

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as Chairman of Newport Civic Society. The society has regularly discussed the proposals for the M4 Relief Road during the various phases of consultation, and submitted feedback accordingly.

With regards to the latest round of exhibitions and requests for feedback by the 4th May, I hope you will consider the following thoughts from Newport Civic Society:

- 1) While there are a range of views in both support and opposition to the proposed Black route, it is clear from the feedback and discussions I have had with committee members and our membership at large that there is strong support for the proposal.
- 2) The Welsh Government and their consultant team are to be applauded for the careful way in which they have sought to minimise the impact of the new road on the Gwent Levels. I would like to stress that the Civic Society does view the levels as an important ecological feature and that a balance between development and nature is essential.
- 3) The concerns raised by the Port of Newport should be constructively resolved by all parties. Newport has suffered more than most as major industrial employers have cut back on manufacturing, the port is an important component in the local and regional economy.
- 4) It appears from the latest proposals that there will be direct access from the new road to the A48M, this is essential as it will mean that nearly all Cardiff traffic would opt for the new road rather than the existing M4.
- 5) While for the city and region as a whole there is now a risk of consultation fatigue over these long talked about proposals, we would strongly encourage ongoing meaningful engagement with the residents who will live closest to the new road, such as those in Marshfield, St Brides, Castleton, Bishton, Redwick, Goldcliffe, Nash, Broadstreet Common and Whitson.

A large amount of public money has already been spent on this project, yet there remain doubts as to its deliverability or political acceptability. This is a concern. While there are groups and individuals opposed to the scheme, the indications we have seen suggest that there is also widespread support from people, politicians and press in Newport for a motorway-standard relief road. While the physical impact falls on Newport, the potential benefits spread far into Wales and claims by some that this is spending a large sum in one corner of Wales fail to acknowledge the boost that this road could give to the wider Welsh economy.

Yours faithfully

Nicolas Webb

Chairman, Newport Civic Society