

**P-05-738, Public Petition for the Dinas Powys By-Pass, Correspondence –
Petitioner to Chair, 07.10.19**

Dear Chair,

P-05-738, Public Petition for the Dinas Powys By-Pass.

We'd like to respond to the latest communications your Office has received from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport, Ken Skates A.C./ A.M. and new Vale Council Leader Cllr Neil Moore since the last time this item came before your Committee.

On 30th August 2018 Minister Skates wrote to the Chair of the By-Pass Steering Group (now the Barry to Cardiff Link Road Group). He referenced a request by the Dinas Powys Community Council to the Vale Council Cabinet in April 2018 to extend the scope of the Dinas Powys Transport Study and to include an alternative by-pass route which Consultant / officers have referred to as the Blue route.

http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2018/18-04-16/Reports/Dinas-Powys-Transport-Study-Cabinet-Report.pdf

This extension was proposed to enable the whole Barry to Cardiff corridor to be covered by the WelTAG Stage 2 study. The Blue route and the accompanying upgrading of some existing roads would by-pass the A4055 from Merrie Harrier to Fford y Mileniwm thereby relieving traffic congestion for the whole corridor.

The consultant Arcadis included outline work on the Blue route in its draft Stage 2 report submitted in September 2018.

LATEST CHANGE COULD CAUSE BARRY GRID-LOCK

However, since the draft Stage 2 report was submitted there has been a dramatic reversal of the Cabinet's earlier decision that could seriously jeopardise the financial viability of a by-pass and result in grid-lock of traffic on the section of the A4055 which would not be by-passed.

In April 2019 the then Vale Cabinet changed their earlier scope extension decision by stopping further work on the Blue Route following the motion of a single councillor on the Environment and Redevelopment Scrutiny Committee. Dinas Powys Community Council asked for time to comment on the planned reversal of the unanimous request made by them in February 2018.

Unfortunately an error that has not been attributable resulted in the Community Council not commenting on the change and the Scrutiny recommendation being accepted.

N.B. Regarding the Blue Route change, a spokesman for the new Vale Council Cabinet led by Cllr Neil Moore informed the media in July 2019: “These comments (Scrutiny regarding Blue Route) seem to reflect the view of a few members of the committee during discussions and **do not** reflect the rationale for a final decision.”

Written attempts to gain clarification of this statement from Cllr Moore, from the cabinet member for Roads, Cllr Peter King and from Deputy Leader Cllr Lis Burnett have gone without response.

Vale leader Cllr Neil Moore wrote to the Committee this week referencing the minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 15th April 2019 when he was not a cabinet member.

However, we would submit that those minutes do not substantiate the so-called ‘reasons’ given for halting work on the Blue route. These were:-

- **Slowing study completion.** But no progress evidence March – October 2019.
- **Dispersal of Assests (?)** WeITAG requires consideration of cost-benefit ratio not just cost.
- **Too many options.** WeITAG requires all options to be properly compared.
- **Traffic direction.** Consultant states considerable majority of traffic through Dinas Powys is from or to Barry **not** the Link Road as incorrectly claimed.

How can the Review Group and the Public at a future consultation make observations, comments or suggestions if the Draft Report has had a major scope change since its arrival at Council in September 2018?

The decision to reverse the scope variation would appear to be non-compliant with WeITAG in that it was made **before** either the Review Group has commented on the technical aspects of updated report or a Public Consultation has taken place. (N.B. The only Public Consultation held on this Study to date was on **March 13th 2017**).

WeITAG states the process should :

- i.) Involve people affected by decisions as a requirement of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act

II.) share understanding between those involved in making the decisions and those affected by those decisions. This (It) underlies the importance of stakeholder involvement and public consultation in the gathering of evidence of the need for an intervention, the setting of the criteria against which proposed options will be assessed, and the likely impacts of each option.

Without the Blue Route there would be no true comparison or evaluation of different by-pass routes. It would leave just the Green Route that by-passes only the section of the A4055 through Dinas Powys.

There is also a Pink option which is the same as the Green Route but with an added roundabout.

Neither the Green or Pink options would relieve predicted traffic congestion on the A4055 from Biglis to Ffordd y Mileniwm as referenced beneath.

NO DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The Minister also refers to the Council being asked by us to consider a development proposal that would be more easily facilitated by the Blue route. He rightly indicates that this type of proposal needs to be considered via the proper processes and probably as part of any future review to the Adopted Local Development Plan.

However, there has been a major misinterpretation of discussions between representatives of our Group and Council Officials regarding this suggestion. Neither any of our Members nor any of our Pro Bono Consultants have at any time put forward any 'proposed development' from which any / all might benefit financially. We have only expressed ideas that might be pursued by others and give considerable added value for the alternative route.

Figures of 5,000 potential jobs and £200 Million added GVA P.A. have been indicated by consultants as a potential for development on around 200 acres of employment land, by whoever might be commercially interested.

Obviously such potential gives added information for any cost / benefits analysis of the by-pass route options. It is, for this reason only that the importance of the Blue route by-pass option has been drawn to the Minister and the Council during the current WeITAG study.

RELIEVING TRAFFIC CONGESTION FOR EAST BARRY, SULLY, COSMESTON AND LOWER PENARTH AS WELL AS FOR DINAS POWYS.

Only the Blue Route proposal would relieve traffic congestion on the A4055 between Biglis and Ffordd y Mileniwm which is predicted to increase by up to 35% by 2026. This will be partly as a result of continuing expansion of the Barry Waterfront development.

The Blue Route could also provide relief for the major housing developments being proposed along the B4267 at Cog, Cosmeston and Lower Penarth, which otherwise could add over 3,000 extra vehicle trips daily.

The WeITAG study work for the Blue Route was part-complete when the previous Cabinet called a halt to it. Most of the remaining work on the Stage 2 study is required for all route options and includes area wide analysis of future traffic flows using the South East Wales Traffic Model (SEWTM) both with and without alternative by-pass route options.

REQUEST

We are suggesting that effectively eliminating the Blue by-pass route from the Stage 2 study is premature, does not provide a solution for the whole Barry to Cardiff corridor and is not in the best interest of the South East Vale community. We believe that the Blue Route should be reinstated into the WeITAG Stage 2 Study for full evaluation and request that your Committee consider suggesting this to the Vale Council.

On behalf of:
ROD HARROD, Chair,
Barry to Cardiff Link Road Group
(formerly Dinas Powys By-pass Group)