

P-05-886 Stop the Red Route A55 A494 corridor – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Committee, 24.09.20

Many thanks for your response and the opportunity to reply. Since we last communicated we have been made aware of the enclosed recently published WAG briefing on the proposed new road, by a local AS, which has provided us with new incites from which we have derived the following questions to the minister:

Question 1 (i)

On 13 December 2017, a new mandatory Transport Appraisal Guidance document was introduced (WelTAG2017). Just 78 days prior to that, on 26th September 2017, you announced that your preferred route was the Red Route.

The supplementary guidance to WelTAG 2017 says that, "When using WelTAG it is essential to comply with the duties set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015."

Instead, the consultation response to the Route Options says that, this decision was based on the 2008 WelTAG. This pre-dates very important pieces of legislation, including the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

By taking the decision based on a version of the guidance from 2008, you failed to base that decision on an up-to-date and legally relevant framework, didn't you?

Question 1 (ii)

Similarly, by taking the decision based on the 2008 Framework, the decision was, in turn based on HM Treasury Green Book guidance dating from 2003.

You would agree, wouldn't you that the world has changed out of all recognition since then, so much so, that you had revised the WelTAG framework around the same time that the decision to support the Red Route was taken.

Your own WelTAG 2017 guidance requires "Schemes that are already being taken forward through the WelTAG 2008 should move over to WelTAG 2017 at an appropriate stage in their development".

No substantive or detailed design work has commenced nor spade put in the ground yet. Now would be an appropriate stage to assess the route against the principles set out in WelTAG 2017 wouldn't it?

Question 2

The Wales Transport Strategy has been commended for having a vision for a sustainable transport system for Wales. It will also be subject to plan stage Habitats Regulation Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

It would make sense, wouldn't it, for such a major and expensive piece of road infrastructure to be part of the broader transport for Wales strategy, which is (i) subject to the rigours of plan stage Habitats Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment and (ii) focused on delivering a more sustainable Wales?

Question 3

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 requires Ministers to take account of and enhance Active Travel in the creation of new highways and alteration of existing highways. What specific Active Travel provisions are included in the Red Route budget to provide active travel enhancement linking the populations in Flint, Oakenholt, Connah's Quay and Shotton (population, 39,000) to the adjacent strategic economic growth area, Deeside Industrial Park (9000 jobs) over the Flintshire Bridge?

I should point out that the circulation of the this briefing 'behind the backs' of the petitioners has caused some annoyance, particularly amongst amongst those who stand to lose their homes and livelihoods! However we must stress that we realise that this is not the fault of the committee to whom we are very grateful in affording us the opportunity to be heard on this important matter.