal is to switch both lanes of traffic up onto the high split-level new A465 for the westernmost 2km of the scheme. The traffic switch enables construction work to begin on the existing low-level A465 which has been carrying the traffic until now.

A number of options have been considered to manage traffic while this work is carried out. In choosing an option the project team have balanced a number of competing factors taking into consideration:

- Safety to the travelling public and workforce
- Journey times and reliability on the A465 and on the local road network
- The level of disruption to the local communities along the route.

However, consideration of options has identified that there is no solution that does not involve disruption in the area with the project team's priority to minimise that level of disruption. As a result of the work done to date, two main options were identified as the most likely to meet the project requirements, Option A and Option B.

Assessment of the Option A layout identified extensive queuing and the need to investigate alternatives. The development of Option B has involved extensive stakeholder consultation. Costain have developed their proposals in conjunction with the Traffic Management Liaison Group (TMLG) which includes officers from the local authorities, South Wales Trunk Roads Agency and the Emergency Services. The project team have consulted with local elected members and the Brynmawr Business Forum.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

[Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

A full briefing session has taken place with the Brynmawr Business Forum to explain predicted traffic delays under option A and to explain that the traffic modelling carried out indicates that motorists would travel into Brynmawr quicker under option B. The traffic management is designed to facilitate free flowing A465 traffic, although still limited to 40mph. Option B is anticipated to improve journey times as a whole and reduce the incentive for rat-running as predictability improves. The diversion route should take 7 minutes.

It is recognised that to avoid queues on the A465 under the current layout, additional traffic has been experienced in Beaufort. We also recognise that the current Blaenau Gwent CBC diversion route, following the closure of the A4046, has increased traffic on the A4047 between Beaufort and Brynmawr Roundabout where the current layout has queues on the A465.

During the 3 month westbound on-slip construction, advance signage and diversion routes will minimise A467 traffic traveling through Beaufort and A465 traffic will use the free flowing A465. Following the completion of the westbound on-slip traffic it is anticipated that westbound A467 traffic would use the free flowing A465. We do not anticipate a significant increase in traffic or queuing therefore do not anticipate an increase in emissions. There is also a 7.5t restriction for vehicles traveling through Beaufort and we have reinforced advanced signing of the weight restriction.

While Option A appears to operate in a similar way to the existing layout and could provide some benefits during off-peak times, it will introduce significant congestion on both the A465 and local road network at peak times in the morning and evenings and encourage rat-running. It is also not a suitable layout for large vehicles.

Option B, westbound exit-slip road into Brynmawr will be closed until near project completion. The westbound entry-slip road will be closed for 3 months. Officials continue to challenge Costain to explore opportunities to complete the works as quickly and as safely as possible. In addition, once the scheme is completed, access into Beaufort and Brynmawr from the A465 will be via Brynmawr roundabout similar to the arrangements in place before construction started.

Further stakeholder engagement is planned to outline to the public the impacts of both options after which it is hoped that a number of those who have signed the petition will understand why Option B is the optimum solution overall. This was to be in the form of public exhibitions but due to the COVID-19 restrictions the project team are developing alternative ways to undertake this information exercise. The switch will not occur until this engagement has occurred.

Finally, I can assure you that officials are doing everything possible to mitigate any potential negative impacts arising from the new temporary traffic management. Everyone involved in the project continues to be very grateful to those living and working in the area for their patience whilst these works to complete this project are carried out.

Yours sincerely



**Ken Skates AC/AM**

Gweinidog yr Economi, Trafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru  
Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales