



Dear

THE CHESTER TO BANGOR TRUNK ROAD (A55) (JUNCTIONS 16 AND 16A IMPROVEMENT REALIGNMENT AND SLIP ROADS) ORDER 202-

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(Ref J16-R017 A55J15J16-2021-071-R)

I refer to your online submission relating to the above Draft Orders dated 6 May 2021. Please note that your submission has been registered as an Objection and you should have received a Welsh Government letter dated 25 May 2021 confirming that a Public Local Inquiry is to be held.

In your submission you said *"A complete waste of time and resources. Traffic is much quieter, changes in habits due to Brexit and covid. Scheme should be rethought due to this. Use roundabout daily, never witnessed an accident. Disruption caused by works not worth potential benefit..."*

I have set out below our response to your concerns.

Traffic is much quieter due to Covid and Brexit

There is no doubt that Brexit and Covid have had a short-term impact on traffic levels and, in all likelihood, there will be some longer-term impacts as well. Interim observations suggest that traffic levels are at a similar level as shown before the pandemic, but the make-up of traffic is different. There has been a reduction in the frequency of travel to work, as more working from home has taken place. However, there has been an increase in work travel by car as people have migrated from Public Transport. Additionally, recreation travel has increased as people holiday in the UK. How this is reflected in population growth, employment growth, social wellbeing and mobility, and ultimately long-term traffic growth, is difficult to say at present. There is, however, no reason to suspect that there will be a significant downturn in traffic volumes.

During periods of economic downturn, traffic flows will remain static or decrease for a period before increasing to meet the original growth trend, as economic activity returns. The length of this cycle will depend on the severity of the economic downturn, but historically has lasted around 4-5 years.

Traffic growth of circa 2% per annum is the growth trend for A55 in the Conwy area.

You use the roundabout a lot and never seen an accident

Whilst you have never witnessed an accident at the roundabout evidence suggests that as traffic volumes increase on roads that use roundabouts to provide entry and exit points, such as this one, that the propensity for accidents will increase.

In both the construction and operation cases, the removal of a roundabout will remove some of the potential conflict between vehicles making turning manoeuvres at the junction, thereby reducing the potential for accidents rather than increasing them.



The removal of conflicting vehicle movements through segregation of the junction will provide the greatest benefit to accident reduction. Where these movements do occur, it will be in a safer and controlled environment, removed from the main A55 carriageway.

There are also other reasons why a roundabout is not preferable which include:

Traffic flows and delays

The roundabouts at Junction 15 and 16 cause of delays. The existing 'At-grade' roundabout accommodates conflicting traffic movements at a single point. For these movements to be operated in a safe manner, all traffic has to reduce speed, below the 'free-flow' speed. The reduction in speed is variable based on the degree of conflict between movements. Thus, there is delay to all traffic over a length on the approach to the junction, where traffic is decelerating/queueing and on the exit to the junction where traffic is accelerating up to the free flow speed.

Noise and air pollution

Our assessment of noise impact of both Schemes is carried out in accordance with DMRB LA111 and Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (1988) and you can access this in Chapter 13 of the Environmental Statement.

In respect of pollution from motor vehicles; vehicle engines are more efficient when driving at a constant speed. Driving with less acceleration and deceleration and stop-and-go would improve fuel consumption, reduce exhaust and brake-wear and tyre-wear emissions and improve air pollution. The existing roundabout does not reduce air pollution because it requires traffic to slow down, forcing vehicles to brake and then accelerate, resulting in higher vehicle and brake- and tyre-wear emissions when compared with free flow traffic conditions.

The replacement of the roundabout with slip roads and an overbridge for example, would reduce congestion and increase the average speed by promoting free flowing traffic, resulting in an overall improvement in air pollution and reduction in vehicle emissions is due to the changes in driving style.

The disruption during construction isn't worth it

The Welsh Government disagree with this statement. In response to most areas of the appraisal which has been undertaken for both schemes, provided the short term construction impacts are appropriately managed, there is overall benefit to completing the scheme. Elements of the construction sequence and impacts are discussed in Chapter 2 of the Environmental Statement and this explains some of the mitigations that would be in place to minimise the adverse impacts during construction.

I hope I have satisfactorily addressed the points you have raised.

Should you require clarification, or wish to discuss the matters prior to responding, please contact Rob Griffiths of Ramboll as follows: Tel: 07918 720458 / Email: Robert.Griffiths@ramboll.co.uk.

Yours faithfully,

James Healey. B.Eng. C.Eng. MHKIE. MICE.

Project Engineer – A55 Junctions 15/16 Improvement Scheme

Trafnidiaeth -Transport

Seilwaith yr Economi - Economic Infrastructure

Llywodraeth Cymru - Welsh Government

Sarn Mynach

Llandudno Junction

LL31 9RZ