

## OBJECTION ONE

As a resident of Macclesfield Road I objected, like many other residents, to both option 1 and option 2 of the SEMMMS scheme. Please consider the response from the Metropolitan Borough Council of Stockport (the Council):

*Based on (our) analysis it is considered that an effective solution in terms of...visual and traffic impact can be provided with Option 1.*

Option 1 is not an effective solution in terms of visual impact; a rudimentary glance at the plans can demonstrate that a single lane road becomes a monstrous seven lane cross roads.

I regularly watch families and walkers pass by on their way to Poynton Pool or one of the many walks available nearby. The route to these is currently accessed via an uninterrupted pavement. In future this will mean navigating what will be one of the largest junctions in the local area.

In their Statement of Case (SoC) the Council describes measures to make certain roads 'less attractive' to motorists by reducing speed limits or adding traffic calming measures. Isn't there a risk that this junction makes **pedestrian** access to the natural attractions to the south of Hazel Grove 'less attractive' and therefore reduces their use?

Surely this, and the Council's ready acceptance that the plans will decimate large swathes of Green Belt and ancient woodland, contradicts the Compulsory Purchase Order test set out in Circular 06/2004 (25.2 SoC) where the Council considers '*the Relief Road will make a major contribution to improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of the local area*'.

There is a very real risk that those involved are now too close to the project to be able to objectively see the negative impacts introduced by the SEMMMS scheme.

## OBJECTION TWO

The 'human' implications of the plans are easily overlooked when viewing documents containing exaggerated benefits and carefully selected statistics. Responses to objections frequently state that '*69% of respondents were either in favour of, or strongly in favour of the scheme*'.

We shouldn't forget that only 8,737 individuals responded. This low turnout could be expected of a survey of little local importance, however did the Council consider why the response rate to a survey of such magnitude was so low? Did they review the phrasing and placing of the question to ensure that it was clear? If the responses had returned with a majority *not in favour* of the scheme what action would have been taken?

The accepted increase in road traffic between High Lane and Disley must be a

concern for *any* road user forced to travel on this already established bottle-neck. I fail to see how any well-informed resident wouldn't have objected to the scheme based on this information alone.

Further evidence of this potentially irresponsible use of data is apparent at 19.7 of the SoC with what can only be described as 'Dragon's Den' style predictions. Travel time savings have been valued at up to £825 million, with total transport economic efficiency benefits of £858 million. As this is expected over 60 years I fail to see who can be ultimately accountable for the realisation of these sweeping predictions.

### **OBJECTION THREE**

There is a real feeling of frustration amongst local residents that this is a done-deal and our views are not listened to; hence our objection that there has been lack of consideration to the Council's residents throughout the planning period.

Though the Council have ticked all the boxes, making small concessions in response to our concerns, the 'consultation' phase has been a one-directional process where we have all been told what **will** happen. We are left feeling that we have no control over what OUR council does to our surrounding area, our lifestyles and in some cases our livelihoods.

### **OBJECTION FOUR**

Again, returning to the CPO tests, I am again amazed that the council feels the relevant tests are met. I fail to see how *the Relief Road will make a major contribution to the social and economic well-being* of already relatively affluent areas surrounding the road (25.2 SoC).

I also see that the Council feels that *the Relief Road accords with national and local planning policies which seek to deliver hierarchy of housing to address need and provision of ancillary retail and leisure facilities to positively regenerate the area*. Again I wasn't aware that the majority of locations along the route are considered to be areas requiring regeneration, however I'm sure the Council can clarify this statement of fact.

### **OBJECTIVE FIVE**

Further specific objections have been raised in connection with junction 6 regarding the increased risk when gaining access to and from our property due to an increase in traffic lanes and traffic volumes. The Council's response to this is that *'it is likely that the new signalised junction at Macclesfield Road/A6 MARR will create platoons of traffic flow. This may increase the window of opportunity to carry out this particular manoeuvre.'*

I take offence to this flippant response which is indicative of the Council's attitude towards genuine safety fears. I'm sure that they would argue that they revised their plans (to reduce the pavement width) to ensure that we still had

an area to pull onto enabling us to reverse onto our driveways without having to stop on the carriageway. However it is more likely that they realised their original plan was unenforceable, whereas the revised plan is simply unpalatable.

At 20.30 the SoC explains that *the Relief Road will reduce traffic using the A523 between the A6 Rising Sun and Poynton cross-roads*. However it does not seem to take account of the fact that any traffic heading north on the A6MARR wanting to gain access to Hazel Grove or Stockport will leave the road at junction 6 as this is the most direct route.

Therefore the chances of traffic reducing on Macclesfield road between junction 6 and the A6 Rising Sun are slim, in fact - due to the existing set of traffic signals at the Fiveways just a short distance from the proposed junction - the chance of standing traffic is greatly increased. Therefore our 'window of opportunity' for manoeuvring safely on and off our driveways is likely to be non-existent, especially at peak periods.

Residents find it both derogatory, and frankly depressing that our serious safety concerns are addressed in this way. When asked 'what happens if the modelling is wrong and we are left with standing traffic outside our houses for the majority of the day?' the response from the Council was 'we will amend our modelling'. Whereas we will live with the consequences.

Also on the issue of safety I am delighted to hear that the scheme will (objective #2) *'improve the safety of road users, pedestrians and cyclists'*. However I wonder how. My sons attend Poynton High School; I encourage them to make the journey on foot, for both health and environmental reasons. These plans will see them navigating a seven-lane crossing within five minutes of their journey. Cyclists using the proposed cycle route will be cycling alongside two traffic lanes each measuring just three metres wide, as well as avoiding the likes of me trying to navigate on and off my driveway with limited visibility. Though I note that the Council have documented specific measurable targets (s.4 SoC) it is not clear what remedial actions can and will be taken should these not be met.

## CONCLUSION

The SoC boldly tells the reader at 38.2 that *'the Relief Road will represent a significant improvement to the highway network* (truth – in some areas it represents a likely improvement, however in others a significant deterioration) *and will have a **highly positive impact** not only on the sustainability of the local highway network* (truth – it has a 20 year lifespan) *but will act as a driver for further economic activity and **boosting prosperity in the region.**\**

\*Highlighting is mine.

I can't see how the Council is in a position to make such inflated, emotive statements; to do so is irresponsible and manipulative.

Please do not assume that these objections stem from opposition to change. Things move forward, and change is a necessary part of this. Change can be disruptive and require unpopular decisions - we all know that to make an omelette you have to break a few eggs - however it is wrong that so many already feel that objection is useless. The risk of our objections not being seriously considered is that the CPO and SRO requests are granted. At this stage this will instigate unnecessary, wide-ranging and irreparable damage to the surrounding area. As residents we simply request that ALL the evidence is carefully considered, and that those involved never lose sight of the human impact of what is proposed.