

## Dinas Powys By-Pass

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 4 Ebrill 2017  
Petitions Committee | 4 April 2017

### Research Briefing:

Petition number: P-05-738

Petition title: Public Petition for the Dinas Powys By-Pass

Text of petition: we the undersigned, call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to provide the necessary funding and support for the construction of a Dinas Powys By-Pass.

### Background

The Welsh Government is responsible for maintaining the [motorway and trunk road network](#) in Wales. Other roads, including the A4055, are the responsibility of the local authority (in this case the Vale of Glamorgan Council).

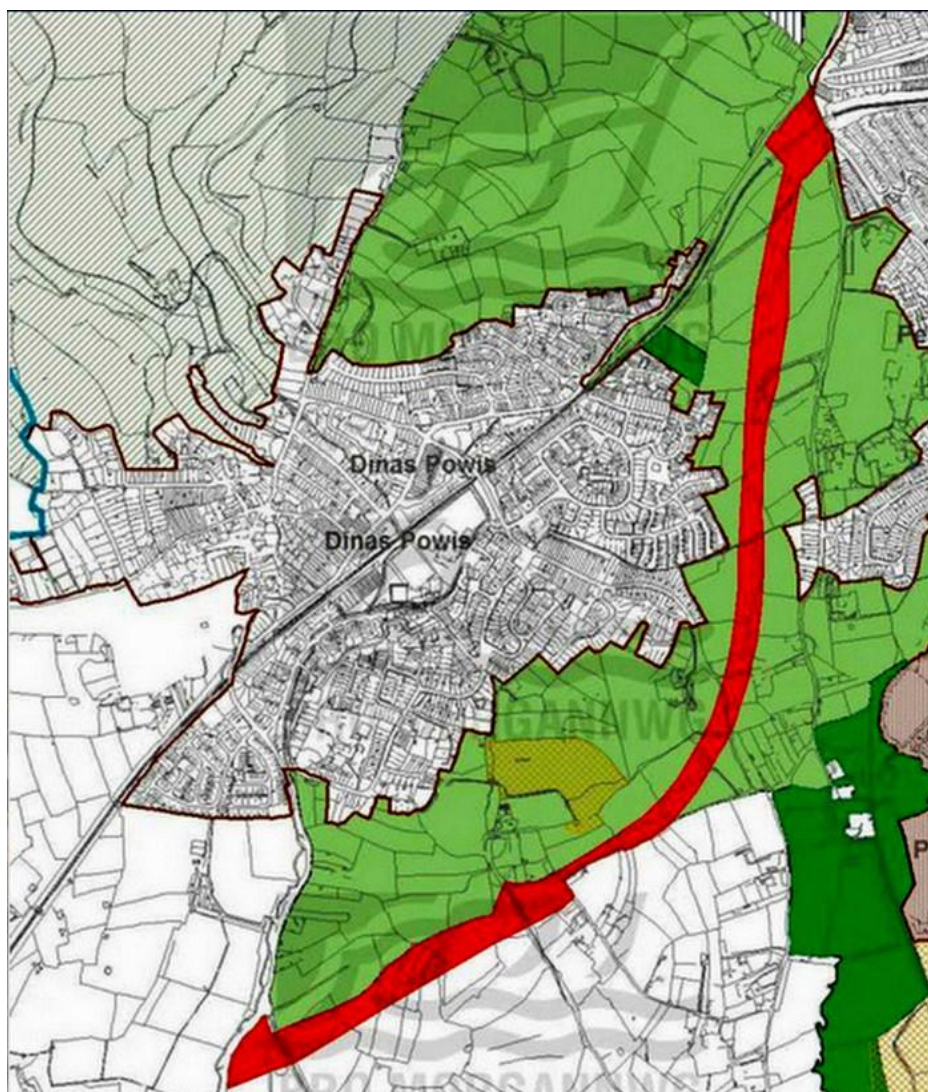
The A4055 is the main road link between Cardiff and Barry, and passes through the village of Dinas Powys. For a number of years there have been [calls](#) to build a by-pass to ease traffic congestion. These calls have been renewed in recent months due to the approval of a number of large new housing developments in the area, such as on [Cog Road](#), which are likely to further increase the numbers of cars using the road. Furthermore, plans for an [additional housing development](#) on a former school site would encroach on the possible route for the by-pass. The by-pass is not included in the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP) or in the [Local Transport Plan](#) for the Vale of Glamorgan. The rationale for not including the by-pass in the LDP is set out in the [Vale of Glamorgan Draft Infrastructure Plan](#) (September 2013):

