

# THE CHESTER TO BANGOR TRUNK ROAD (A55) (JUNCTIONS 14 & 15 AND JUNCTIONS 16 & 16A IMPROVEMENT REALIGNMENT AND SLIP ROADS) SCHEMES & ASSOCIATED SIDE ROADS & COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDERS – PUBLIC LOCAL INQUIRY

Respondent ID: J15 – R040

Overview of positive and negative points relating to the removal of the Roundabout at A55 Junction 15

## During Construction - For

- Temporary increase in construction jobs

## When complete – For

- Small reduction in journey time (on average between 10-20 seconds) for vehicles travelling along the A55 past Llanfairfechan
- Slight improvement to the free flow of traffic on A55 past Llanfairfechan
- Decrease in noise from rumble strips and lorries accelerating from roundabout
- Some Improvements to the Active Travel Route could be introduced without the need to remove the roundabout

## During construction - Against

- The CO2 footprint of the scheme goes against the Welsh Senedd declaration of a climate emergency (IPCC report indicates our CO2 targets are still too high)
- Negative impact on the economy of North Wales including town businesses because of congestion
- Cost of scheme, which could be spent more effectively (perhaps on greener measures)
- Cost of construction materials has increased due to Brexit and Covid – does the current budget take account of that and if not, can the Welsh Government afford it or will corners be cut (general material cost inflation is forecast to rise by between 7 and 8 per cent over the next year, according to the Office for National Statistics potentially increasing the cost of the scheme by over £2.5 million)
- Current global shortages of construction materials could be problematic to completing the scheme on time
- Decrease in resilience for town because of Junction 15 closure, particularly as Aber Road is frequently subject to bad flooding
- How will the cost of the work be covered if the flooding needs to be addressed before the project goes ahead?
- Loss of bus services to the town because of Junction 15 closure and lack of turning options which goes against The Welsh Governments Transport Strategy – there is no solution for environmentally friendly replacement services as yet
- Loss of playing fields for Ysgol Pant Y Rhedyn (at a time when when obesity is dangerously increasing in children)
- Possible damage to memorial trees in school grounds

- Loss of residential homes with no available replacements (a particular problem in the current housing climate)
- Increased stress to drivers on A55 due to congestion and narrowed lanes
- Reduced mental and physical health of residents because of noise nuisance through the day and night for two years
- Reduced health of residents because of particulate pollution from construction work
- Increase in casualties because of reduced response time of emergency services to Llanfairfechan and Penmaenmawr due to closure of Junction 15 and congestion
- Increase in cost to NHS and CO2 footprint if air ambulance is needed instead
- Loss of many mature trees, shrubs and plants currently protecting the town from noise and pollution, reducing CO2 and providing a visual screen of the A55 from nearby properties
- Both plants and animals near the site may struggle to thrive as a result of contamination from particulate air pollution caused by construction, causing a loss of biodiversity and disrupting the food chain
- Loss of plants could lead to more extinctions like that of the Llanfairfechan Hawkweed (and goes against the Welsh Government's declaration of a Nature Emergency)
- Noise pollution can disturb the natural cycles of animals as well as reduce the size of the habitat they can use (there has been sightings of an osprey in Llanfairfechan this summer)
- Increase in travel time and CO2 emissions because of 11km total extra distance to use Junction 14 through the roadworks if coming or going east from the town (particularly bad for people having to travel from Penmaenmawr to Llanfairfechan to go to the doctors or work for example)

