



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

**Trafnidiaeth Cymru**  
**Transport Wales**

## **A483 SWANSEA TO MANCHESTER TRUNK ROAD LLANDEILO AND FFAIRFACH**

### **STATEMENT OF RESULTS OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP AND CONSULTATION ON THE REVIEW OF THE PROTECTED ROUTE**

**MARCH 2007**

## **CONTENTS**

1. INTRODUCTION
2. BACKGROUND
3. OPTIONS APPRAISAL
4. PUBLIC WORKSHOP AND CONSULTATION
5. ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION
6. ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED FROM THE CONSULTATION
7. CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES FOLLOWING PUBLIC CONSULTATION
8. CONCLUSIONS
9. PROTECTION OF THE PREFERRED ROUTE
10. PROCEDURES FOLLOWING PROTECTION OF THE PREFERRED ROUTE

APPENDICES

FIGURES

REFERENCES

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Llandeilo and Ffairfach lie in the eastern part of Carmarthenshire. Llandeilo is a small market town with the A483 Swansea - Manchester Trunk Road passing through its main street (Figure 1). Ffairfach is a settlement lying to the south, with a large secondary and primary school. The A40 (T) London to Fishguard trunk road passes east-west to the north of Llandeilo and joining with the A483(T) trunk road.
- 1.2 The River Towy is a significant, natural feature in this part of Carmarthenshire separating Llandeilo from Ffairfach. A listed single span stone arch bridge carries the A483(T) over the river and its floodplain.
- 1.3 The Trunk Road Forward Programme 2002 (TRFP – Ref. 1) and the 2004 Supplement (Ref. 2) set out a programme for the delivery of improvements to the trunk road network in response to the aims of the Transport Framework for Wales 2001 (TFW - Ref. 3).
- 1.4 The TFW sets out strategic and corridor objectives for Trunk Roads with the north to south objectives being relevant to this scheme. The 2004 Supplement to the TRFP confirms this as a Phase 2 scheme. This means it could be ready to start by April 2010, subject to completion of statutory consent procedures and the availability of finance from budgets approved by the Welsh Assembly Government.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In May 1974, the Welsh Office consulted on bypass routes for both the A40(T) and the A483(T) at Llandeilo. The northern A40(T) bypass was opened in January 1995. An eastern A483(T) bypass was protected for planning purposes in March 1978. Draft Line, Side Roads and Compulsory Purchase Orders were then published in 1993. A Public Local Inquiry was held in June 1993 to consider a number of unresolved objections and representations. The Inspector's Report (Ref. 4) concluded that:

2.1.1 *The balance of the points (discussed in Inquiry) is very much in favour of the proposed route;*

2.1.2 *However [I am] very concerned about the impact of the proposed retaining wall in the region of the station;*

2.1.3 *I have drawn attention to the Secretary of State to a legal point .....regarding flooding, but am also very uneasy about the general effects of increased flooding in the area resulting from the proposed construction.*

2.1.4 *I do not..... consider that at this time it would be prudent for me to agree that the scheme should go ahead.*

2.2 The Secretary of State (Wales) Decision (Ref. 5) generally agreed with the Inspector's conclusions, except that low pedestrian counts and vehicle survey figures fell short of accepted criteria to provide enhanced crossing facilities of the A483 north of Ffairfach. He agreed not to make the Orders and undertook to review options in the Station area to see how environmental concerns could be addressed.

2.3 The Strategic Review of the Welsh Trunk Roads Programme (Ref. 6) published in 1998 identified a number of representations in respect of the Llandeilo eastern bypass. In particular, commercial interests advocated early construction of a bypass as it was considered vital to transform the ailing economy of the town and improve environmental conditions in Rhosmaen Street. Others condemned the proposed route as an unacceptable impact on the setting of the historic town. Minor improvements to the A483(T) were considered unlikely to resolve the traffic problems and it was concluded a multi-modal transportation study of Llandeilo would be undertaken.

