

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 9TH OCTOBER, 2017

REFERENCE FROM ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 14TH SEPTEMBER, 2017

“ IMPROVING STRATEGIC TRANSPORT FOR DINAS POWYS (REF) –

Following introductions the Chairman advised all present of the procedure to be followed in considering the report as below:-

- departmental Officer to present the report
- representative from ARCADIS Ms. Janice Hughes - presentation on the Consultant's report
- three members of the public who had registered to speak
- Elected Members of the Council not on the Committee
- Cabinet Member
- Members of the Committee who would consider all evidence presented.

The Principal Transport and Road Safety officer informed all present that the report had been referred to the Scrutiny Committee by Cabinet on 31st July, 2017 for consideration who had made the following:

- (1) T H A T the report be referred to the Scrutiny Committee (Environment and Regeneration) for consideration.**
- (2) T H A T subject to resolution 1 above, the contents of the report and accompanying appendices be noted and agreed.**
- (3) T H A T subject to resolution 1 above, a Stage 2 Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) Report be undertaken for Dinas Powys for the Stage 1 short listed options of Do-Minimum, Multi Modal and Bypass.**
- (4) T H A T subject to resolution 1 above, the Stage 2 Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) Report, once completed, be presented to Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee (Environment and Regeneration) for consideration in Spring 2018.**
- (5) T H AT the Review Group established to guide the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) process should include local business representatives, to be agreed by the Director of Environment and Housing and the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport.**

Cabinet had been requested to agree the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) Stage 1 Report undertaken by Arcadis Consulting UK Limited (Arcadis) on Improving Strategic Transport for Dinas Powys. Arcadis had been commissioned by

the Council in early 2017 to develop and appraise potential options for improving the strategic transport network for Dinas Powys including transport corridors from Biglis roundabout, Barry, through Dinas Powys to Cardiff via Leckwith, Cogan and Penarth. Appendix A to the report provided a map of the study area. The appraisal options were in accordance with Welsh Government's latest version (June 2016) of the WeITAG and the report highlighted that all transport schemes in Wales needed to go through the WeITAG process to be put forward for Welsh Government funding and accepted schemes for transport funding needed to demonstrate value for money.

The study had been required because of the high traffic flows experienced in the area with frequent traffic congestion causing delays and poor journey time reliability. Furthermore, public transport in the area was at capacity during peak periods of travel and there were limited walking and cycling opportunities.

Janice Hughes, representing Arcadis Design and Consultancy informed Committee that in undertaking the study, consultation had been undertaken with key stakeholders on Tuesday, 7th March, 2017 at the Parish Hall, Britway Road, Dinas Powys. Stakeholders included key employers, public organisations, transport providers and the Local Authority. At the consultation the concept was discussed and problems identified, together with opportunities and constraints and the setting of objectives being identified and potential transport options discussed. A public meeting also took place on Monday, 13th March, 2017 again in the Parish Hall, with the public being afforded the opportunity to provide feedback on identified options, opportunities and constraints, as well as consideration and suggestions for the objectives and potential transport options.

Following the consultation 95 feedback forms had been received with the key issues raised being reported as:

- Need for a bypass (44%)
- Larger trains with more capacity / frequency (43%)
- Improve footpaths / cycle infrastructure (34%)
- Improve road safety for cyclists and pedestrians (21%)
- More reliable / frequent bus services (19%).

Ten problems were also identified:

Identification of Problems

- Poor quality bus stops with limited facilities
- Poor interchange facilities at railway stations (including poor parking opportunities)
- Overcrowding on peak rail services
- Overcrowding on peak bus services
- Poor infrastructure and local connectivity by walking and cycling
- A4055 creating severance within the community (e.g. access to schools and other facilities/ services)
- High local traffic flows leading to congestion, capacity issues at junctions, environmental impacts (air quality and noise pollution) and unreliable journey times

- High use of the car for local and regional trips (e.g. journeys to work)
- Occurrence of accidents along key strategic routes, especially the A4055
- Residential land use development within Vale of Glamorgan will compound existing traffic issues and increase pressure on public transport services.

