Design Review
Report
A483/A489 Newtown Bypass,
Newtown
30th January 2014
Declarations of Interest

Panel members, observers and other relevant parties are required to declare *in advance* any interests they may have in relation to the Design Review Agenda items. Any such declarations are recorded here and in DCFW’s central records.

### Review Status

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<td>Meeting date</td>
<td>30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issue date</td>
<td>17&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; February 2014</td>
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<td>Scheme location</td>
<td>Newtown</td>
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<td>Scheme description</td>
<td>New bypass road</td>
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<td>Scheme reference number</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>Planning status</td>
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### Declarations of Interest

### Consultations to Date

A public exhibition for the proposed scheme was held in July 2013. Further public exhibitions are planned for February 2014 and Q3 2014.

### The Proposals

The scheme is for a 5.6km long bypass road around Newtown through predominantly agricultural land, with a build budget of approximately £50m. The new road will include eleven structures, including bridges, and culverts. It is hoped that the bypass will relieve traffic congestion in the town, making it a safer place to walk and cycle. It is planned that Draft Orders will be published June 2014, a public inquiry will take place winter 2015, and construction will begin summer 2016. Improvement works in Newtown will follow.

### Summary

- The Design Commission welcomes the opportunity to review this project at an early stage, and would encourage further engagement as the designs progress.

- The integration of highway design and environmental mitigation and enhancement is positive.

- The Design Commission would like to know more detail about the proposed improvements in Newtown and how these will benefit the wider community.
Main Points in Detail

**Environmental Factors**
A new road of this scale will have an impact on the landscape and environment. Given the rural, agricultural setting for this bypass, it is good that the highway design has been strongly guided by and integrated with environmental mitigation and enhancement.

On initial inspection the changes to the original route that are proposed appear positive; adding value and reducing environmental impact.

A holistic approach to environmental mitigation and enhancement, such as proposed, is to be encouraged. The design of these measures is at an early stage, but we look forward to seeing how they progress alongside the highways design.

It is good to hear that the team has found undertaking the CEEQUAL Assessment a helpful process; and that it has encouraged proactive thinking rather than retrofitting, and has helped integrate the team.

**Structures**
The road requires 11 structures which are designed to minimise impact on the environment. Natural stone cladding will be used where bridges are visible, along with weathered (Corten) steel. The designers recognise that careful detailing of the structures is needed to avoid staining from the steel, but they have experience of using this material.

It would be beneficial if the stone for the bridges could be sourced locally. Resources should be investigated, and samples tested.

**Newtown Improvements**
The benefits to Newtown which will result from this project are important. The bypass is intended to relieve traffic levels in Newtown, enabling improved and safer walking and cycling conditions. Following construction of the new road, improvements will be carried out in the town. Whilst it is acknowledged that the town centre improvements are being designed and delivered separately from the bypass it is important that Welsh Government ensure both aspects of the Newtown scheme are presented to the Design Commission.

It is encouraging to see the team working with the Local Authority and community on a project for Newtown ‘Gateway’.

The Design Commission would like to know more about what will be done in the town and how the works will improve the quality of the urban realm in Newtown, and address the broader objectives of public transport and non-car transport. It will be important to define the measures which will be used to achieve this soon, as this project has potential to make major positive change.

**Future Engagement**
It is best if design review is first carried out at an early stage when there is more potential to influence the scheme and add value. The Design Commission welcomes this
early engagement on this project and would welcome further review as designs progress to a more detailed stage.

At the next review we would expect to see the following:

- Environmental masterplan drawings
- Key details of the environmental strategy (water treatment, lighting, wildlife mitigation, noise and visual impact, cut-fill balance etc.). Treatment of the cutting and embankment slopes and measures to reduce visual and acoustic impacts from properties located to the north of the scheme.
- More detailed proposals for structures, including appraisal of options for sourcing local stone
- Proposals for mitigating effects on non-motorised users of the area during construction and operation
- Proposals for town centre improvements and Newtown ‘Gateway’
- How lessons learned from previous road schemes are influencing this project
- Demonstration of BIM model

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A Welsh language copy of this report is available upon request.

Attendees

Agent/Client/Developer: Peris Jones, Welsh Government

Designers/Contractors: Alex Thomas, Atkins
Peter McComiskey, TACP
Jo Wall, TACP
David Rowlands, Alun Griffiths Contractors
Richard Britten, Alun Griffiths Contractors

Planning Authority:

Design Review Panel:
Chair: Wendy Richards
Lead Panellist: Simon Power
Elfed Roberts
Ashley Bateson
Toby Adam
Amanda Spence, Design Advisor, DCFW

Observing: Carole-Anne Davies