Sarah Wetherill – Reference no: 20016210 - Written Representation

1. Introduction

Over a prolonged period of this scheme Highways England have demonstrated a failure to gauge or acknowledge the supressed demand for a direct safe cycle crossing on the B3277/A390 alignment. This has led to an unsatisfactory underpass in the main scheme designed primarily to enable the progress of their DCO application. Timely recognition of demand would have meant the inclusion of the best solution, a bridge at the present junction or 'Starbucks site', in the scheme presented for Public Consultation in early 2018.

2. Local indicators

Highways England should have considered the following factors from the outset and determined that this was a key route with potential to increase existing cycling rates:

- St.Agnes is a growing parish of 7000 population
- on the A390 approach into Truro there are many prime commuter destinations including Royal Cornwall Hospital Treliske, Truro College, Richard Lander School, Threemilestone Business Park as well as the park and ride facility at Langarth.
- The route via Chiverton is direct and for Cornwall relatively flat.
- The distance between St. Agnes and and this part of Truro is just over 6.5 miles and thus cycle commuting with its health and enviromental benefits would be an option for many.

3. Published data

The above factors should have been considered in conjunction with the following to identify the latent demand for cycle trips:

- 2011 Census data showing over 1000 travel to work trips each day from the St Agnes area
- Propensity to Cycle tool. This is an online resource initially funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) and designed to assist transport planners and policy makers to prioritise investments and interventions to promote cycling.The Cornwall case study (referred to elsewhere) shows the potential to significantly increase cycling rates along this route with Dutch levels of infrastructure and the availability of e-bikes

4. Highways England strategies and policies

The strategic need for a direct and segregated cycle crossing should have been identified by Highways England when taking into account their following strategies and policies in their assessment process:

4.1 Cycling Strategy – our approach: this promotes ' cycling facilities which are safe, separate from traffic and that enable users of all abilities to cycle, encouraging cycling as a sustainable form of transport.

4.2 Interim Advice Note 195/16 - Cycle Traffic and the Strategic Road Network. This states at 2.1.2 that 'current levels of demand for cycle trips are not always a good indication of potential future levels of demand. Creation of a comprehensive network of good quality cycle routes has the potential to stimulate demand beyond the incremental change that demand models predict. Designers shall not rely solely on modelled incremental increases relative to current demand for cycle trips, therefore they shall ensure they consider the potential for additional stimulated demand.'
Importantly (on pages 30-33) paragraph 2.4.2 states that table 2.4.2 ***shall*** be used to determine the appropriate type of cycle crossing provision. This makes it clear that Highways England should have factored in a grade-separated crossing in the scheme from the outset. This would have enabled a high quality crossing (a bridge on the alignment) to have been designed in from day one.

4.3 HD 42/05 Non-motorised user Audits. Even before the above IAN, this document from 2015 requires assessments to consider 'potential routes and desire lines not currently used, e.g. due to personal safety or road safety fears and to take into account desire lines and trip generators. This document was further updated in 2017 **(HD 42/17)** to reiterate the need to include 'a review of significant local trip generators and amenities in the area surrounding the highway scheme to identify likely desire lines for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians'.

4.4 Advice note 91/05 from as early as 2005 states that 'it is important to consider the range of potential users, key destinations and latent demand in determining the appropriate form of NMU [Non Motorised User] provision'.

5. Consultation responses
5.1 Throughout the consultation process for the Scheme local people have made their views known on the desire for cycling improvements. This should have triggered a more thorough and early assessment of the need for a high quality cycle crossing at Chiverton allowing a proposal for a cycle bridge to be worked up at an early stage.

See application document TR010026 - 5.2 Consultation report appendices part 1
https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR010026/TR010026-000158-5.2%20CONSULTATION%20REPORT%20APPENDICES%20PART%201.pdf

5.2 The Public Engagment Exercise of March to May 2015 gave an early indication of the general desire for improvement. Of 1301 respondents 58% said that they would be interested in an improved cycle network (para 1.3.5 of appendix A of TR10026). Graph 6.8 of Appendix A shows that to the question 'What is your main mode of transport?' 'cycle' came 2nd to 'motor vehicle' (77.5%) with 8.7%.

5.3 In Appendix B of TR10026 - Report on Public Consultation (June 2017) paragraph 4.2.5 ‘St. Agnes – Truro connection at Chiverton Cross’ states:

‘As with 4.2.2 above, since the proposed Chiverton Cross junction is to the north of the existing junction location, a number of comments requested an underpass or bridge near the existing junction location to cater for non-motorised user’s (NMU) or vehicles travelling between St. Agnes and Truro.
While the 1.2 km diversion through the new junction will benefit a vehicle when compared against the congestion at the junction during peak hours, and provide safer crossing points, cyclists and pedestrians perceive themselves to be disadvantaged by the proposals. Particularly those located around Chiverton and St. Agnes felt that more direct NMU facilities should be provided at the Chiverton Cross junction. A number of respondents suggested the alignment of the old Truro to St. Agnes route be used, incorporating an NMU underpass or overbridge to cross the dual carriageway.
Kea Downs Road is an alternative route but is a similar distance from the existing junction location and does not have dedicated NMU facilities’.