### **3 OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

3.1 The Welsh Assembly Government assesses all its transport schemes to ensure they meet their objectives and represent good value for money. The appraisal process used for this scheme was based on the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) (Ref. 7). Options are tested against Welsh Assembly Government's policies, strategic and scheme planning objectives. Problems, constraints, opportunities and uncertainties were identified through the review of previous work, desktop studies and site visits. These formed the basis of consultation with County, Community and Town Council representatives and are reported in the Llandeilo Planning and Objectives and Pre-appraisal Report (Ref. 8).

3.2 A Workshop was held on 30 June 2004 attended by representatives from the Welsh Assembly Government, Carmarthenshire County Council and Jacobs (formerly Babbie Group). The purpose of the Workshop was to review the policies, problems, constraints, opportunities and uncertainties and confirm the Planning Objectives needed to assess the options. Multi-modal improvement options were also identified under the heads of traffic management measures, public transport improvements and road improvements.

3.3 Following the Workshop these options were assessed against the Planning Objectives and the following criteria environmental

impacts, effectiveness, buildability, public acceptability and cost. The outcome determined that whilst traffic management measures and improvements in public transport may reduce some of the problems, they would be unlikely to reduce traffic flows sufficiently to address congestion problems.

#### **4. PUBLIC WORKSHOP AND CONSULTATION**

4.1 A Public Workshop and Consultation to consider the options appraised was held between April 2006 and June 2006. This included a Public Workshop and Exhibition held at Llandeilo Civic Hall between 26 and 27 April 2006.

4.2 An information pack containing a public notice, brochure, questionnaire and postage paid return envelope was delivered to approximately 1300 statutory bodies, local businesses and residences in the immediate locality in April 2006. A further 300 were made available in deposit locations.

4.3 A series of meetings were held in advance of the Workshop with interested groups comprising of the following invitees:

Statutory Bodies: Carmarthenshire County Council  
Countryside Council for Wales  
Environment Agency

Non Statutory Bodies: The National Trust  
Cambria Archaeology - Heritage Management  
Carmarthenshire Fishermens Federation  
Llandeilo and District Civic Trust Society  
Campaign for the Protection of  
Rural Wales  
Sustrans  
Heart of Wales Line Forum

Rail Bodies: Network Rail

4.4 A preview of the consultation exhibition on 24 April 2006 was attended by representatives of:

Carmarthenshire County Council  
Manordeilo and Salem Community Council  
Llandeilo Fawr Town Council  
Dyffryn Cennen Community Council  
Carmel Community Council  
Broad Oak Community Council

4.5 The Public Workshop and Exhibition displayed material that described Assembly Government policies, the historic scheme

development of the previous eastern bypass scheme, the Planning Objectives development, environmental constraints, options generation and comparison, refinements to the existing protected route, and the way forward.

## **5. ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION**

5.1 Written contributions were received from:

- statutory bodies
- non-statutory bodies
- rail body
- petitions from local Action Groups
- public respondees

Public responses (72% of the total) primarily came from the Llandeilo/Ffairfach postal area SA19 6.

### **5.2 Statutory bodies**

#### **5.2.1 Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC)**

5.2.1.1 CCC's Local Transport Plan 2001 to 2006 states *"that a bypass to the east of Llandeilo is urgently required in order to remove through traffic which unnecessarily passes through the centre of this (Llandeilo) historic and attractive town. Together with the completed northern bypass, it will create the opportunity for traffic management and environmental enhancement and a better life for the residents of the town."* They seek early construction of the eastern bypass for the future health and economy of Llandeilo.

5.2.1.2 The Executive Board confirmed support on 24 July 2006 for the proposed Llandeilo Eastern Bypass. It supports the purple Inner Eastern Route (existing protected route) with the proposed refinements (broken purple route) shown in April 2006 at consultation stage.

