

C/O Bls Estates
 1 Riverside House
 Heron Way
 Newham
 Truro
 Cornwall
 TR1 2XN
 Email:
 mel@newhambid.co.uk

3rd October 2023

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak
 The Prime Minister
 10 Downing Street
 London
 SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister

Newham Industrial Estate, Truro Loops Road Narrowing Scheme

I, along with business colleagues, have listened with interest over the past days to the recent announcements regarding the Government's approach to 'supporting the motorist', reconsidering 20 mph zones and a review of low traffic neighbourhoods.

Our experience of the 'motorist being supported' runs completely counter to the poor treatment of 180 businesses on Newham Industrial Estate in Truro, West Cornwall where an 'unsafe' scheme which disrespects the needs of private sector businesses, is currently being implemented by Cornwall Council.

Newham Industrial Estate is home to 180 businesses employing over 1,200 people, trading locally, nationally and internationally; we are the equivalent size by rateable value of a small town centre and Newham is noted as the economic hub of Cornwall's capital City. We are proud that Newham is sought after as a business location to work and invest.

As a group of businesses under a not-for-profit limited company, Newham BID, we have been challenging Cornwall Council since February on their proposals to narrow the road to our very busy, successful and well-respected industrial estate. Industry is Newham's primary purpose; we are not a leisure park and that function is well provided for on the opposite side of the river.

We have thousands of heavy goods vehicles movements every day (some stats are provided in this communication) and put simply, there are more appropriate places for a walking and cycling initiative, places where lives will not be endangered or safe access compromised for the many motorists who use Newham. We have strong evidence from experienced independent transport consultants, TPA, to demonstrate that the scheme, when completed, will pose an extreme danger to life as well as destroying the livelihoods of our businesses and the employees and suppliers who depend on Newham for work.

Businesses based on Newham serve the local community with food (Tesco and Aldi) public transport (we have the First depot), waste refuse (Biffa), emergency services (Macsalvors Crane Hire), postal services (County main depot for Royal Mail), Sewage Plant for South-West Water, Port of Truro harbour operations, care services for our most vulnerable residents and a whole host of trade counters.

The Council led scheme, which is currently underway (pictures provided), is being implemented to encourage cyclists and pedestrians to access Newham as part of the 'Truro Loops' project intended to encourage more sustainable travel around the City and alongside the river. 'Green transport' is something that Newham businesses would support if implemented safely and if it contributed towards a reduction in carbon emissions; neither is the case in this location. In fact, emissions will increase as HGVs will need to slow to such a level in order to pass each other and to avoid vehicle and pedestrian collisions, something which TPA, transport consultants, state is a high probability. Your Government even passed legislation in May 2023

to allow longer trailers on UK roads to grow the economy, boost productivity, slash road emissions and support supply chains (<https://www.tyrenet.net/laws-on-trailer-length-change-may-31st-2023?>) These vehicles will not be able to access Newham Industrial Estate in the future.

In dialogue with Cornwall Council, we have suggested several alternative paths and routes which would have allowed the scheme to proceed without compromising the road but all of these, sadly, have fallen on deaf ears as Cornwall Council runs roughshod over businesses in their race to spend European money, secured for this project, taking the easiest but most unsuitable and unsafe option to narrow the carriageway.

Our map of Newham, included in this communication, demonstrates that almost three quarters of the businesses based on the industrial estate are categorised as storage and distribution. Cornwall Council's narrowing scheme which will see the main carriageway narrowed from 7.3M to a width of just 6.5M flies in the face of their own published guidance [Development Layout Design \(cornwall.gov.uk\)](https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/development-layout-design) and is contrary to the national Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

Despite widespread opposition to the scheme, both on safety and economic grounds and an initial threat of legal action from Newham Business Improvement District earlier this year which prompted the scheme to be stopped over the summer, Cornwall Council have now resumed work.

It is evident that once completed, it will be impossible for two HGVs to pass safely without one mounting the very pavement that is being installed to protect pedestrians and cyclists from heavy vehicles. Cornwall Council's own plans show this to be the case and yet they have continued with the scheme, currently in construction phase with traffic lights installed. The works have already caused long delays, accidents to property, many near misses, thousands of pounds of costs for businesses with smashed wing mirrors and disruption to deliveries. Indeed, some suppliers have refused to make essential deliveries to key businesses due to the time taken to travel through the estate. This will escalate once the works are completed.