With regard to opportunities and constraints the following had been identified :-

Opportunities

- Proximity to major employment and services means large volume of transport movements to and from Cardiff, from Dinas Powys and Barry and Vale
- Significant facilities and services in close proximity with potential for access by sustainable modes
- Dinas Powys has good potential accessibility by non-car means
- Metro improvements, including more frequent rail services
- Bus priority and service enhancements
- Walking and cycling improvements
- Highway junction / off-line capacity improvements
- Road safety improvements
- Interchange improvements in services and facilities
- New Wales rail franchise
- Park and Ride facilities
- Promotion and marketing of all modes
- Reduce the adverse environmental impacts of the transport system
- New development to be accessible by sustainable modes.

Constraints

- Traffic issues related to being on strategic corridor and difficult to solve alone from measures in Dinas Powys
- Policy context (which was also an opportunity)
- Potential need for third party land to deliver improvements
- Funding availability
- Location of existing services and facilities within Dinas Powys (which was also an opportunity).

The strategic outline case document set out the strategic case for change and assessed each of the intervention options to examine how they would meet the objectives together with the identification of key risks, adverse impacts, constraints and dependencies. The transport objectives for the study that were agreed were reported as follows:

- Objective 1 – Support sustainable connectivity in Cardiff City region
- Objective 2 – Facilitate and support economic growth
- Objective 3 – Improving health and wellbeing
- Objective 4 – Improved safety and security
- Objective 5 – Benefits and minimised impacts on the environment.

As a result of the evidence seven options were assessed as follows:

- Do minimum
- Enhanced rail services and interchange
- Improved bus services and infrastructure
- Enhanced walking and cycling connectivity
- Online highway improvements
- By-pass
- Multi-modal option.

Committee was informed that the options appraisal to assess the long list of options, included considering how the option tackled the identified problems, how the option met the objectives, assessment of risk, consideration of any adverse impacts, constraints and any dependencies.

The report recommended three options to be taken forward to WelTAG Stage 2 :

- Do minimum
- By-pass
- Multi-modal option.

The main impacts of “do minimum” were reported as:

- Adverse effect at meeting the objectives, due to the modest levels of funding currently able to be invested in transport infrastructure and public transport services.
- Background increases in population and traffic growth exceed investment provision to mitigate increasing impacts and pressure on the existing transport network.
- A negative impact on the environment is forecast as the traffic levels through Dinas Powys would continue to increase.

The impacts in relation to the “by-pass” were:

- Could improve local journey times for drivers and public transport, depending on time savings on the route compared to existing. Given that route would still be subject to delays at key junctions to the east, this may not be significant.
- Improved air quality and noise benefits for residents along Cardiff Road and potentially road safety benefits, depending on level of traffic that uses the new link.
- Environmental impacts on landscape, ecology, heritage etc. of new link through countryside.
- Very high cost and delivery issues.
- Requires traffic analysis and further consideration of environmental issues.

The main impacts for “multi-modal” were reported as :

- Potential to improve accessibility.
- Improved road safety and journey time reliability.
- Benefits for health and wellbeing of walking and cycling measures.
- Neutral environmental impact.

- Moderate to high cost and deliverability issues if need third party land.
- Need for further analysis on options and impacts.

In conclusion Ms. Hughes advised that the next steps were to undertake the Stage 2 study and to further consider the recommended options, which required additional evidence and consultation to support decision making.

Following the above presentation the first registered public speaker was afforded the opportunity to make their representations to the Committee. Mr. Rod Harrod commenced by advising that the Committee had three options for consideration and that some people may wonder why the multi-modal option did not include a by-pass. He stated that this was because Arcadis, at page 19 of the report, stated that it would “combine to create a high cost option and may potentially detract from the rail investment elements of the package by improving car journey times”. Mr. Harrod stated that without the by-pass this option would not improve journey times or reduce congestion for Dinas Powys and that in any case the extra passenger benefit from rail investment would be constrained by the Dinas Powys’ stations inadequate platform length and land available for car parking. He stated that 78% of the commuters in Dinas Powys used a car, van or motor cycle to go to work with 22% combined use by bus, train, cycle or walking. He stated that of course non-car travel options were desirable, but that did not mean they would magically work regardless of increasing traffic congestion. A total of 4,000 homes at Barry Waterfront, 450 in Dinas Powys and over 1,500 properties in adjoining settlements without improving the highway infrastructure had meant something had to give and he further stated that by-passes had been built around every other settlement on the Vale’s strategic highway corridors except for Dinas Powys. Mr. Harrod further stated that a by-pass would benefit residents throughout the Vale and it could easily include park and ride facilities, cycle paths and walkways but, in his view, the report did not examine these possibilities. It could also improve access between communities along its path, but instead in his view individual options had been put together to form an ineffective multi-modal. In referring again to page 19 of the report, he stated that this referred to a single route for the southern part of a by-pass although alternative routes were possible and may offer greater benefits if considered at the outset of Stage 2. Information, he stated, that “do minimum” was not a solution, the multi-model would be ineffective unless traffic congestion was first reduced and that the by-pass could be improved by adding sustainable elements such as a park and ride facilities, cycle tracks and walkways.

Mr. Roger Pattenden, in making his representations to the Committee, stated that he did not see how the three options shortlisted in the report could be compared as they were, in his view, unequal. Again, in his view, only the by-pass would significantly reduce traffic congestion and improve vehicle journey times including the buses. Without a by-pass there would be insufficient long term economic employment, social and environmental benefits. In referring to the public consultation held on 13th March, he stressed that the majority of respondents had identified the need for a by-pass and requested weight and speed restrictions on the A4055 through Dinas Powys. During that consultation they drew attention to the juggernauts and HGVs that polluted and endangered the lives of children at the local junior school on the road. However, Arcadis he stated had noted that such restrictions were not possible

while the road remained an A road, however a by-pass could become the A road turning the Cardiff Road through Dinas Powys into a B road with restrictions.

The Arcadis report also referred to a review group created by officials to oversee and guide the study work. Although a number of representatives were included, 78% of local communities who travelled by caravan were not yet represented on the group.

It was accepted that any option must include increasing the capacity of the critical Merrie Harrier junction and Mr. Pattenden also hoped that another would be considered at Stage 2, being the safety improvements on the route through Dinas Powys Old Village along Pen-y-Turnpike to Leckwith as there had recently been a three car pile-up on this narrow road and the road itself had fast become a "rat run". He feared that the current short list for Stage 2 may not allow investigation of combinations for a by-pass with sustainable improvements and urged the Committee to consider asking Cabinet to review the scope of Stage 2 to cover investigation of the various proposals and combinations mentioned.

Mr. Edward Jenkins BEM referred to previous proposals for a by-pass in 2008 and the public consultation that had been held at that time including a major developer who had agreed to underwrite the by-pass and he advised that there was no element in the Arcadis report referring to these proposals from 2008 and hoped that the work that had been done previously would be shared with Arcadis. In referring to the frequent reference to the A4055, he stressed that this certainly needed to be looked at together with traffic management throughout Dinas Powys.

Councillor Robert Crowley, not a member of the Committee, was granted permission to speak and raised concern as to how the options had been short listed and scored. The scores for the by-pass he stated appeared pessimistic and at odds with the statements quoted in the Arcadis report and that if buses were being stuck in traffic jams he could not see how the option was being rated as good and that the multi-modal option had received the highest score, but the by-pass had not. In conclusion Councillor Crowley commented that it was important to consider the economic and environmental future of the Vale and that as a result, different options should be considered at Stage 2.