#### **5.2.2 CADW**

5.2.2.1 They have advised that the *"most wide-ranging damage to the historic environment would be from the Western Routes. Both the Outer and the Inner Western Routes would have a serious impact on the Grade 1 historic park and garden of Plas Dinefwr and would seriously affect the setting of Newton House and Old Dinefwr Castle. In addition, the Inner Western Route would cut across an area of high archaeological importance the scheduled Dinefwr Park Roman Forts (CM367)."*

5.2.2.2 Eastern routes would impact on the wider historic environment and in particular on Ffairfach standing stone (CM325) which lies on the inner eastern route.

5.2.2.3 Routes would impact on the Tywi Valley Landscape of outstanding Historic Interest and thus any scheme would need to assess impacts in accordance with prescribed methodology.

### 5.2.3 Environment Agency

5.2.3.1 No written response was received from the Environment Agency. However, they attended the Workshop along with other statutory and non-statutory bodies. They raised concerns regarding flooding and sought assurances that a full flood risk assessment study would be undertaken.

### 5.2.4 Countryside Council for Wales

5.2.4.1 No written response was received from the Countryside Council for Wales. However, they attended the Workshop along with other statutory and non-statutory bodies. They raised concerns regarding the impact on the SAC and the geomorphology of the River Towy and its tributaries.

### 5.2.5 Llandeilo Fawr Town Council

5.2.5.1 The Town Council supported the principle of an A483 bypass for Llandeilo. It "accepts the purple route as the only realistic option". They identify a number of aspects to be addressed:

- how would the scheme deal with the risk of flooding in Ffairfach?
- how would the scheme be amended to deal with the area in the Railway Station area?
- design of the new road bridge over the River Towy;
- landscaping proposals along the route to mitigate against the visual impact of the scheme;
- details of the pedestrian crossing facility at the new roundabout at Towy Terrace, Ffairfach;
- impact of the scheme in terms of noise and pollution and mitigation measures; and

- an evaluation of the effectiveness of any traffic calming measures.

#### 5.2.6 Dyffryn Cennen Community Council

##### 5.2.6.1 The Community Council observed that:

- the blue route would not cater for traffic on the A476 from Cross Hands, and would create a barrier between Ffairfach and Ysgol Tre-Gib;
- the purple route would not be a bypass as it would mix local and long distance traffic. Further this route would not address flooding concerns, would interfere with the historic bridge and does not provide a solution to the pedestrian/disabled access across the carriageway;
- the yellow route was a viable proposition but unlikely because of significant land acquisition from the National Trust;
- the green route would be preferred, but should be sited further west and follow the yellow route between A483(T) and A476 around Ffairfach;

#### 5.2.7 Other Community Councils

##### 5.2.7.1 No written responses were received from Carmel and Broad Oak Community Councils.

### 5.3 **Non Statutory Bodies**

#### 5.3.1 The National Trust

##### 5.3.1.1 They sought justification for the need and options identified;

- considered it was premature to dismiss non-bypass options before public consultation;
- opposed the western route options, which cross land held inalienably by the Trust;
- sought careful assessment of eastern routes and bypass options taking account of the impact on the setting of Dynevor Park; and

- called for a design approach based on landscape and environmental perspective.

### 5.3.2 Cambria Archaeology - Heritage Management

5.3.2.1 Firstly challenged the sufficiency of data and assessment to inform the study in terms of historic environment issues and impact. Consequently, it was not apparent from the consultation, the basis of route selection. Secondly, as all routes cross the Towy Valley registered historic landscape, then each route would need to assess its impact before selecting a single preferred route. Thirdly they were not aware of a desk study to assess the archaeological and historic resource within the consultation area.

### 5.3.3 Carmarthenshire Fishermens Federation.

5.3.3.1 The Federation support the argument for a bypass, but will oppose any non essential route or works that impact on the Towy. For the inner/outer eastern routes any lateral encroachment on the river channel is likely to involve meander truncation with considerable effects up and down stream. Other routes should be considered such as mid way between the inner and outer western routes or a route nearer Llangadog.