### When complete – against

- Loss of only bus stop at the east end of the town with no solution for replacement services (going against the Welsh Government's 'Transport' and 'Prosperity for All' strategies, reducing accessibility to jobs, increasing car use and increasing local inequalities)
- New junction might encourage a shift to motor traffic and reduce viability of some public transport
- New junction might act to induce additional motor traffic, undermining the benefits of making the junction more free flowing and causing more problems at Britannia Bridge
- Safety data comparing similar junctions shows that accidents at the new junction are likely to stay the same or increase slightly, with a greater number of casualties and higher economic cost due to the faster traffic speed
- Line of sight to the junction will be limited when travelling west as the new slip road will be just a short distance after the left hand curve past the tunnel, decreasing traffic safety
- New layout will not improve the Town's network resilience in any way
- New layout will not improve residents access across the A55 to the beach and promenade and in fact the 10m high embankments up to the overpass will create a bigger physical and psychological barrier. It may actually increase severance with coastal areas if pedestrians can no longer use the railway access road to get from the footbridge to the beach. Will the new footbridge still be connected to the beach with the new slip road in place?
- Embankments will visually and psychologically separate the Pendalar area from the rest of the town
- Vegetation reduced as more road surface leaves less space for new planting leading to a

highly urban and exposed environment

- New planting will take many years to establish and reach maturity before it can offer the same benefits of the vegetation that is removed
- Increase in average time to get on and off A55 because of 2 sets of traffic lights – there will not be 'a marginal benefit for local traffic' as claimed by James Healey
- Loss or reduction of views to Blue and Green Space for many residents leading to reduction in mental health
- Increased road traffic noise from cars travelling at 70mph (UKNA report says an increase in speed from 60mph to 70mph can lead to up to a 50% increase in noise) leading to increased health risks
- Increase CO2 from cars now travelling at the higher 70mph (despite the fact that the Welsh Government has mandated reduced speed limits on the M4 in the context of the Climate Emergency)
- Noise barriers not being erected along large parts of A55 despite residential houses being so close to the trunk road
- Increased road noise as residential housing will be closer to new road layout
- Residents and school children close to the construction area may experience the effects of poor air quality long after the project has been completed from PM<sub>10</sub> and other air pollutants
- The set of additional pedestrian lights outside Ysgol Pant Y Rhedyn will not improve safety for those accessing the school as they currently have a Lollipop Lady. Will they lose their job?
- Cost of increased maintenance for new junction (particularly a problem as Wales is facing a huge reduction in funds because of Brexit)
- Increased maintenance needed leading to more congestion
- New overpass will be much more susceptible than the roundabout to problems in extreme heat (heatwaves are becoming more frequent, longer and intense as a result of climate change)
- Increase in ugly urbanisation of an attractive Victorian seaside town and spoiling valued open space with additional man-made features such as the overbridge, viaduct, retaining walls and gantries detracting from the existing view
- Loss of quality and character to town due to the detrimental visual impact of removing garden stone walls, grass verges and vegetation along Penmaenmawr Road because of new Active Travel Route path
- Active Travel Route already exists – it isn't a new benefit of the scheme
- Reduced visibility for vehicle drivers to see cyclists at the bottom of Penmaen Park road if cycle track is moved to where the current pavement is because of the vicinity of Penmaen Lodge
- Cyclists will have to cross Penmaenmawr Road in both directions near the current bus gate on the new cycle path making the Route slower and more dangerous at that point
- More chance of accidents between pedestrians and cyclists along Penmaenmawr Road because they will be sharing the new Active Travel Route, particularly east after the footbridge where the path narrows
- Increased danger of a car sliding down the hill (15%) onto the cycle route and hitting the A55 crash barrier in icy weather because of the barrier being taken away at the corner of Penmaenmawr Road by the bus gate (there is not room for the crash barrier and the NCNR5 path between Penmaenmawr Road and the A55)

- Will cyclists and pedestrians be given any protection at this point from emissions as the Active Travel Route will be less than a meter from the A55
- More chance of accidents between cyclists and the pedestrians getting on and off at the two bus stops on Penmaenmawr Road
- Replacing large grass verges with asphalt concrete along Active travel route will make walking along it much more uncomfortable for people and dogs in hot weather (significant temperature reduction for grass because of reduced solar reflectance and evaporative cooling)
- Loss of 1.7 hectares of farmland and areas of land allocated for housing under the Conwy Local Development Plan
- Loss of a low maintenance, visually unintrusive, low cost, safe and eco-friendly junction