

**P-06-1356 Introduce comprehensive safety measures at the A477
'Fingerpost' junction - Correspondence from the Petitioner to Committee,
24.08.23**

THOUGHTS ON THE DOCUMENT

I have not been furnished with a copy of the letter referred to by Mr Waters dated 11 July 2023 - please provide a copy of that letter in early course.

The document itself is disappointingly political in parts.

Though it is appreciated that Mr Waters holds the position of Deputy Minister for Climate Change, the wording of the petition was very specific in stating that the Welsh Government should ***'prioritise human life over trivial budgeting pressure.***

I am in agreement that the climate is an increasingly prevalent issue in modern society but, as with budgeting considerations, the preservation of human life must supersede the relatively trivial short term output in emissions that would accompany the implementation of long term safety measures at the A477 junction.

DOES THE DOCUMENT ADEQUATELY ADDRESS THE ISSUES RAISED

- *Positives*

- o I am pleased that a report has been commissioned in response to the actions taken by myself and the many others who have supported the petition.
- o Though I do not feel that they go far enough, I am pleased to hear that there have been some soft measures introduced in a bid to improve the situation.
- o I am strongly in support of the introduction of traffic signals, with the caveat that this is only ***if*** the 'signals' referred to are specifically traffic lights.

- *Negatives*

- o Despite searching, I cannot find the SWTRA's report and so can only presume that it is not publicly available. I look forward to receipt of the same in early course. I would like to flag that I do feel hampered in my ability to properly respond to Mr Waters' letter in absence of this document.
- o There is no clarity as to what is meant by 'signalling, road markings and possible minor junction layout changes for enhanced visibility'. Presumably this is set out in

greater detail within the aforementioned report, however it certainly appears to fall short of the comprehensive measures called for by the petition.

o The 'Ride Safely Signs' are a welcomed measure, however I would advise caution in placing too much emphasis on this - I would respectfully remind Mr Waters that fault for the most recent collision has not yet been ascertained. The issue at hand is that the junction is clearly not fit for purpose.

o The letter demonstrates an overall reluctance to commit to long-term safety measures at the junction, which was the petition's overall purpose.

o I fail to understand why a period of monitoring would be required prior to the submission of a business case in support of traffic signals; multiple near misses, over 10,000 signatories and a number of fatalities are plainly sufficient grounds for action.

o The final two paragraphs are specifically disappointing and I refer to them individually as the 'Penultimate Paragraph' and the 'Final Paragraph' below;

§ **The Penultimate Paragraph:** The petition had a very specific purpose, which was to bring about much-needed change at a junction that is clearly dangerous. By referencing the preparation of new guidance on speed limit setting in Wales it suggests that the Welsh Government lacks the ability to consider nuanced instances of danger faced by constituent citizens. I live in hope that this is not the case.

§ **The Final Paragraph:** The overall sentiment of this paragraph echoes the penultimate paragraph. It suggests that the Welsh Government has seemingly limited itself in its ability to take important action on the basis of arbitrary red tape. I also have to question the evidentiary basis for the statements made by Mr Waters. Is he able to accurately provide answers to each of the following questions if the long-term measure implemented was, say, the immediate introduction of a traffic light system at the junction:-

1) What would be the overall increase in land take at the specific junction?

2) What would be the overall carbon emissions output?

3) How would the introduction of traffic lights at the junction encourage dependency on the private car?

Though I am admittedly not an expert in highway management, I would suggest that the answers to questions 1-3 would be either zero, negligible or not applicable.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

I would like complete clarity on the chronology of previous works done at the junction, costings and estimated emissions output for the same.

As someone local to the area, I am aware that previous works were carried out at the junction and I am concerned that such works may now be a factor in stifling necessary change.

It is appreciated that policy changes over time and that carbon emissions are more a more salient issue now than they were in the past. However, if something is unfit for purpose - which over 10,000 local people clearly consider this junction to be - following an attempt at change, then that should not be a bar to future improvement when human life is at stake.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

I look forward to receipt of the final agenda, the link to Senedd TV and ultimately to watching the Senedd's consideration of the petition on 11 September 2023.

Yours faithfully