### 5.3.4 Llandeilo and District Civic Trust Society

5.3.4.1 They considered that the information provided did not allay people's fears about the difficulties raised in the 1993 Public Local Inquiry about the existing protected route, i.e. the purple route. However the Executive Committee prefers the broken purple inner eastern route because it would be the shortest of all the routes with least impact on the environment and historical sites. In developing such a scheme they sought:

- the consideration of the health and safety of residents and visitors;
- retain access to the improved station;
- safe pedestrian facilities;
- mitigation of flooding risks
- mitigation by landscaping and tree planting to screen the road and railway;

- a well designed bridge to enhance the landscape;
- further public engagement.

### 5.3.5 SUSTRANS

- 5.3.5.1 The charity promoting cycling opportunities considered that none of the options adequately conserves the historic and splendid location of the town. No traffic analysis, desire lines or existing traffic flow figures were provided. However the western options will result in a longer diversion and take less traffic out of the town.
- 5.3.5.2 Further, detrunking of A483(T) and trunking the A476 was not referred to, but could have a significant effect on traffic distribution.
- 5.3.5.3 The revised (purple) option including relocation of the station to avoid the retaining wall would seem to have merit, notwithstanding noise, severance and intrusion that traffic would bring.
- 5.3.5.4 An alternative route option from Bethlehem Road following a line similar to the outer eastern option would require a shorter length of river to be diverted is considered to greatly reduce intrusion and severance.
- 5.3.5.5 They are particularly concerned about access, provision of special off-carriageway shared use paths, recognition of the Suspension Bridge as part of an important footpath route and in respect of traffic management, dedicated routes for cycling and walking away from A483(T).

### 5.3.6 Heart of Wales Line Forum

- 5.3.6.1 The Forum acknowledges the need for action to relieve problems caused by road traffic passing through the town centre which could include construction of a bypass. It could also cover more targeted management of heavy goods vehicles using the route. No recent analysis had been made of the nature of traffic flows and so impossible to comment on better traffic management. They commended a study. The Forum supported item 4 of the 'planning objectives' which is to provide opportunity to improve public transport accessibility and interchange.

### 5.3.7 Network Rail

5.3.7.1 Network Rail agreed in principle to the local realignment of the railway in the station area, subject to more detailed discussion, including retention of the passing loop.

## 5.4 **Petitions**

5.4.1 Two petitions were submitted arising from the consultation:

### 5.4.2 Towy Bypass Action Group (TBAG)

5.4.2.1 The Group was supported by 826 signatures and sought agreement to the following statements:

- (i) the Inner Eastern Protected Route (1993) is unacceptable on a number of grounds;
- (ii) consultation did not meet standards of fairness and balance because it solely promotes the Inner Eastern Protected Route;
- (iii) alternatives such as traffic calming measures, a western route linking A476 to A40(T) or a new far eastern route, and not include such unfeasible options such as the inner western route through Penlan Park.

### 5.4.3 Mr W G Evans

5.4.3.1 This petition was supported by 835 signatures, and sought agreement to the following statements:

- (i) "The only practical solution to Llandeilo and Ffairfach's traffic, pollution and road safety problems is a bypass".
- (ii) "As aforementioned problems continue to grow, work on constructing a bypass should be allowed to proceed without undue delay".
- (iii) "The presentation of route options for the Public Workshop and Consultation was incomplete". Issues arising from the 1993 Public Inquiry had not been addressed in sufficient detail to allay fears of those most affected by the Inner Eastern Route.

- (iv) Welsh Assembly Government should provide more details of most practical routes, not involving Dynevor Park, one to the east and one to the west.

