

Orders Branch – Transport  
Department of Economy and Infrastructure  
Welsh Government  
Crown Buildings  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

Reference: qA1174612

Dear Sir or Madam,

I strongly oppose the proposal to build a new M4 motorway through the beautiful Gwent Levels.

As someone who is working on the living levels project which is a long time coming I would like to see the Welsh Government protect our wildlife and character such as the Gwent Levels. I don't believe that building a new six-lane motorway through the Gwent Levels ancient landscape is sustainable. The Welsh Government should do all it can to encourage cars off the road by providing greener transport options rather than making more space for traffic.

The impact this would have on the levels would be irreversible and the area would never recover. On a regular basis now information is released on the wildlife returning to this habitat and the efforts made to support this. A motorway would bring noise pollution and adversely affect these programmes and make them meaningless.

I have also attended seminars on the future wellbeing act and see this proposal as a complete contradiction.

From the presentations I have attended showed an approach can only be described as hard sell and the information provided was inaccurate and incomplete.

Welsh Governments should also consider viable alternatives such as the blue route which is cheaper and will take less time to build.

I urge you to stop this new road from being built and protect the natural environment and wildlife of the Gwent Levels for future generations.

The current cost estimate of £1,093m excluding VAT and inflation for 23km (SAR 2016) of motorway appears highly optimistic and is likely to be nearer £1,500m (or even £2,000m). The mostly elevated M74 extension in Glasgow cost £86,500/metre (in 2011) nearly twice the £47,520/metre quoted for the 'Black' route (Q4/2015). It is also unclear whether ground conditions have been fully investigated/taken into account especially for the high level section from the Dyffryn Railway Bridge to the Ebbw River crossing. Network Rail's electrification works/replacement of Hawse Lane bridge have been considerably prolonged and over budget owing to underestimating the extent/time to pile poor ground bearing conditions (estuarine alluvial silts/clays). This together with inevitable increases in other construction costs and higher than forecast land prices/compensation to landowners are all likely to contribute to over spend and this higher cost (PVC) will seriously undermine the economic benefit ratio (BCR) derived. That being the case, the question to be asked is whether that level of funding can be supported and/or spent on better alternatives ? Indeed, the enormous costs involved will leave little funding left for any other projects for the rest of Wales.

Please ensure the Welsh Government receives this email so my objection will be considered and counted.

Cllr Brian Miles

Cllr Brian Miles  
Bramden House  
Peterstone  
Wentlooge  
CF3 2TN