

# Welsh Government, Consultation – M4 Corridor around Newport



1. The Freight Transport Association (FTA) is one of the UK's largest trade associations and represents over 15,000 members relying on or providing the transport of freight both domestically and internationally, to or from the UK. Our members include hauliers, freight forwarders, rail and airfreight operators, through to customers – producers, manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers. They cover all modes of transport – road, rail, air and sea. FTA members operate over 200,000 commercial goods vehicles on the roads in the UK; which is more than half of the UK fleet of goods vehicles. FTA members also consign around 90 per cent of goods moved by rail and around 70 per cent of goods moved by air and sea.
2. The Freight Transport Association welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Welsh Government, consultation concerning the draft Orders - M4 Corridor around Newport. The Freight Transport Association supports the Governments in its proposals for the Black Route, however FTA would encourage the Welsh Government to continue discussion with the operator, Road Chef to find a compromise solution regarding access to and from the services at Magor.
3. In 2014, over 89,000 tonnes of goods were moved by lorries on Welsh roads. 42 million tonnes within Wales itself. And as this figure excludes vans, it is only a part of what freight does. The complexity of carrying out such a scale of operation every day is astonishing – and yet it happens with most people taking for granted the role it plays in keeping the Welsh economy functioning.
4. It is important to note that it costs approximately £1 per minute to operate a modern day articulated vehicle therefore delays due to congestion or an incident have an impact on cost. With more than 80% of goods being transported by road, disadvantaging freight is not cost free. Eventually costs are passed on to customers and thence the public. More expensive freight increases the cost of construction projects such as housing, increases the price of supplying food to supermarkets, and makes it more expensive to supply our hospitals and schools with the goods they need.
5. To continue to function, Wales requires 250,000 tonnes of goods to be moved everyday by lorry, and as the economy continues to recover, the demands placed on the road network will only increase. This increase has already been felt by Severn River Crossing PLC who in 2015 saw a 7% increase in traffic crossing the bridges into Wales.
6. This is predicted to increase further in 2018 with the announcement by the Chancellor of a reduction in tolls. The ARUP report of 2012 on the *Economic impact of the tolls on the Welsh Economy* suggested that this increase could be up to 11,000 vehicles, this dependant on the final outcome of any decision to reduce or scrap the toll. FTA believes that this modelling was made at a time the economy was depressed, therefore this number could be much higher.
7. The freight industry is heavily reliant on the transport infrastructure that it uses, performing to a consistently high standard. Distribution networks, delivery routes and schedules have been designed to achieve availability of sufficient goods at the point of consumption by business or consumers without the need for extensive and expensive stock holding.
8. The M4 corridors is of great strategic importance to Wales, providing a link to Ireland, and through the south east of England and into Europe and Northern English and Scottish markets. Transport is regularly listed as a top consideration for international businesses when deciding where to base their operations, and that in terms of economic benefit transport investment yields several times what it costs. The Welsh supply chain moves goods by road much more than other modes, and so maintaining targeted roads investment is vital to securing Wales' economic future.
9. Reflecting the international function, The M4 in South Wales forms part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), which provides connections throughout Europe by road, rail, sea and air. The M4 plays a

key strategic role in connecting South Wales with the rest of Europe, providing links to Ireland via the ports in South West Wales and to England and mainland Europe to the east. It is a key east-west route being the main gateway into South Wales and the section of the motorway around Newport is one of the most heavily used roads in Wales. It is important therefore that development of the M4 around Newport is not viewed as a 'local' issue. It is of course important to the local economy, but this also remains the case for other conurbations including, Cardiff and Swansea and West Wales. The strategic importance of the M4 requires that it be viewed in the national context.

10. In summary the Freight Transport Association support the Draft Proposals of the Welsh Government with regards to the development of a new Motorway around Newport. (Black Route). A motorway system should allow expeditious movement of traffic. Any new development must result in a Motorway that benefits all road users, whether that be local, national or international.

***Freight Transport Association  
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