

# Bodmin Town Council



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MRN Consultation  
Department for Transport  
2/15 Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
LONDON  
SW1P 4DR

Date: 12 March 2018

Our Ref: SMF/MRN/2018

Your Ref:

Dear Sir / Madam

## **Proposals for the Creation of a Major Road Network – Consultation by the Department for Transport**

Bodmin Town Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Local Department for Transport's consultation on proposals for the creation of a Major Road Network. This matter was considered by Bodmin Town Council's Planning Committee when it met on 21 February and again on 7 March 2018 and I have been instructed to make the following response.

These comments are made from the perspective that Bodmin Town Council is one of the largest and most proactive town councils in Cornwall. The Town Council provides a range of high quality services and facilities throughout the town and has a budgeted operational expenditure of £1.4 Million in the financial year 2017/18.

Bodmin is currently the fastest growing town in Cornwall and has an increased housing target figure within the Cornwall Local Plan of 3,000 additional homes over the plan period 2010 to 2030. The predicted growth and the increased demand on the local road network will have a significant impact upon the local and Strategic Road Network which will need future proofing particularly when taking into account the seasonal influx to Cornwall that tourism brings. Bodmin is currently ranked second in the County, with Truro (the only city in the County) ranked number one, for the number of people who travel / commute from outside the town into Bodmin for employment and business purposes. These inward and outward employment journeys add pressure to the road network which will only increase as Bodmin's strategic position on the conflux to the regionally important A30 and A38 is further exposed through additional housing and

employment opportunities. Bodmin has recently received inward investment, most notably with the Growth Deal funding (circa £7.5 Million) to improve town centre roads to encourage and support modal shift opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists whilst improving traffic flow and air quality and delivering reductions to vehicular speeds through the narrowing of the carriageway. The town has also seen the £25 Million investment by Truro & Penwith College to provide additional post 16 educational prospects for a large number of young people living in the North Cornwall catchment area who now choose Bodmin as their educational centre of choice. So, Bodmin's future is looking better, but this has led to increased vehicular movements on the existing road network in and around the North Cornwall area and the town's ambition and emerging strategic role for Cornwall is continuing to emerge and requires ongoing energy, enthusiasm and investment.

However, there is an additional element to consider in terms of transportation given the combined impact during summer months with inward employment and educational journeys to Bodmin and the influx of tourist traffic, a large proportion of which chooses to drive through Bodmin to access areas of North Cornwall such as Wadebridge, Padstow and the numerous coastal communities which have increased in popularity given the Doc Martin and Poldark television series.

There is a potential solution which whilst embryonic could deliver a combined package of outputs and outcomes. A northern distributor or relief road would improve the road network, increase business transport options which will be a boost for distribution of materials, goods and services by road, whilst assisting with unlocking development opportunities for Bodmin over and above the current 3,000 housing target. This solution is not a new concept, as it was discussed and considered as part of the emerging Growth Deal work around 4 years ago. However, that was ruled out at the time, as it was difficult to see developer contributions being sufficient to support the entire scope of works given the presence of some valleys which would need bridging work. However, a combined package of investment could deliver this improved road network to the north of Bodmin and unlock a number of outcomes, such as:

- mitigating local congestion through Bodmin;
- improving local economic prosperity by offering improved road transport distribution methods to North Cornwall with the A30 / A38 avoiding the need to add more journeys via the A389 (through Wadebridge and on the more rural roads via St. Issey to Padstow etc);
- unlocking ripe development land to the north of Bodmin which is currently outside the scope of the Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) for the town which is undergoing Examination;
- improving employment opportunities in an area of the UK where a large proportion of job opportunities are seasonal;
- creating a more sustainable community by offering the right type of employment and housing mix to attract people to live and work in Bodmin rather than commuting to the town from the rural hinterland

The above is broadly aligned with the government's housing white paper which recognises that transport infrastructure is the key to unlocking development and delivering places people want to live. Bodmin has embraced growth, but it has been very clear in numerous consultation responses that there needs to be the concomitant infrastructure improvements to assist with that aspiration and which includes a wide

range of community essentials, such as green space, health care, education, policing etc.

This new northern link road has received support locally through the Growth Deal consultation programme and Bodmin Town Council considers that this northern option would enhance the town's prosperity by unlocking additional development land whilst ensuring that the town centre is not inundated with traffic which is simply passing through Bodmin to access the A389 and the north coast. This would improve journey times for traffic going to the north coast via the new northern distributor road and would further assist with the town's aspirations and ambitions around becoming a cleaner, safer, greener community whilst not impinging upon its current and future role as a strategic centre for growth.

The potential integration between this northern distributor road and the A30 and A38 would provide a vital opportunity (local labour markets, connectivity with communities and housing developments to the network) for this part of Cornwall which has largely been overlooked in preference of Plymouth and areas towards Camborne/Redruth, Truro, Falmouth and Penryn. Given Bodmin's geographical position in the centre of Cornwall and on the A30 arterial spine, it offers an excellent hub for wider economic prosperity to Cornwall and Devon. This would open up opportunities to consider funding programmes to deliver this northern road with a combination of the MRN programme and contributions from developers and different investment programmes. If central government is serious about UK growth and enhancing regionally important roads where numerous benefits can be achieved with improved connectivity, then this northern road option for Bodmin is an excellent opportunity for the longer-term and would deliver a robust and sensible major road network for the County.

Bodmin Town Council also considered that the connectivity to Plymouth via the A38 is long overdue for investment and improvement, as it winds its way through a number of communities and settlements and is not suitable, in some sections given carriage width, for the volume of traffic that uses the route on a daily basis. In particular, there have been a number of serious and fatal accidents along the Glynn Valley section where the road is one lane in both directions and primarily a 50 mph limit. The A38 has seen little investment in terms of widening to combat the known stretches of road where there are pinch points and where accidents prevail. The volume of traffic has increased year-on-year and the Tamar Bridge underwent strengthening and widening improvements / upgrade work around 2001 to be able to accommodate the additional traffic demands into and out of Plymouth yet the A38, which is not dualled along much of its length, has not seen investment. Upgrade to the A38 will assist not only Bodmin but also Liskeard and will improve freight movement along this important corridor to Devon and improve road safety for all users of this Plymouth link.

Cornwall can play an important role, but as it is a peninsula County, the road transport infrastructure is vital to unlock economic performance with Devon and the rest of the UK. Bodmin is strategically situated on the conflux of the A30 and A38 between Truro, Exeter and Plymouth and is a gateway that can unlock development and economic opportunities and prosperity for Cornwall. Bodmin sits on Cornwall's major road network and strategic road network and with packaged investment programmes is ideally situated to deliver far reaching benefits for the town and the mid/east areas of Cornwall.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S.M. Facer". The letters are stylized and connected, with a small dot at the end of the signature.

S M Facer  
**Town Clerk**