The Sewta Highway Strategy Study (2008) identifies the A4055 through Dinas Powys as a key problem area of the regional road network as a consequence of the scale of traffic and associated congestion. Barry Waterfront to Cardiff Link Road (Dinas Powys By-Pass) was viewed as having dual benefits, helping to alleviate traffic congestion and improve road safety on the A4055 through Dinas Powys, while having the potential to improve access to the wider road network. Issues at the Cogan Spur and

Merrie Harrier Junctions, following from the proposed Dinas Powys bypass, would however be difficult to overcome.

The Regional Transport Plan (2010) states that the scheme offers positive outcomes and should be subject to further development and evaluation within the investment programme. Whilst the Council supports this scheme in principle, it is considered unlikely that it will come to fruition during the Plan period, given the current economic climate and the Welsh Government's preference to make better use of the existing transport system through the enhancement of public transport routes and provision of new facilities for walking, cycling and rail. Accordingly, the proposed link road / by-pass is not included within the LDP.

A proposed route is set out on the petitioner's [Dinas Powys By-Pass campaign website](#) (proposed route shown in red):



South Wales Central AM, Andrew RT Davies, wrote to the Leader of the Vale of Glamorgan Council in May 2016 about the traffic issues in Dinas Powys, and setting out his views on the

role a by-pass could play in alleviating the problems. The [response](#) from Cllr Peter King, Cabinet Member for Building Services, Highways and Transportation stated:

I can advise you that the Council is of the view that while the provision of a by-pass would partially address through traffic issues within Dinas Powys, it would not address the primary issues which cause the congestion i.e. the constraints imposed by the Merrie Harrier and Barons Court junctions, and would merely transpose the issue to another location. Therefore, the provision of a by-pass scheme is not considered to be required. Furthermore, the area lies outside any designated residential settlement boundary in open countryside where development proposals would be resisted.

Emphasising the role of alternatives to car transport it says:

In line with national, regional and local transport policies, the Council is seeking to promote sustainable transport options and is actively promoting walking and cycling schemes between Barry and Cardiff via Dinas Powys and via Sully and Penarth, and bus priority measures along the same corridors. The Council is also requesting that Welsh Government seek a double frequency on the Vale of Glamorgan Railway Line to maximise rail use from Rhoose and the more rural settlements to discourage driving on the main corridors.

In December 2016, Vale Of Glamorgan Council officers [met with](#) officials from Welsh Government to discuss transport issues affecting Dinas Powys. A combined statement released jointly by both parties following those discussions read:

Transport officials from the Council and Welsh Government met on Monday 12 December 2016 to discuss the Dinas Powys transport network.

Council officers explained that they would like to undertake an investigation to establish the transport issues and opportunities at Dinas Powys and Welsh Government officials agreed to consider putting forward a funding request for their Cabinet Secretary's approval.

This study will build upon the policies and proposals set out in the Council's emerging Local Development Plan. The timescale and precise funding amount for this Study has yet to be agreed.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council held a [public engagement](#) session on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017 in Dinas Powys. The aim of the session was to explore wider transport issues and possible solutions, including the potential by-pass.

## Welsh Government action

There is no legal restriction on the Welsh Government providing funding for major local authority highway schemes. Welsh Government has in the past funded local authorities to deliver large-scale transport projects. However in recent years the approach to Welsh Government funding for local authority highway schemes has changed and the funding streams available are now intended to fund smaller scale projects. There is therefore no

formal Welsh Government grant process into which local authorities can bid to fund large scale local authority road projects.

