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National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire SY2 6ND

Date: 6 November 2012
My Ref: 259
Your Ref: P-04-393

Dear Mr Powell

A483 PANT AND LLANYMYNECH – BYPASS PETITION

Thank you for your letter dated 10th October requesting further information regarding accidents or safety issues at the above location, to assist in consideration of a request to the Petitions Committee.

The on-going concerns over the unsafe nature of the A483 through the communities of Pant and Llanymynech has caused this to be a standing issue reported against on the Parish Council agenda and also on the agenda for the Local Joint Committee of Shropshire and Parish councillors. It has led to a local action group being formed to press for a Bypass and meetings with the local MP and the local Powys MP – Owen Paterson and Glyn Davies – together with representatives of the Highways Agency. This has resulted in some mitigating measures including the previously unprecedented provision by Shropshire Council of Vehicle Activated Signs on this Highways Agency road but it remains the case and is the Community view that only a Bypass will solve the underlying safety problems.

Essentially the carriageways and footways are too narrow. The HGVs, which comprise in excess of 10% of the total traffic flow, fill the width of the carriageway, which is reduced to 6m wide in places. The footways are so narrow that pedestrians feel threatened to the extent that parents are frightened to allow their children to walk to school or in many cases frightened to walk with them. This is borne out by the data returned from the annual travel to school surveys carried out by Bryn Offa Primary School in Pant as part of their School Travel Plan. The Primary School is located on the northern side of the village and is accessed from a residential lane off the A483. The travel surveys show that in 2004, 29.5% of children walked to and from school however this figure has now dropped to just 18% in 2011 with travel by car also increasing to its highest level of 58% in the last survey. Relatively minor incursion of the hedgerows onto the narrow footways also renders some lengths totally unusable.

There are on-going maintenance issues on the surface water gully grids, causing vehicles to lurch and intimidate pedestrians even more; reporting of these damaged grids and their repair is a continuous process. This damage also exacerbates the noise that passing vehicles make to the annoyance of people living in the houses fronting the road particularly during quiet periods and has led to increasing concern over the vibration and damage to those properties.

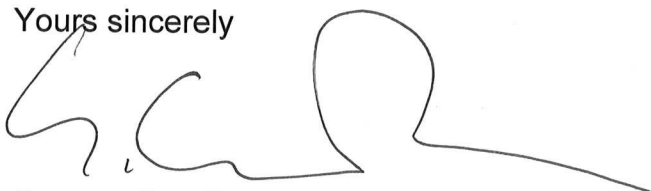
North of the 40mph speed limit in Pant, where the road becomes derestricted, the A483 goes through Llynclys Crossroads, over a railway bridge and on through a stretch known as the "Sweeney Bends". This whole length is a cause for concern, particularly the number of accidents and near misses at the Crossroads and its severely limited visibility. The provision of the Bypass, as previously designed and planned, would also provide the remedy here by replacing the crossroads with a much needed roundabout. The grids along this whole stretch of road are similarly damaged on a regular basis causing danger and inconvenience to all road users and a real danger to cyclists with motorists swerving to avoid them.

There is a history of personal injury accidents on the A483 through Pant, recording 7 slight accidents during the past 5 years, one of which involved a 15 year old pedestrian alighting from a school bus. The West Mercia Safer Roads Partnership have Pant as one of their "community concern" sites, following local representation and concerns, with targeted enforcement being undertaken in the last few years, with some positive results to the vehicle speeds through the village.

In summing up all of the above points, it is the community severance, fear of the traffic and the noise pollution that is having the biggest impact on Pant. The typical village services such as school, children's playground, Post Office, local shop, pub and village hall are all provided adjacent to the A483 however with the areas of housing split either sides of the road, the community will never feel the safety and security that a community such as this should. The area is adjacent to the Llanymynech Rocks Nature Reserve, a golf course and disused section of the Montgomery Canal (under restoration) all of which adds to the tourism and increased pedestrian activity in this part of the Shropshire/Powys borders.

In addition to the above, is the recent development of the use of the A483 through Pant by the huge vehicles transporting wind turbine components and associated equipment to construct the wind farms in Mid Wales. This brings about great community concern over not only safety issues but also noise and damage/vibration to properties which all confirms how this situation would be greatly enhanced from the construction of a bypass.

Yours sincerely



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cc: Cllr Keith Barrow – Leader & Local Member
Cllr Arthur Walpole – Local Member
Ron Buzzacott – Highways & Transport Manager