

PET(4)-01-12 p16g

Petitions Committee

Date: 10 January 2012

Time: 10:30 – 11:00

Title: Evidence Paper to the Petition Committee on Petitions P-03-144 Shared Spaces, P-03-162 Llanspyddid and P-03-261 Local Solutions to Newtown Traffic Congestion and P-04-319 Newtown Traffic

Introduction

This paper provides information and updates the Committee regarding three petitions; P-03-144 on Shared Space, P-03-162 on Road Safety in Llanspyddid and P-03-261 on Local Solutions to Newtown Traffic Congestion.

P-03-144 GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND – SHARED SPACE

1. In June 2008 the Guide Dogs for the Blind submitted a petition asking the National Assembly for Wales to lay specific responsibilities on local authorities to be aware of their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Equality Duty, and comply with them by not creating town centres, high streets and residential streets with shared surfaces that discriminate against blind and partially sighted and other disabled people, effectively excluding them from the street environment.
2. The petition has been kept open by the Committee pending the publication of Local Transport Note 1/11 – Shared Space – by the Department of Transport. This was published in October and focuses on shared space in high street environments and it places particular emphasis on stakeholder engagement and inclusive design.
3. This Local Transport Note is a guidance document for local authorities in England and other practitioners involved in the planning, design and provision of shared space streets. Its development was informed by a two-year research project in which a wide range of interested parties was involved, including the Guide Dogs for the Blind
4. In 2009, the Department for Transport published an appraisal report on shared space. It concludes that shared space schemes, including those with shared surfaces, as implemented in the UK have no more casualties than conventional layouts, or that particular groups, including disabled people, are injured more frequently following their introduction.

5. Further research was carried out to build on the appraisal report and develop the guidance. This included a number of case studies of existing shared space streets.
6. The guidance has not been formally adopted by the Welsh Government as there are some important differences in the statutory equality provisions for Wales which need to be determined before we can endorse this advice note. Work on this is ongoing.
7. Until more evidence is forthcoming on the effects of the shared space schemes already implemented across the UK, the Welsh Government will not be developing such schemes on roads within our jurisdiction. We would expect local authorities to take full account of the needs of all stakeholders, especially vulnerable road users, in taking these schemes forward on their own roads.

P-03-162 – Residents of Llanspyddid - Road Safety in Llanspyddid

1. In November 2008 Residents of Llanspyddid submitted a petition asking the Welsh Assembly Government to improve road safety in the village of Llanspyddid, Brecon, Powys through implementation of traffic calming measures such as a reduction in the current speed limit, improved roadside lighting and improved signage on the A40.
2. Following the concerns raised by the community the Welsh Government undertook the Raglan – Llandovery Trunk Road A40 Llanspyddid Preliminary Investigations study which reviewed the trunk road environment through the village to determine if measures were required in accordance with highway authority guideline to improve safety. A copy of the report was submitted to the Petition Committee in October 2011.
3. The report recommended that there should be on the trunk road visually enhanced junction signing and lining, yellow backed junction ahead warning signs with “reduce speed now” plates and ARAF/SLOW road markings on a red patch 100 metres from the junction with the side road.
4. This work was completed in 2011. Road conditions will be monitored to assess the outcome of these improvements and to identify if further measures are required.
5. The need for improved lighting was considered as part of this study. The accident data available for Llanspyddid did not indicate any specific road safety issues related to night-time collisions or lighting, therefore the study did not recommend changes to lighting.

P-03-261 Local Solutions to Newtown Traffic Congestion

1. In January 2010, Garry Saady, a resident of Newtown, submitted a petition of 37 signatures calling for the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to defer a decision on the proposed bypass of Newtown until it has developed and trialled a set of sustainable measures in the town itself to address traffic congestion.
2. In March 2010, the Petitions Committee considered an update to this petition as the petitioner had submitted additional information. In May 2010, the then Minister responded to the Petition Committee in detail to the specific points raised by the petitioner.
3. The preferred route was announced on 13 October 2010.
4. Subject to the successful completion of the statutory consent procedures and the availability of finance construction is programmed to start late 2014/early 2015.

P-04-319 Newtown Traffic

1. In June 2011, Paul Pavia submitted a petition of 10 signatures calling upon the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to:
 - a) Install a roundabout at the Kerry Road junction and, if flow improves, reinstate a permanent roundabout.
 - b) Issue an early start date for construction of a Newtown Bypass and for works to be fast-tracked through to completion.
2. In June, the Petitions Committee wrote to the Minister for Local Government and Communities asking for comments. The Minister responded in July 2011 with a letter outlining the concerns about reinstating a roundabout at the Kerry road junction.
3. Subject to the successful completion of the statutory consent procedures, and the availability of finance construction, the bypass is programmed to start late 2014/early 2015.