



Lee Waters MS,
Deputy Minister for Climate Change,
Welsh Government,
By Email

10 March 2023

Re: North Wales Transport Commission

Office of Janet Finch-Saunders MS,
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Dear Deputy Minister, Lee,

I am writing to raise my serious concerns about the North Wales Transport Commission.

Please find attached the letter you sent me dated 4 March 2022. This relates to the two bad bends by Erw Glas Campsite, Maenan, LL26 0YP. You advised the following:

"[You] may also wish to be aware that on 10 February I announced the establishment of a North Wales Transport Commission, led by Lord Burns, which will be responsible for taking an evidence-led approach to develop recommendations for multimodal, integrated transport solutions. The year-long review will develop recommendations for road, rail, bus and active travel across the whole of north Wales."

Bearing in mind the content of the letter, it was reasonable for me to expect that the Transport Commission would be making recommendations, including in relation to the bad bends in Maenan. This view is further supported by the fact that you wrote to me on 22 April 2022 stating "The section of the A470 between Glan Conwy and Betws Y Coed will fall under this commission". Therefore, my constituents and I have been expecting the Transport Commission to review the A470 between Glan Conwy and Betws y Coed, including:

- The A470 junction with Pont Fawr, Llanrwst (B5106);
- The A470 junction in Tal y Cafn (B5279);
- A470 (Bodnant Hill):
- The section between Glan Conwy and the top of Bodnant Hill (the junction with Ffordd Trallwyn);
- The aforementioned bad bends in Maenan;
- The section of the A470 by Zip World Fforest/Rhyd y Creuau (it is extremely dangerous joining the trunk road at that point from Zip World, the outdoor pursuits school, and all the hotels);
- The A470 through Llanrwst (the zebra crossing for Llwyn Brith/Parc yr Eryr & the larger issue of HGVs and other large vehicles trying to pass through the town).

On 17 February 2023 I undertook a virtual meeting with Lea Beckerleg, North Wales Transport Commission, Head of Remote Working Policy & Operations, Transport and Digital Connectivity, Climate Change and Rural Affairs Group, Welsh Government. Following the meeting, I went to an effort to prove that you had made a clear promise that the A470 between Glan Conwy and Betws y Coed will fall under the Transport Commission for consideration. The official responded to me on 8 March 2023 with several points, including:

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- *“The Commission is not considering specific road schemes across the region as a rule – whether they were included in the Roads Review or not. The exception is the Menai crossings, which the Deputy Minister for Climate Change has asked to be considered separately”;*
- *“I can’t be sure why a letter has mentioned a specific scheme in this way, but that is not correct. However, I have asked the team who looks after roads infrastructure what is happening with the A470 between Glan Conwy and Betws Y Coed and whether there is any work being done on this stretch of road currently”;*
- *“I have sent your feedback and information on to Lord Burns, and we will be adding the points you have raised to our stakeholder feedback for the Commission”.*

Deputy Minister, either the section of the A470 between Glan Conwy and Betws y Coed is being considered by the Transport Commission, or not. It seems quite clear to the official working as part of the Transport Commission that road schemes are not being considered, so please can you explain why you stated the complete opposite to me on 22 April 2022?

Additionally, you responded to my Written Question ‘Will the Minister undertake a feasibility study into having an alternative signal controlled solution on the A470 for Pont Fawr in Llanrwst?’ (WQ82806) on 8 July 2021 stating:

“In the next financial year 2022/23, we will be undertaking a WelTAG stage 1 appraisal of the route from Glan Conwy to Betws Y Coed. This will consider all issues along that corridor aligning with the priorities of the Wales Transport Strategy. In the meantime, I would be happy for my officials to discuss any proposals Conwy County Borough Council may have for the bridge and consider any improvements that could be made to the trunk road to facilitate these proposals”.

As you will be aware, the promised WelTAG stage 1 appraisal did not take place, and residents and I have been left waiting for the outcome of the Transport Commission’s work, which is now apparently not considering the route. Therefore, it does seem that the Welsh Government has broken two promises to review the route under consideration in this letter.

Finally, as recent as yesterday a Welsh Government official is quoted in a BBC News article entitled ‘Labour back Senedd vote criticising own Welsh roads review’ as stating the following after the debate: ‘The North Wales Transport Commission is consulting with key stakeholders in developing transport plans for North Wales’. When considering that my communication highlights that the A470 between Glan Conwy and Betws y Coed is not going to be considered by the Transport Commission, I would appreciate an explanation as to how they can be preparing a thorough transport plan for North Wales.

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Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

Janet Finch-Saunders MS|AS

Aelod Senedd Cymru dros Aberconwy
Member of the Welsh Parliament for Aberconwy



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As it stands, residents of Aberconwy and I have no idea whether the trunk road between Glan Conwy and Betws y Coed is being reviewed because of what seems to be two broken promises by you, and a poor level of communication between you and the Transport Commission. I would be pleased if these matters could be addressed by you urgently.

Yours sincerely,

Janet

Janet Finch-Saunders MS/AS

Enc – Letters from the Deputy Minister