## 5.5 Public Responses

5.5.1 Drawing from the questionnaire responses, the following was determined:

- (i) *"Do you consider the existing A483 through Llandeilo and Ffairfach needs to be improved"* - 92% agreed, 5% did not and 3% gave no response.
- (ii) *"What do you think are the current problems?"* identified out of all problems listed pedestrian safety, safety/speed of traffic and traffic noise or vibration as the key issues.
- (iii) *"Should any improvements be limited to improving the existing road?"* identified 82% as no, 14% as yes and 4% as no response.
- (iv) *"If a bypass was built which route do you prefer?"* – identified 64% purple with the greatest support, 14% gave no preference and the remaining 22% made up of other and/or combined routes.
- (v) In determining the respondee's interest in the scheme; 66% were residents of Llandeilo or Ffairfach, 25% were outside this area, and 9% were land-owners potentially affected by options. Of all respondents 5% said they were regular users of A483(T) through Llandeilo and Fairfach.

## 6. ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED FROM THE CONSULTATION

6.1 A number of issues need to be addressed when considering options for resolving traffic problems in Llandeilo and Ffairfach. These relate to both the Public Local Inquiry (PLI) held in 1993 and the Public Workshop and Consultation held in 2006. This section sets out the proposed actions to address these issues.

6.2 Statutory designations that may affect these issues are shown in Figure 2. As planning constraints they would influence route options and thus serve as a factor to take into account when reviewing options for the Preferred Route.

6.3 Since 1994, the river valley has been designated a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) and subsequently a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Also in 1994 Consultants Maunsell

produced a response (Ref. 9) to issues raised by the Inspector following the PLI in 1993. These are taken into account in the following actions.

#### 6.4 Proposed retaining wall in the vicinity of Llandeilo railway station

6.4.1 Following the Inspector's recommendation, consideration has been given to a 150m long retaining wall along the western side of the bypass with an average height of 8.8m reaching a maximum of 10.7m. It would be topped with a boundary fence.

6.4.2 To avoid building a wall, the bypass would need to be moved eastwards, either locally by relocating the railway line or adopt a new bypass line further to the east. Through liaison with Network Rail and the Heart of Wales Line Forum, relocation is feasible in principle, but would be subject to more detailed considerations during the next stage of scheme design.

6.4.3 These options would be considered further in the next stage of development for the scheme. This would include consideration of the flooding issues if the railway moved closer to the River Towy and its floodplain.

#### 6.5 Potential flooding and the effects on residential properties

6.5.1 Following the Inspector's recommendation, agreement in principle for hydrological studies was obtained with the former National Rivers Authority (NRA), now the Environment Agency. These studies would examine the potential impact of the scheme and the detailed design of mitigation measures. These could comprise new and improved flood defences.

6.5.2 It is fully recognised that detailed consideration would be required to determine the potential flooding effects on residential properties as well as impacts on the geomorphology of the River Towy and its tributaries. As described above, a comprehensive hydrological study would be undertaken to determine the appropriate scheme design, defence and mitigation works.

#### 6.6 Pedestrian facilities at the proposed A483(T) roundabout.

6.6.1 Concerns were raised about uncontrolled crossing facilities between Llandeilo and Ffairfach where the purple inner eastern route crosses the existing A483(T). The following options have been considered:

- an at-grade uncontrolled crossing;
- a traffic light controlled crossing point;
- a pedestrian overbridge; and
- a pedestrian underpass.

6.6.2 These options would be examined further in the next stage of development, including a detailed analysis of pedestrian movements and safety-related issues. In addition, a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit would be undertaken. At this stage all the options are considered to provide potentially safe provision for pedestrians.

## 6.7 River Tywi Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

6.7.1 Statutory designation under NATURA 2000 Standard Data Form (Ref. 10) confirms the site was designated as a SAC in December 2004 for fish and botanical features. An initial screening report on potential effects of road options has been undertaken (Ref. 11) in accordance with the processes defined in Section 48 of the Habitats (Natural Conservation and etc) Regulations 1994.

## 6.8 Additional Outer Western Bypass Option

6.8.1 Two additional options, which avoid Dynevor Park, were identified as part of the consultation process. These have been appraised against the transport criteria of accessibility, safety, environment, economy and integration. Both of these options have significant environmental impacts and higher costs than other options considered. As a result they are not as favourable as the extant protected route, i.e. the purple inner eastern option.

