



Bert Biscoe CC
Portfolio Holder for Transport
Chairman, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Transport Board
c/o Cabinet Office
County Hall
Treyew Road
Truro
TR1 3AY

27 January 2016

Dear Mr Biscoe,

A38 in South East Cornwall: Road Investment Strategy

As the Cornwall Councillors representing South-East Cornwall, we are seeking your support, and that of the Local Transport Board, in pressing for the A38 to be included as a priority for investment in the Government's Road Investment Strategy (RIS).

First, though, we would like to thank you for your help on this issue to date. As Portfolio Holder, you have carefully listened to our concerns - attending meetings and touring the route in our company - and, with your officers, liaised with Highways England in seeking a way forward.

On 30 November, we had a further meeting with Highways England and Cornwall Council officers. We were asked to identify which schemes we considered should be put forward for inclusion as major projects in RIS2, for delivery in the 2020-25 funding period. We are pleased to report that we identified three priority schemes; officers will be developing two of these as bids for RIS2 (Lean Quarry and Bodmin Parkway), and it is anticipated that the final one (Stoketon Cross) will be delivered by a developer.

It is absolutely vital for Cornwall that these schemes are now included in RIS2 and progressed to delivery in as short a timescale as possible. It is here that we need your support, and that of the Board. Specifically, we need:

- Assurance that work on developing the bids will be given the highest priority, including work on scheme design and an economic case to support the bids
- Formal support for the three projects from Cornwall Council and the Board
- Cornwall Council and the Board to work with us, Members of Parliament, and other stakeholders to lobby the Government to include the Lean Quarry and Bodmin Parkway schemes within RIS2
- Appropriate action to ensure the timely delivery of the Stoketon Cross scheme

We have reiterated our case for the A38 below. We set this out in detail in our letter to you of June 2014; although we are pleased that positive action is now being taken to progress our concerns, we are disappointed at the rate of progress, and feel that the A38 is still not receiving sufficient priority in relation to the A30 and other strategic routes in Cornwall.

We therefore seek assurance that Cornwall Council will press for further major investment in the A38, beyond the schemes listed above. It is vital that we listen to the views of our residential and business community, which as you know include a strong campaign for further dualling, and sustain the pressure to secure permanent solutions for the economic, safety and environmental issues that have been identified.

“The Case for the A38”

1. The A38 needs major investment as a matter of urgency. This is in order to reflect its status as a major trunk road, support the economy, improve road safety, and protect the environment for this and future generations.

2. The need for investment extends to the main roads connecting to the A38, most significantly the A388.

3. Economy: The A38 falls significantly short of that which is required effectively to move people and freight in, around and out of South-East Cornwall. Capacity and journey times are significantly compromised. This hinders existing businesses – causing practical day to day issues and holding back their expansion. It also deters inward investment, as businesses will only relocate if they can transport their goods quickly and efficiently.

4. Safety: The primary concerns relate to the Lean Quarry and Menheniot junctions, and the stretch from Trerulefoot to Carkeel. There have been a number of serious accidents at these locations, including serious injuries and fatalities. Other concerns include: the pinch point outside Bodmin Parkway station and collision hotspots along the Glynn Valley. The hold ups caused by accidents have knock-on effects including time lost to businesses, inconvenience to visitors and loss of reputation.

5. Environment: Trunk roads are supposed to ensure the “free flow” of traffic. Due to the A38’s limitations, we often see serious congestion, and this has implications for air quality and pollution. Hotspots include the approaches to the Tamar Bridge, Bodmin Parkway station and the residential communities of Landrake and Tideford.

6. Constraints: We understand the challenges involved in securing funding and accept, to some extent, that the potential for improvement is constrained by factors such as topography, natural features and other infrastructure like the railway line. However, we must face the challenges head on and work together determinedly and consistently over the long term until there is no further scope for improvement.

7. The overall objective must be that the A38 is upgraded until it truly reflects its status as a major trunk road and can support economic growth to its full potential. The A30 will always be Cornwall’s primary route, but the benefits of having two fit for purpose trunk roads will be enormous. The needs of existing and planned developments will be accommodated, and businesses will have the confidence to invest. The economies of the towns on and around the A38 would reap similar benefits as those on the A30.

8. We recognise the significant financial and practical challenges involved. However, if we are going to deliver the future our communities deserve, we need to make a step change in our ambition for this road and work together to see this through in a staged approach.

We thank you and the Board for their consideration in this matter and look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Bob Austin CC (Saltash West)
Jim Candy CC (Trelawny)
Bernie Ellis CC (Menheniot)
Joe Ellison CC (Saltash North)
Jim Flashman CC (St Dominick, Harrowbarrow and Kelly Bray)
Hilary Frank CC (Saltash South)
Mike George CC (Liskeard West & Dobwalls)
Edwina Hannaford CC (Looe West, Lansallos & Lanteglos)
Sally Hawken CC (Liskeard East)
Brian Hobbs CC (Torpoint East)
Derek Holley CC (Saltash East)
Roger Holmes CC (Liskeard North)
Dorothy Kirk CC (Gunnislake & Calstock)
Andrew Long CC (Callington)
Stephanie McWilliam CC (Lynher)
Mike Pearn MBE CC (Torpoint West)
Daniel Pugh CC (St Germans & Landulph)
Armand Toms CC (Looe East)
George Trubody CC (Rame Peninsula)
Derris Watson CC (St Cleer)

(The Cornwall Councillors representing South-East Cornwall [Caradon, Cornwall Gateway and Liskeard & Looe Community Network Areas])
c/o Members' Room, Luxstowe House, Liskeard, PL14 3DZ

Copy to:

Sheryll Murray MP; Towns & Parish Councils in Caradon, Cornwall Gateway and Liskeard & Looe CNAs; Chair, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Local Economic Partnership; South East Cornwall Collective Chamber of Commerce