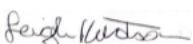
Ultimately, this scheme, intended to improve access, will result in Newham becoming unviable as an industrial estate since it will become too unsafe for businesses to operate from there and delays in accessing the site will prove too costly for the occupiers. Several businesses have already indicated their intention to leave and due to the lack of industrial land allocated by Cornwall Council, businesses that serve the county will have no option but to relocate their operations to Devon or beyond. Business rates have soared on Newham following the new 2023 valuation and yet for their increased contributions, occupiers are rewarded with poor access and the stress of operating in an unsafe environment.

We understand that one large occupier on Newham whose operation will be severely curtailed if this scheme is completed has already launched a legal challenge to the High Court for a judicial review, expedited court hearing and immediate injunction. We are saddened that it has reached this position and that the views of businesses, particularly those who have operated fleets of HGVs for many years and have extensive experience of vehicle safety, have been ignored.

The full story is documented at this link – <https://www.newhamtruro.co.uk/newham-bid/lobbying-on-behalf-of-newham-businesses>

Before any more costs are incurred by our business community, we ask you to intervene on this scheme which serves no benefit to anyone at all and is completely contrary to the Conservative's stance on being the party of business. Clearly, little rationale thought has been applied to the implementation of this scheme which is completely contrary to recent conservative pledges around 'supporting the motorist'.

Yours faithfully



Leigh Ibbotson
Chair of Newham BID and Director of Cher Varya

Cc Rt Hon. Mark Harper, Secretary of State for Transport
Cc Cherilyn Mackrory, MP For Truro and Falmouth



Known Vehicle Movements on Newham

First Buses - 80 to 100 movements a day, provide school services. Vehicles return late afternoon to the Lighterage Hill depot.

Macsalvors - 50 to 60 crane and lorry movements a day weighing up to 80 tonnes on the road. Some are abnormal loads.

Port of Truro Harbour Operations - Exceptionally heavy loads including large boats transported for demolition. Land currently available for investment purposes; unlikely to be realised if access is poor.

Conway Bailey Transport -Largest haulier in the South-West employing 400 people. Operate cold store on Newham. 8-10 vehicle movements per day in each direction over an 8-hour period. Artics are 15M X 3M long.

Truro Recycling Centre - 15 to 20 lorries arrive and leave each day.

Biffa - 60 vehicle movements per day operating waste services.

Tilewise - Between 4-8 artics per week and lorries. Narrowing the road near Tilewise will mean that the lorries won't be able to reverse in and will have to mount the pavement with potentially dangerous consequences.

Screwfix - Like Tilewise, needs full width of road to operate and deliver supplies daily.

P Abraham & Son - Two delivery trucks on 24-hour, daily call out to attend to road traffic accidents – largest is 7.5 tonnes.

We Buy Any Car -Frequent car transporters parked to off load adjacent to the proposed path near the Gas Hill junction close to the intended pedestrian/cyclist crossing point.

South-West Water - SWW utilise 6 and 8 wheel tankers which are up to 40ft in length and weigh up to 44 tonnes on an average week. However, if there is a pollution event ongoing, this can increase to between 50 and 90 tankers for a given week. The narrowing of the road in Newham industrial estate will not only be a safety issue with a conflict between cyclists and tankers but also have the potential to delay tanker

movements which could impact the environment and local water ways are a result of elongated pollution responses from tanker partners navigating the narrow roads.

Royal Mail - Royal Mail fleet includes 12 X 7.5 tonnes, 2 sprinter vehicles, 10 double deckers, 3 X 7 tonne artics – usage accelerates around Christmas. Parcel deliveries using 68 smaller vehicles

Also:

Daily HGV deliveries to all businesses including car transporters to garages and supplies to trade counter movements – e.g. Jewsons, Howdens and Screwfix.

Email: mel@newhambid.co.uk or leigh@chervarya.co.uk