



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-729  
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/07160/16  
Mike Hedges AM  
Chair - Petitions Committee

government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

22 November 2016

*Dear Mike*

Thank you for your letter of 4 November regarding petition P-05-729 Removal of M4 Speed Restrictions at the Brynglas tunnels.

A variable speed limit system is in place along this stretch of the M4 to ensure the safety of road users. It uses sensors in the road to detect the start of traffic build up that could cause congestion. If this happens, the mandatory speed limit is automatically adjusted to keep the traffic flowing. When no speed limit is indicated, the section reverts to the national speed limit.

It should be noted that there is only a temporary 50mph speed limit in place on the westbound approach to the Brynglas tunnels. Following the tunnel fire in July 2011 a temporary lighting system was installed to allow the tunnel to reopen as quickly as possible. Usually, the lighting within the tunnel should adjust automatically depending on the amount of natural light outside. This is the case in the eastbound tunnel. However, the temporary system in the westbound tunnel is not variable. As a result, 50mph is the safest speed limit to have in place for the time being. There are no speed restrictions in place in the eastbound tunnel other than when the variable speed limit system is in operation.

We began works to refurbish the Brynglas tunnels on 20 June with completion expected by February 2018. The mechanical and electrical systems, including lighting, will be replaced as part of these works. The westbound tunnel bore will be refurbished before the eastbound bore and removal of the temporary 50mph speed limit on the westbound bore is anticipated by April 2017. Further information on the refurbishment work is available on our website: <http://gov.wales/topics/transport/roads/schemes/m4/brynglas-tunnels/?lang=en>

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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.

The proposed M4 Corridor around Newport project is considered to be the sustainable, long-term solution to the social, environmental and economic problems associated with the existing M4 around Newport. It forms an essential part of a vision for an efficient integrated transport system in Wales. Further information regarding the project can be found at [www.gov.wales/m4newport](http://www.gov.wales/m4newport).

*Yours ever,  
Ken*

**Ken Skates AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure