

Monday 27th February 2023

To Whom It May Concern

Truro Town Loops Phase 1

On behalf of Newham Business Improvement District, we wish to formally object to the proposals for Truro Town Loops Phase 1.

Alongside our objection as Newham BID, we have collected the names of a number of businesses from across the Estate who stand alongside us in making this objection (see end of this letter). These businesses either attended the meeting held on Friday 24th February with your representatives or have since asked to be part of our formal objection. Some of these businesses may also object in their own right.

It is worth stating at the outset that Newham BID supports the 'principle' of Truro Loops, but it is the 'implementation' that we feel is fundamentally flawed. We welcome good access for all **but** not at the expense of safety **or** at the expense of our businesses being able to operate unimpeded.

To enable 'safe' pedestrian and cycle access, Newham BID maintains the viewpoint as we have done so for over a decade that separate paths for pedestrians/cyclists well away from the road need to be created which should be alongside the river or to the rear of buildings.

We want to make it very clear that Newham BID believe the proposals pose a danger to the safety of users of Newham particularly the proposal to reduce the width of the carriageway on Newham Road and Lighterage Hill. We cannot see how these proposals are in any way safe and would urge you to consider the reality of daily movements on Newham rather than relying on 'modelling' as we understand has been the case.

The reduction of the carriageway on Newham is our number one objection. In fact, widening the roads across Newham to cater for heavy vehicle usage is something that Newham BID on behalf of its business community has lobbied for and will continue to do so. One of the key priorities for Newham is to widen the carriageway between Gas Hill and Lighterage Hill as per the CORMAC study carried out in 2016.

Before responding to each of the 8 points outlined in your consultation, we would like to make the following points:

Newham BID is part of Totally Truro, a company limited by guarantee and registered in England: No. 6070111

c/o BLS Estates, 1 Riverside House, Heron Way, TR1 2XN

1. Newham is an Industrial Estate

Newham is an Industrial Estate first and foremost and this is Newham's primary purpose. We are surprised and disappointed that the proposals being put forward fail to recognise this. We believe that there are circa 1,200 people employed on the estate working at 180 business premises. Collectively, these businesses generate millions of pounds of turnover, trading nationally and internationally and importantly, carrying out many thousands of vehicle movements daily. Our Estate is thriving and sought after as a place to work and invest.

Given the nature of the businesses who are on the Estate, Newham operates 24-hour vehicle movements throughout the year, in poor, as well as good weather. It is **not** and has never purported to be a **leisure** area.

We feel that the proposals are disrespectful to the businesses on Newham, their suppliers and the important role they play daily in the economy and community of Truro and indeed, Cornwall. During the pandemic, where town centres were largely closed, Newham was busy providing essential services – public transport, waste disposal, food, post and emergency operations to name a few. Newham businesses are proud to be based on the Estate, close to Truro City Centre; they ask for very little other than an effective road system.

2. Newham's Economic and Community Contribution is being undermined by these proposals.

Newham's business community make a valuable economic contribution to the City of Truro and provide an essential service to Cornwall as a whole.

For instance, local people living in Truro rely on an efficient waste disposal service through Biffa and a reliable bus service from First, two businesses who have voiced their concern to the proposed scheme. Macsalvors recently carried out an essential operation to assist Cornwall Council with the completion of works on the A30 only a week ago, a complicated bridge manoeuvre using their cranes; this was applauded by the statutory authorities. Two major supermarkets, Tesco and Aldi, at the entrance to Newham rely on good and safe road access for their customers and deliveries. These businesses and many more on our Estate rely on ease of access so that they in turn can serve the people of Cornwall efficiently.

The proposals put forward will create congestion, cause delays and add to higher costs for businesses. Given that business rates are due to rise for the majority of businesses on Newham from 1st April 2023, surely, these businesses deserve to maintain their current access so that their business operations are not impeded. It should be pointed out that Newham's cumulative rateable value is equivalent to some town centres in Cornwall and therefore it should receive the same degree of consideration.

Furthermore, narrowing the carriageway reduces the appeal of Newham as a place to invest. Land is available for investment purposes but these proposals will hinder future investment; already, some of the businesses on Newham, on hearing of these proposals, are re-considering renewing their leases and looking elsewhere, something that would have detrimental consequences for Truro.



3. Funding driving this scheme

The opportunity to spend European funding before the deadline seems to be the overriding driver for this scheme rather than carrying out detailed research and safety studies to consider the best scheme.

We are disappointed that the appropriate time is not being given to considering proposals that are safe, sensible, rational and respect the needs of businesses as well as pedestrians and cyclists. We know that land-owners have not been approached who may be prepared for their paths to be utilised for this project, something which we feel is a huge oversight and a missed opportunity.

