

P-05-690 Resurfacing of the A40 Raglan-Abergavenny Road – Views of local residents

I would like to register our feelings regarding the A40 bypass at The Bryn, Abergavenny, my husband was born and brought up at The Bryn and we have lived near the road for over 30years. The noise from the road is constant throughout the day and during the night until 3am when it stops for roughly an hour.

The noise during the day spoils our enjoyment of our garden during the summer when we can hear the traffic joining the A40 at the Hardwick roundabout and continues past our house at The Bryn for a number miles towards Raglan or visa versa. We are unable to hold conversations when in the garden and are unable to open our windows during the night because of the constant noise.

We would greatly appreciate having the road resurfaced with the whisper tarmac so that we can once again enjoy our garden.

Regards

Dear Sir or Madam

We understand that the above petition, that was submitted in July 2016 by Sara Jones our County Councillor, is to be further discussed on 13/03/2018. With this in mind, we understand that we are allowed to make further representations to you, prior to that date.

We have been campaigning and petitioning successive ministers in The Welsh Government for nearly 15 years, to have the section of dual carriageway between Raglan and Abergavenny resurfaced with "whisper tarmac", thereby reducing significantly, the level of road noise generated by traffic. This road was completed in 1981 and is made of concrete. This material generates an excessive amount of tyre noise when traffic travels over it. The two major causes being the "riffle" effect of the surface and the "thump" crossing expansion joints between the slabs of concrete, both creating excessive noise.

The road noise affect all the communities alongside the A40, as it is weather directional. The Bryn and Bryngwyn are the larger populations beside the A40 but there are many smaller hamlets and individual properties. All have to be treated as the whole, and in the same way.

The noise is constant day and night, affecting people's health. In summertime people find it impossible to sleep with windows open. We all entitled and have a right under European legislation to a "peaceful and quiet life". Penpergwm House is a Residential Home for the Elderly situated alongside the A40. Residents suffer a

great deal from excessive road noise. Any solution to the noise problem must ensure there needs are met.

The resurfacing of the A40 was given priority status in previous noise surveys and was confirmed in writing to our AM, Nick Ramsay, and our MP, David Davies. The progress was dependant on funding availability. We were all advised at the same time that any/all funds and any extra funds that may become available from other projects etc., would all go towards the dualling of the A40.

This statement was brought into question when funding was suddenly made available to the A55 project in North Wales!

Once this dualling scheme is complete, it will mean that the A40 is the second route/second choice route from the West Wales ports to London, the Midlands and the North, resulting in increased volumes of traffic and associated noise. Noise levels will increase!

The road noise is persistent and invasive, affecting peoples live and health and yet the Welsh Government does nothing except issue platitudes often through juniors, indicating that they have little interest and that we should just "put up with it". No minister has ever visited the site to evaluate the problem for themselves. They do not have to suffer the problem!

The only way to resolve the noise problem is to resurface the complete highway, from Abergavenny to Raglan, which would require major works, including problems with bridge clearances, drainage systems and crash barriers, etc., but it is the only realistic way.

Limited noise fencing was offered, but rejected by residents as being too little, inappropriate, unsuitable and unlikely to solve the whole problem. Long stretches of fencing at the Bryn would be needed, to the extent of a mile in both direction, and in some areas on both sides. A similar approach would be needed at Bryngwyn, with smaller stretches at other locations. this would be extremely costly and not necessarily effective.

Such fencing may severely restrict the views from the A40 of the Welsh Countryside, which would be objected to by Welsh Tourism.

Finally, it would seem that the Welsh Government is blind to needs/requirements of it's residents.

Dear Sir

I am writing to add the concerns of my husband and myself to the petition that originally was presented to you by our County Councillor Sara Jones on 21 July 2016 and is being debated again on 13th March 2018.

We live at [The Bryn] in a well insulated house with triple glazing, but are still aware of the increasingly loud noise of the A40 as it runs passed The Bryn.

When we built the house we were able to sleep with windows open, use our balcony and garden with out undue stress. Unfortunately this is no longer the case. Even through the triple glazing we are aware of constant heavy traffic particularly in the early morning.

We appreciate that the road was in place when we built here and accepted the level of road noise at that time. However, the volume of noise on the concrete surface, especially of heavy vehicles, has increased beyond imagining and is now at an unacceptable level. The sound of vehicles travelling over concrete and hitting the edges of the sections is in no way 'background noise' that can be ignored.