## 6.9 A483(T)/A476 Link

6.9.1 This option, which links the A483(T) and the A476 some 3km south of Ffairfach, would be costly and have significant environmental impacts. Also, it would not remove the need for a bypass of Llandeilo.

## 6.10 Alternative traffic management arrangements

6.10.1 A wide range of traffic management arrangements was considered as part of the option appraisal. However, these only provide limited benefits compared to a bypass.

- 6.10.2 Options such as restricting HGVs' and introducing weight limits on the existing trunk road were considered. However, as the A483(T) is a national strategic trunk road such proposals could not be justified as there is no reasonable alternative route for these vehicles. Also, enforcement of these restrictions would be impractical.
- 6.10.3 The Towy Bypass Action Group (TBAG) suggested an alternative traffic management arrangement involving traffic light controlled tidal flow arrangements in Rhosmaen Street with a complementary one-way traffic flow through Crescent Road and Church Street. This proposal would provide limited benefits in terms of vehicle conflicts and pedestrian safety on Rhosmaen Street. However, it would not reduce delays to traffic, remove HGVs from the town centre, and improve the town centre environment. It would also create new safety problems on Crescent Road and Church Street, which are not suitable to cater for trunk road traffic.

6.11 Effect on Dynevor Park

- 6.11.1 The western routes which cross Dynevor Park would create some adverse impact on the Park in terms of visual intrusion and loss of amenity for the National Trust who own and manage the house and estate.

6.12 River Fisheries

- 6.12.1 All the options considered would cross the river and its flood plain and have the potential to impact upon river fisheries and the SAC. More detailed work as part of a future hydraulic study would be able to determine local effects on fishing, taking advice of the statutory regulatory authorities: Environment Agency and Countryside Council for Wales.

6.13 Detrunking A483(T) (M4 to Ffairfach) and trunking A476 (A48(T) Cross Hands to Ffairfach)

- 6.13.1 The Welsh Assembly Government's Review of Trunk Roads in 2002 (Ref. 12), includes proposals to
- de-trunk the A483(T) between M4 Pont Abraham and the A476 at Ffairfach; and
  - to trunk the A476 between the A48(T) Cross Hands and the A483(T) at Ffairfach.

6.13.2 The timing of these proposals is not yet known as it would be the subject of further consultation, separate statutory processes, and the availability of finance. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that as the level of traffic which would re-route as a result of these proposals is low, it should not be a significant factor to consider in the selection of a preferred route.

#### 6.14 Station access and integration

6.14.1 The purple inner eastern route provides a significant opportunity to improve the integration of different modes of transport in Llandeilo. It would also provide an opportunity to improve the public transport gateway into the town.

6.14.2 Although this is a matter for detailed design, it is feasible to improve pedestrian links into the town centre, increase bus/rail interchange facilities, and improve car parking facilities at the railway station. These improvements would be considered through liaison with the local highway authority, Carmarthenshire County Council, the regional transport body, SWWITCH, and the Assembly Government.

### **7. CONSIDERATIONS OF ISSUES FOLLOWING PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

7.1 The Public Consultation was effective in terms of attendance, returned questionnaires and written responses. There was considerable support for improvement (92%) and for a bypass (82%). Figure 3 indicates the options considered during the Consultation exercise. Greater support was registered for an eastern rather than a western route. Public responses were 7% for the yellow and 5.5% green western routes compared with 64% for the purple route and 7.5% for the blue eastern routes (the remainder comprised of no preference or combinations).

7.2 Statutory bodies generally support the purple. Carmarthenshire County Council support the broken purple inner eastern route as published and shown in the brochure. Llandeilo Fawr Town Council accepts the purple. However Dyffryn Cennen Community Council supports the green, inner western route.

