

PE1236/L

Dear Sir,

I thank you for, once again, allowing me to respond to the findings from Transport Scotland.

I am, again, dismayed by their attempts to fob us off with their own "figures". At our recent meeting held on the 8th April with reps from both Transport Scotland and Bear Scotland we asked two things of them.

We asked for a more accurate cost of a flyover at Laurencekirk.

We also asked for the accident figures of two other sites where grade separation has been approved, so we could compare these figures with Laurencekirk.

They have made no attempt to supply us with the answers to these queries.

Their own amendments to the accident figures at Laurencekirk make no difference to the fact that the accident level has clearly risen here since the 50 mph was introduced in 2005 and yet we were told by Alan Campbell (Bear). At the meeting, that the accident level remained consistent.

The new safety measures that are being introduced at present have been welcomed by locals as insulting and laughable. At the meeting we were told that these measures were more aimed at strangers to the area rather than the local people, yet if you look at the fatalities from the last 10 years every fatality has been a "local". Every fatality has been a person trying to CROSS the A90 at one of the Laurencekirk junctions and yet transport Scotland refuse to address this.

The merge taper, just announced, at the North Junction may, indeed, be of a benefit to traffic leaving Laurencekirk travelling North but will do nothing to alleviate the real problem of crossing traffic at the junctions.

Although, I felt quite positive at the time of leaving the meeting on 9th April, on reading Transport Scotlands findings I now see it for what it was. An attempt to wash over facts and figures from the Transport Minister.

If you consider the south junction at Laurencekirk where the A937 joins the A90. On one side you have Laurencekirk on the other the A937 takes you through Marykirk, Craigo, Hillside, Montrose, Ferryden further down the coast is Arbroath. The junction serves all the above towns.

There are some major developments within some of these areas which will and are effecting the volume of traffic using the junction.

Montrose, itself with a population of 12,000 plus is rapidly becoming a commuter town with many homes owned by people travelling North daily. A current development in the town is currently building 200 new homes and I am led to believe planning has been passed for a further 350 at the site. The forties Industrial Estate has expanded by 4 hectares providing 8 new development plots for incoming businesses.

Montrose Port is about to get 2 deep water Berths which has even received a £3million grant from Transport Scotland, Stewart Stevenson said, himself, this would remove lorries from the A90 but it will direct many of them straight through the south junction at Laurencekirk.

A new Grain Store and drying facility has also been authorised for Montrose Harbour, again with £2million of government funding and again will only add to the congestion of crossing traffic at the south junction at Laurencekirk.

I have documentation of these plans and I would like to bring them with me to the next meeting and have them introduced as evidence.

I am absolutely gobsmacked that our own Transport Minister and government would encourage these two developments and help fund them but refuse to make the journey safer to the people who will use them.

At Hillside, Sunnyside royal hospital is about to close and the plan is to build 360 new homes on the site. I live on the first development of houses on this site and I know that over 90% of homes on my street are owned by people who commute through the junction daily. Lower house prices have attracted many northbound commuters to the area.

I have photographs of traffic at the junction. These were taken by a photographer friend of mine who stood for an hour, during morning rush hour, and captured what he saw. In that hour he saw 4 near misses, huge queues and an extremely long wait by one particular lorry driver, another lorry driver who actually left his cab and cleaned his windows whilst in the queue and also managed to show how difficult it is for lorries to cross at the junction. Again I would like to bring these photos along and introduce them as evidence and be given the opportunity to discuss them and the other documents with the committee.

The documents I will have with me are:

Photographs of an hour period of rush hour taken 22nd February 2010

Forties Road Business Park Montrose Development Master Plan

Montrose Including Ferryden and Hillside, Angus Council local plan review

Pages from Dredging Today (details of Two Deep-Water Berths planned for Montrose)

Details of New Grain Store planned at Montrose Harbour

A letter from Councillor David May of Montrose

All I hear from the transport office is that they are continuing to monitor the junction. I find this very difficult to believe.

On Saturday May 15th. I received a phone call from Mrs Kate Smith of Garvock Court, Laurencekirk. On Tuesday 4th of May she was returning from her work, around lunchtime, and using the North Junction, as always, to cross over into Laurencekirk. As she was sitting in the central reservation, she observed the northbound carriageway and it was clear to go. As she made her manoeuvre she was struck by a northbound vehicle, in the fast lane, that she maintains she never saw. She considers herself very lucky as she escaped with only minor injuries. It was the exact same manoeuvre that killed Mr Anderson last year and another local lady a few years

ago. There is a small sign on the central reservation which, we believe creates a blind spot on the northbound fast lane momentarily for vehicles waiting to cross from the central reservation. Kate was lucky she only lost her car it could so easily have been her life.

If Transport Scotland is monitoring this stretch of road so carefully why have they not picked up on this. We have brought this up before.

I thank you for your time and consideration

Yours faithfully

Jill Campbell