Ms. Hughes, in response, advised that currently there was no evidence available and that proper traffic modelling needed to be done to assess the benefits. Stage 2 was meant to look at more options to provide the evidence base to assist decision making. The Principal Transport and Road Safety Officer advised that the Council did need to look at the by-pass as one option and that if there was a perceived then this could be addressed at Stage 3. The officer also referred to page 20 of the report which advised the main impact of multi-modal main was to improve road safety and journey time. It was important, she stated, that all options were looked at.

A Member of the Committee advised that he could see the reasons why the options needed to be separate, but it was more logical in his view that they be combined and that it was important that the multi-modal and by-pass be considered together.

Following a further query as to clarity regarding where the by-pass would commence, the officer advised that the original by-pass investigated in 2008

commenced at the Biglis roundabout rather than the Merrie Harrier, although other options could be considered. A local Member referred to a previous option known as the Northern Line and reminded Members of the potential for significant building development that could be undertaken which could also exacerbate the problem. The Managing Director advised if a by-pass came out as a favoured option, the Council could look at what had been suggested in the past and assess the relevance of that evidence for today. As one of the key issues of the new road would be where it would start and end any work / evidence from the in the past would be relevant. The Managing Director further commented that paragraph 17 of the report made it clear that no route had yet been specified, although the Arcadis report assumed a line similar to the UDP.

The Cabinet Member, with permission to speak, advised that he had made the point to Cabinet recently that it was not just a by-pass for Dinas Powys, it would improve transport links in the south eastern part of the Vale.

The Chairman advised that his concern was that the way the Arcadis report was written, the multi-modal option was so far ahead that the by-pass did not rank high enough to be pursued through to Stage 3. Consideration of the by-pass with the multi-modal model was, in his view, the best option and suggested that rather than just considering them in isolation, could they both be added together at Stage 2 in order that aspects of the multi-modal could be considered with the by-pass suggestions.

The Director of Arcadis advised that there was no reason that they could not be combined but that further evidential work needed to be undertaken at Stage 2 in order to make the recommendations to Stage 3. It was however, important to note that the by-pass would need walking, cycling and bus service improvements as well.

The Managing Director advised that in any event notwithstanding what outcomes could be made at stage 2 there could in effect be a suite of measures recommended.

A Member of the Committee stated that they welcomed the report as an attempt to address the issues in a holistic approach. He believed that there was a major agreement for a by-pass and queried the hopes for funding as to whether it would be 50:50 Vale of Glamorgan and Welsh Government and also queried the details of the plans for bus and rail and cycle path timeframes.

The Principal Officer advised that the Vale franchise was currently being considered at the moment but would not be known until March 2018. The bus services had undertaken quite a few studies to look at the corridor and there were plans in place for the Merrie Harrier and Cogan areas with funding to undertake a study. For walking and cycling, Biglis roundabout at Dinas Powys was the major route and there had been a number of studies completed in relation to this. Currently the Council had funding for J34 and once all the studies were complete, they would be reported to Members for consideration.

A Committee Member from Dinas Powys commented that more detail, he hoped, would come through the Stage 2 process, as he stated that he was not sure where the 44% figures referred to had arisen from and anticipated that the Stage 2 process

would provide a cost benefit analysis on the impact on the economy of the congestion. The Principal Officer advised that an analysis would be undertaken at that stage.

In acknowledging that the report appeared to be weighted in favour of organisations such as the rail service and not road users and motorists the Chairman considered that there was a need for greater community representation and that an invitation should be extended to a representative to be nominated by the Community Council.

The Principal Officer advised that the Road Haulage Association and Freight Transport Association had recently been engaged as part of the group and that officers would have no objections to a representative nominated by the Community Council.

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T Cabinet be requested to consider the appointment of a representative by Dinas Powys Community Council of their choosing to sit on the review group.

(2) T H A T Cabinet be requested to consider an additional fourth option to the three proposed of a “bypass and multi modal” at Stage 2 of the process as below:

- Do minimum
- By-pass
- Multi-modal option.
- **By-pass and Multi-modal**

Reasons for recommendations

(1) To ensure that a local voice is represented on the review group.

(2) To ensure that both models are considered together.”