We understand that the traffic study and economic study for Newham has yet to be released and yet the Truro Loops proposals are due to begin by the end of March without consideration to the results of those exercises. This is surely the wrong way around.

The intended survey of how employees travel to Newham, promised in November 2022, has yet to be carried out and therefore there is no reliable baseline data to suggest that employees of Newham will use the footways or cycle paths to the level that warrants a reduction in the carriageway that will penalise the regular business user. Anecdotal evidence from a handful of businesses suggests very few employees would utilise the footpaths/cycle ways on a regular basis given where they currently commute from supporting the fear that the scheme will be under-used. Newham BID feel that the scheme is over-engineered considering there is no real evidence of likely usage; yet it is abundantly clear that a 30 cm reduction in carriageway will create large scale disruption for businesses.

The loss of grant funding should not be more important than creating a scheme that is detrimental to people's livelihoods, presents a potential safety issue and will undoubtedly create gridlock across the City. The scheme should not be rushed and that appears to be what is happening.

4. 'Green' policy

We understand that the policy around reducing carbon emissions overrides any other factor such as highways safety. Whilst Newham businesses support the reduction of carbon emissions and doing their bit towards net zero, it is impractical for many business users to switch to walking or cycling due to the nature of their business. What's more, Newham BID would put safety as the number one priority over and above a reduction in carbon emissions and we are surprised that Cornwall Council would not do the same.

Newham businesses are looking at other ways they can contribute towards the 'green' agenda and are committed to looking at a series of measures that are practical and impactful.

We feel that any 'health benefits' or perceived 'carbon emission reductions' proposed by this scheme will be outweighed by the pollution created by vehicles standing still with their engines running due to the congestion this scheme will create.



5. Disruption on Newham

During 2022, there was severe disruption on Newham due to works undertaken by the utilities and by CORMAC. These road-works were not co-ordinated and severely over-ran costing businesses many hours of lost time and frustration. Traffic lights remained in place for some 6 months for schemes that promised a turnaround in two weeks.

The prospect of further traffic delays during the Spring/early Summer will create significant costs for businesses for no real benefit. The works during 2022 caused staff to arrive late and deliveries to be delayed. Past performance would suggest that the traffic works will continue throughout 2023 and not be completed by the summer.

In response to the 8 points, we would make the following comments:

1. Realign Junction of Garras Wharf car park access road – OBJECT.

We object to the realignment of the Garras Wharf car park access road. Apart from the barriers to the car park at Garras Wharf frequently malfunctioning which already creates chaos and congestion, this road leads to the loading bay for Tesco with regular HGV deliveries. We believe that giving pedestrians and cyclists a right of way and an indication that this junction is in any way a safe passage is wrong and will lead to accidents.

2. Widen the footway along Newham Road alongside Tesco carpark to convert it to an unsegregated shared use pedestrian and cycle path. This requires the removal of the right turn lane into Aldi – OBJECT.

We object in the strongest terms to any proposal to narrow the carriageway at the entrance to Newham and to the removal of the right-hand turn lane into Aldi.

Reducing the width of the carriageway to 6.5m will create a safety hazard when two large vehicles pass each other (allowing only 10cm between the wing mirrors of large vehicles). As well as creating a traffic hazard, the wing mirrors of large vehicles will overhang the footpath/cycle path which could easily cause serious injury or a fatality to a cyclist or pedestrian. We want it formally noted that we foresee the accident statistics rising if these proposals are implemented.

Access is needed 24 hours a day for Newham's business users – this is an essential requirement whereas use of the footpath/cycleway for leisure use will be far more intermittent and likely to be in good weather only. Therefore, we object to the needs of good access for our businesses being compromised for intermittent use by pedestrians and cyclists. We foresee the footpath/cycle way largely being under-utilised for which our businesses will be penalised. We do not see the need for an 'unsegregated' path – surely, it is possible for cyclists and pedestrians to give way to each other on the few occasions they will be using the path at the same time.

Removing the right hand turn lane into Aldi, will generate a backlog of traffic to the roundabout and around Morlaix Avenue; this will create congestion on Newham but also have serious implications for traffic flow across Truro City. At very busy times, for instance late afternoon when First buses are returning to their depot, chaos is likely to ensue.



3. Replacement of the pedestrian refuge on Newham Road between Aldi and Tesco with a zebra crossing – OBJECT if removing right hand turn to Aldi.

If this proposal requires the removal of the right-hand turn into Aldi, we object. We can see that a zebra crossing may be preferable to the current pedestrian refuge providing the right-hand turn remains. We would ask that rather than a zebra you consider a pelican crossing which will allow motorists to have time to brake and pedestrians to cross safely.