7.3 Cadw and the National Trust believe that a western route has the potential to adversely affect Dynevor Park. Further, Cadw have identified a serious impact on the historic park and garden and National Trust says irreversible harm to its integrity. The area is also inalienable land. On the basis of responses from the above statutory bodies, western routes are not favoured. The exception is

Dyffryn Cennen Community Council who support a green route, but only if located further west. It would afford better access or additional access to Dynevor Park.

- 7.4 Environment Agency acknowledged preliminary consultation and need for further, more detailed examination in the next stage of scheme development.
- 7.5 Network Rail has indicated willingness to discuss relocating track and railway line to facilitate the broken purple route.
- 7.6 By taking account of the statutory body responses there is general support for a bypass and that this should be the purple, inner eastern route.
- 7.7 Non statutory body responses are however more disparate with only Llandeilo and District Civic Trust Society supporting the dashed purple inner eastern route. Cambria Archaeology challenged adequacy of data to inform the study. The same issue was raised by Llandeilo and District Civic Trust Society. At this stage in the scheme development the intention is to review all potential options and to determine if the current protection of the purple inner eastern route should be maintained. Detailed analytical work of the preferred option would be carried out in the next stage, including preliminary designs and environmental appraisals.
- 7.8 The preliminary design would include examination of the railway station area including the retaining wall. Because of the importance of this visual aspect, need for suitable access to the platforms and general improvement of the station locality, the Design Commission for Wales would be invited to offer their views.
- 7.9 Potential flooding issues remain an important concern whichever route was to be pursued. During preliminary design, an extensive river modelling exercise would be undertaken.
- 7.10 Pedestrian access and safe crossing facilities of a bypass route would be an integral part of the design, taking account of the pattern of transport and pedestrian movements.
- 7.11 The foregoing non-statutory body comments point towards important aspects requiring detailed examination during the next stage of scheme development.
- 7.12 The two petitions reflect differing views towards a bypass in almost similar numbers. However both claimed insufficient data for the public to judge between the need for a bypass, and if so which route was preferable. Comparative information was tabulated and

displayed on an unbiased basis in the brochure and explained in the exhibition.

- 7.13 Public respondees confirmed that pedestrian safety, safety/speed of traffic, noise/pollution, and community severance were uppermost concerns of the public. Consequently this supports the need for a bypass.
- 7.14 Detrunking of the A483 (T) south of Ffairfach to the M4 Motorway, and trunking A476 between Cross Hands and Ffairfach, remains a Welsh Assembly Government intention. It would however not be a primary issue for determining a Preferred Route as forecast traffic flows on both routes would not significantly alter. However connecting with the blue, eastern route to the A476 would be more problematic than with the other options because it would require a link around Ffairfach.
- 7.15 Any 'far' eastern route (as suggested by Sustrans) is not favoured as it would incur substantial cost, involve a longer crossing over the valley and require a local river diversion.
- 7.16 The full results of the Consultation exercise are given in the A483(T) Llandeilo and Ffairfach Public Workshop and Consultation Report (Ref. 13). This information has been considered in developing the Preferred Route for this Scheme (See Figure 4). The reasons for selecting the Preferred Route are set out in this Statement.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 The consultation reflected a considerable interest in overcoming the problem of traffic congestion occurring on A483 through Ffairfach and Llandeilo. There is significant support for the purple inner eastern route, but this should be designed to recognise the sensitive nature of the Towy Valley, imposing position of Llandeilo and potential flooding effects for Ffairfach. Good design of the road co-existing with the railway station and fitted into the river valley would be primary aims of the next stage of developing the scheme. There was little support for a western route. The visual effects of such an option would be long lasting and difficult to mitigate. In addition, any such route would be longer, more costly and less attractive for through traffic than the purple, inner eastern route.
- 8.2 The refinement to the purple inner eastern route, shown dashed in the consultation brochure, reduces the impact of the route crossing the flood plain and River Towy. This is considered to be the optimum environmentally sensitive and cost effective solution, subject to a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an Appropriate Assessment to determine the potential effects on the SAC and the qualifying interests.