The road is frequently being repaired indicating that it has reached its end of life span and when the Heads of the Valleys road upgrade is completed there will be many more heavy vehicles along the A40 between Raglan and Abergavenny causing further deterioration to the surface.

When driving along the A40 in front of the castle at Raglan recently we noticed that it has been resurfaced with whisper tarmac. May I respectfully ask 'Why has not the same consideration been given to the road that affects many in the larger area around the road, and particularly those of us in The Bryn?'

We live in the village of The Bryn adjacent to the A40 dual carriageway, which is a concrete surfaced road. Our bungalow is less than 100metres from the road. We find the constant traffic noise very disturbing, especially through the night, particularly if the wind is blowing from the NW.

Almost every night we are wakened between 4-4.30am when convoys of HGVs use the road, and find difficulty in getting back to sleep. This is particularly bad on Monday mornings.

We are concerned that the noise will increase after the completion of the A465 improvements when HGVs will use this road as an alternative to and from the M4 to West Wales, avoiding the congestion between junctions 24 & 33 of the M4.

Most of the villagers are finding the noise a constant disturbance. This problem has been in existence for several years, and it was previously agreed that the surface should be replaced with whisper tarmac but this hasn't materialised. Can this be done and also soundproof fencing be erected as a matter of urgency?

Trusting that you will give this your utmost attention,

To the Petitions Committee.

You will know that there have been various communications with you in the past about the noise generated by traffic on the A40 dual carriageway between Abergavenny & Raglan.

We have been residents of The Bryn for 54 years, long before this road was constructed & always enjoyed the peace & solitude of the country.

When the road was first opened the traffic noise was bearable because traffic volume was low & there were times during the night when there was virtually no traffic at all.

Unfortunately the concrete road surface makes traffic noise much louder than it would be with a "whisper " surface. As traffic has increased substantially over the years, the noise has become constant day & night, to the point where in Summer months in particular we (together with other residents) cannot open our bedroom windows at night. Gardening is no longer a pleasant pastime as it is impossible to enjoy the garden with the incessant, intrusive noise from the A40.

The volume of traffic will only increase when the work to dual the A465 is finally completed as this will make a continuous motorway / dual carriageway link from the North & the Midlands to West Wales.

The A40 has never been fully resurfaced since it's construction & we suggest that after over 30 years that time has come & the surface of choice should be "whisper ".

If the noise continues at it's present level & increases as traffic increases, then the detrimental effects on the local population will be profound.

Sleep deprivation & stress caused by undue levels of noise are well known causes of ill health both physical & mental.

We hope this Committee will take note of these facts presented here when this matter is debated on 13.3.2018.

The Bryn,

Chairman of Senedd Petitions Committee

Dear Sir

Re: Petition P-05-690 Petitions Committee 13.3.18

I have been a resident of The Bryn for nearly four years and in that time the resurfacing of the A40 Dual Carriageway Abergavenny–Raglan–Newport has been raised many times culminating in another hearing before your Committee on 13 March 2018. The petition has been tendered by Mrs Sara Jones, County Councillor for Llanover Ward of the Monmouthshire County Council. Mrs Jones is our local representative on that body.

The recent snow and its after effects has given the village a welcome respite from most of the traffic noise emanating from the dual carriageway, the surface of which was laid approximately 35 years ago in concrete pads which have now long passed their sell by date and are breaking up. These pads cause additional traffic noise where movement of the pads add to the overall increase in noise.

Successive attempts have been made for the A40 to be upgraded to a tarmac “whisper” surface to help alleviate noise pollution, a surface not available some years ago, however, tarmac was available. The A40 is one of the last major concrete highways to be upgraded. A recent upgrade of one such was the A55 in North Wales which received funding. With the upgrade and completion of the new works to the A465 this will bring more traffic, heavier traffic to the A40 thereby increasing noise levels even further. The position with increased noise levels is further exacerbated in warmer/summer weather when windows are left open and there is a difficulty for residents in sleeping. The traffic is marginally less during the night/early hours of the day but increases from about 5 am with all the heavy delivery traffic/through traffic. This situation has become intolerable, I and the residents of The Bryn are asking the Welsh Assembly to reconsider the whole position of resurfacing the A40 and fund the upgrade with the new quiet tarmac in the very near future.

Yours faithfully