4. Realign the junction of the Tesco access road to provide a safer crossing point – OBJECT.

We believe this proposal is ill considered and again, will lead to serious accidents. There is already congestion at this point with motorists turning right out of Tesco needing to judge the speed of vehicles entering Newham from the roundabout. Allowing cyclists and pedestrians to cross this busy junction, some of whom could be children, disabled, elderly etc will create an additional hazard for motorists. An emergency response to an incident will inevitably close down the whole of Newham and create gridlock across Truro.

The logical solution would be to move cyclists and pedestrians away from the busy road and to route them around the back of Tesco and onto the riverside pathways. This concurs with our overall view that the roads should remain the same or be widened and other users should be routed nearer the riverside subject to necessary consents which disappointingly, we understand have not even been explored.

5. South of the Tesco access the footway along Newham Road is to be widened and the carriageway width reduced to provide an unsegregated shared use pedestrian and cycle path for 320m – OBJECT.

We reiterate that we object in the strongest terms to any reduction in the width of the carriageway both on safety grounds, accessibility for our business community and on the basis that this proposal is unnecessary – see point 2 that reflects our view of the need for an ‘unsegregated’ path.

Our safety concerns outlined in point 2 apply here too. We suggest that use of the paths to the rear of the office buildings is explored. Newham BID would be happy to facilitate discussions.

6. Proposed shared zebra crossing on Newham Road, just north of the junction with Gas Hill – OBJECT unless tress are cut back along Newham Road adjacent to Gas Hill and maintained.

We object to this proposal unless the trees/bushes between Gas Hill and Lighterage Hill are cut back and are on Cornwall Council’s regular maintenance plan.

Currently, the overgrown foliage causes poor visibility for motorists coming down Gas Hill and turning left or right onto Newham Road. Vehicles travelling between Gas Hill and Lighterage Hill are forced to move out into the road to avoid the foliage. Despite repeated requests over an 18-

month period for these trees to be trimmed, we have been repeatedly told that they do not pose a risk despite a number of complaints from our business users.

As for 3, if this proposal did go ahead, we would prefer a pelican crossing to a zebra.

7. Proposed lighting columns on the Newham Trail between Gas Hill car park and Lighterage Hill

– SUPPORT

Better lighting on the Newham Trail would seem to be a sensible proposal and we are therefore happy to support this.

8. A priority build-out is proposed where the Newham Trail crosses Lighterage Hill, to create a safer crossing point – OBJECT.

We object in the strongest terms to any narrowing of the carriageway on Lighterage Hill. This road is already difficult to navigate for large vehicles and a 'build-out' will make this far worse. Without a clear run up or down the hill, it is likely that lorries will get stranded creating gridlock; they cannot reverse as a car has the capacity to do so.

On poor weather days, this could be very dangerous with vehicles slipping backwards. Already, it is difficult for large vehicles to stop at the bottom of the hill. During icy weather, with the proposed scheme, large vehicles would be forced to restart their engines from a standing still point. Maintaining good traffic flow will help safety but this 'build out' will severely impair flow and potentially create gridlock for all businesses beyond Lighterage Hill who trade on Heron Way.

We suggest that a barrier is created for cyclists and pedestrians so that they are made to dismount or stop when they approach Lighterage Hill, with clear signage that they are approaching a busy road utilised by HGVs. There has already been a serious incident at this junction. We believe the barrier is a much simpler and more appropriate solution.

And Finally

Finally, it was evident from the meeting held with the number of people giving up their time on a busy weekday afternoon, that these proposals have evoked a strong objection from some very key businesses on Newham.

Detailed research and testing should be part of any scheme of this nature before it is implemented. Newham BID is happy to work with partners to create a safe and appropriate scheme in the future.



We urge you to reconsider implementation of these proposals.
Yours sincerely

Leigh R Ibbotson

Leigh Ibbotson
Chair of Newham BID

On behalf of Newham BID and the following businesses:

1. Routenote
2. Truro Recycling Centre
3. Macsavlors
4. Roseland Furniture
5. Cornwall Garage Doors
6. Fresh from Cornwall
7. Brooklands Garage
8. Whetter Properties (owner of properties across Newham)
9. P Abraham & Son
10. M J Medical
11. Biffa
12. Truro BID
13. Trevannel (owner of properties across Heron Way)
14. Tesco
15. Aldi
16. First Coaches
17. BLS Estates
18. Truro Boat Services
19. Cher Varya
20. Three Rivers Furniture
21. Copper Rock
22. iSight Cornwall
23. Cornish Mutual
24. Coast2Coast Motorhome Hire

Businesses meeting with Council representatives on 24th February 2023



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c/o BLS Estates, 1 Riverside House, Heron Way, TR1 2XN



**NEWHAM
& THE PORT
OF TRURO**
Truro's Business Quarter