## **9. PROTECTION OF PREFERRED ROUTE**

- 9.1 The purple inner eastern route, modified as described in paragraph 8.2 above to reduce its impact on the River Towy and its floodplain, will continue to be protected for planning purposes as the Preferred Route. This protection will extend from the south end of Ffairfach on the A483(T) to the A40(T) roundabout north of Llandeilo. This means that future applications for development in the vicinity of the Preferred Route will continue to be referred to the Assembly Government by the Local Planning Authority. Any person having difficulty in selling a property because of the Preferred Route will be able submit a Blight Notice to request the Assembly Government to purchase it.
- 9.2 Copies of the plan of the Preferred Route issued to the Local Planning Authority (Figure 4) may be inspected at Carmarthenshire County Hall in Carmarthen and Transport Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ.

## **10. PROCEDURES FOLLOWING PROTECTION OF PREFERRED ROUTE**

- 10.1 Arising from the Minister's decision to proceed with the project, the route will be protected under the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995. Members of the public will have an opportunity to comment further when draft Orders are published.
- 10.2 The protection of the Preferred Route does not commit the Assembly Government to the line of that route, but it will now be the subject of more detailed engineering, environmental and design investigations. In preparing the preliminary detailed design, the comments received during the public consultation, which relate to such matters as junction strategy pedestrian safety, access and amenity issues in the railway station area flooding and design, side roads etc, will be taken into account.
- 10.3 It is a statutory requirement that all projects for improving or constructing a trunk road should be examined to determine whether or not an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required under the Highways (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1999 and Directive 85/337/EC, as amended by Directive 97/11/EC. The scheme has been assessed with reference to the criteria in the Regulations and has been determined to be a "relevant project". An EIA will be undertaken and an Environmental Statement (ES) published at the same time as draft Orders under the Highways Act 1980. The public will have the opportunity to comment on the ES.

- 10.4 With regard to the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c). Regulations 1994 as this may apply to any Appropriate Assessment, which identifies a significant impact (or reasonable scientific doubt as to the absence of such) on the River Towy SAC, an initial review has been undertaken for the existing road and options. Findings indicate that at this stage in design development, there is no better option than the purple (inner eastern route) as the Preferred Route. Further, more detailed assessment will be undertaken in the next stage of developing the scheme to inform an Appropriate Assessment decision. The Statement to Inform the Appropriate Assessment (SIAA) will be published with the draft Orders and the public will have the opportunity to comment.
- 10.5 After more detailed design and assessment, the Assembly Government will publish proposals for the new trunk road in the form of draft Orders under the Highways Act, 1980 and draft Compulsory Purchase Orders under the Acquisition of Land Act, 1981. There will be a period during which interested or affected persons may object to the proposals suggesting alternative routes if they so wish. All objections to the draft Orders will be taken into account and, if they cannot be resolved, a Public Local Inquiry will be held by an independent Inspector before the decision is made whether or not to make the Orders.

## **FIGURES**

1. Scheme Location Plan
2. Constraints Plan
3. Consultation Options Plan
4. Protected Route Plan

## REFERENCES

1. Trunk Road Forward Programme, 2002
2. 2004 Supplement to the Trunk Road Forward Programme
3. The Transport Framework for Wales, 2001
4. Inspector's Report, 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1993
5. Secretary of State (Wales) Decision Letter of 14 July, 1994
6. A Strategic Review of the Welsh Trunk Roads Programme, 1998.
7. Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance
8. Llandeilo Objectives and Pre-Appraisal Report, November 2005
9. Response to Public Inquiry Report, February 1994
10. NATURA 2000 Standard Data Form for River Tywi
11. River Tywi SAC, Appropriate Assessment Screening and Significance of Effects Report
12. Review of Trunk Roads – Welsh Assembly Government 2002
13. Report on Public Workshop and Consultation, February 2007