Between 2001 and 2010 the Welsh Government operated a Transport Grant Programme which provided funding for large-scale local authority transport infrastructure projects. The Auditor General for Wales published his [Major Transport Projects report](#) in 2011 which described the grant programme and considered value for money in delivery of schemes.

The report describes the grant, which allocated a total £829 million to fund a range of projects including:

- Porth Relief Road – Rhondda Cynon Taf Country Borough Council. Cost: £102m. At the time the largest local authority managed transport project in the UK;
- Port Talbot Peripheral Distributor Road – Neath Port Talbot County Council. Cost: £102m; and
- Church Village Bypass – Rhondda Cynon Taf Country borough Council. Cost: £88m.

The report also describes how the approach to funding changed from 2009–10 as the Welsh Government restricted bids for funding for major projects through the Grant, other than for pre-approved projects. It moved instead to other funding streams intended to support the delivery of Regional Transport Plans. Regional Transport Plans were replaced by Local Transport Plans following the abolition of Regional Transport Consortia.

The Welsh Government [Local Transport Fund](#) provides local authorities with funding for smaller regional transport projects. In order to qualify for the fund projects must:

- Support Welsh Government economic priorities for jobs and growth;
- Provide safe and affordable access to employment sites;
- Provide safe and easy to use transport to key facilities and services;
- Connect communities;
- Encourage healthier and sustainable travel;
- Support delivery of the *Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013*; and
- Consider the safeguarding of vulnerable groups.

Grants are available annually and in 2016–17 the Welsh Government will be distributing £17.6m in grants from the Fund to 38 schemes across 22 local authorities. [Guidance on Local Transport Fund allocations](#) (PDF 226KB) for 2017–18 says “the maximum allocation available per scheme from the Local Transport Fund is £1.5m”. [A list of schemes to be funded in 2017–18](#) was published on 22 March 2017.

In his letter to the Chair of the Committee, the Cabinet Secretary reiterated the local authority view that a bypass would not address the primary issues causing the congestion, and set out that the study (of which the public engagement session was a part) is due to conclude in April.

## National Assembly for Wales action

Issues around the Dinas Powys by-pass have been raised a number of times in Plenary and in written questions. In response to a [question](#) from Andrew RT Davies in May 2016 about what proposals the Welsh Government would bring forward to enable residents to feel confident that the Welsh Government would support an application for funding for a by-pass, the First Minister stated:

I'm familiar with the stretch of road, of course, and it is a busy stretch of road. It's a matter for the Vale of Glamorgan Council to consider. It wouldn't be a trunk road; it would be a road run by the local authority, but, of course, we'd be happy to examine any proposals that they might wish to bring forward.

There was also a [written question](#) in June 2016:

Andrew RT Davies (South Wales Central): Will the Minister confirm when the Transport/Highways Department of the Welsh Government last discussed the Dinas Powys by-pass with the Vale of Glamorgan Council and what status, if any, does this scheme have in the Welsh Government's future capital projects? (WAQ70280)

Ken Skates: Local authority highway schemes are a matter for the relevant local authority. We understand the local authority does not propose to take forward the scheme at this point.

In October 2016 the issue was again raised in Plenary. In response to a [question](#) from Andrew RT Davies in October 2016, on whether he had familiarised himself with the transport issues and proposals in Dinas Powys the Cabinet Secretary stated:

Yes, I am aware of the problem in this particular area, and I've asked officials to liaise more closely with the local authority in an attempt to identify a solution that can be fully funded. We do have a very ambitious programme of infrastructure upgrades across Wales, but I do recognise that Dinas Powys is a unique issue that needs to be resolved. If there's any part that I can play in facilitating a solution, I will happily do so.

Referring to the meeting between Welsh Government and the Vale of Glamorgan Council in December 2016, the Cabinet Secretary, in [response to another written question](#) stated:

Although the Dinas Powys by-pass is not included in the emerging Local Development Plan, the local authority has advised that they will give further consideration to the issues involved.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.