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PETITION - NO ROADS ACROSS CARRINGTON MOSS

COUNCIL RESPONSE NOTICE - 13 OCTOBER 2021

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TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Council – 13 October 2021

Consideration of a Petition containing more than 500 signatures

Petition – No Roads Across Carrington Moss

Lead petitioner, Anna Chopping introduced the following petition containing 1632 signatures, which had been presented to the Council:

“We respectfully request that Trafford Council do not agree to build any new roads across or through Carrington Moss. The proposal to build a bridge across the Manchester Ship Canal, as set out in Trafford’s 2012 Core Strategy, should be fully explored. We believe this would be a much more effective solution to alleviate the existing traffic problems in the area, without impacting the health and wellbeing of the local populations of both humans and wildlife.”

The lead petitioner explained that, as a resident of Carrington Village and Secretary of the Friends of Carrington Moss, she spoke on behalf of all those local signatories overwhelmed by development in their area and requested that the Council give consideration to 3 main requests for:

- more consultation;
- alternative options to the building of roads across Carrington Moss; and
- more consideration of the environmental impact of the road proposal in the wake of the climate emergency.

Explaining that local people were feeling powerless and fearful as well as angry that planning and development appeared to be carried out despite, rather than for the community, residents were requesting a seat at the table and involvement at the design stage of plans for their locality. To date there had not been any consultation with the local community regarding the strategic agenda for the Carrington Relief Road. Carrington Village was desperate to stop the large number of HGVs on the roads in their village but the proposal did not promise to deliver any benefits or ‘relief’ to residents suffering daily from the vehicles. Rather than health, wellbeing and basic safety, the key objective of scheme was about increasing capacity to deliver growth.

Regarding alternative options there was no discussion about alternative tram or train connections or options to make safer, more sustainable transport choices that reduce the reliance on cars or even a commitment to improve public transport. It was understood that there was time limited external funding for the scheme which could be at risk, however, a decision now would ultimately cost more in the long term to the local environment and habitat. Emphasising that the Friends Group was not anti-development

and wished to engender progressive change, professional reviews, however, by the Countryside Charity, Natural England and the Cheshire and Lancashire Wildlife Trusts, of the places for everyone proposals were damning and an appeal was made to Members to read them as there was nowhere else in Trafford as unique as Carrington Moss.

Councillor Wright the Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration and Councillors Evans, Newgrosh and Coggins responded to the petition on behalf of the political parties and made the following points:

Councillor Wright: Sustainable development was the main issue and how to provide the social and economic opportunities that current and future residents need without sacrificing environmental assets. The Council was not promoting transport improvements which included a new road without good reason with the aim of providing people a home of their own and the prosperity and opportunity that derived from full and secure employment. A full assessment of route options was undertaken and a new route was considered more beneficial than one based on the current road. In terms of the impact on any peat moss, investigations had been undertaken in relation to potential carbon emissions due to peat/soil disturbance and a thin layer of peat was found in an isolated trial hole that in itself was insufficient to change the overall carbon performance of the two routes. It should be noted that the peat was not expected to be disturbed. A full environment scoping report would be prepared for the planning application which was the appropriate stage for the detailed assessment and Natural England would be consulted as part of the process.

Inconsistency was suggested with the petition regarding road building with objection to roads to the east of the area, whilst they were acceptable to the west. The Carrington Relief Road was a part of a series of transport measures planned for the area and would provide safe cycling to the rest of Trafford for the first time. Combined with Greater Manchester reform it would facilitate swifter links by bus, however, the road on its own would never be an answer to the transport challenges of the area. The Council subscribed to the Transport for Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy, which was clear that fundamental change in the way we travel was vital for future movements in the City Region.

For Carrington, reuse of the former rail corridor was proposed for green travel and links to the adjacent areas of Trafford and the Metrolink and also the Council was in discussion with Salford Council regarding the use of the Cadishead viaduct and links to Irlam station. A bridge could compliment planned transport improvements but it was not viewed as a substitute for them.

The Council was taking a responsible approach of tackling transport problems in the present and the link road was a vital component in a planned suite of improvements.

Councillor Evans: There was no doubt improved access was needed to the area with multiple homes planned. Alternatives to the current road had been explored over numerous years and he suggested that the Council should be bold and perhaps imagine re-instating the Moss and to come up with a different solution.

Councillor Newgrosh: Supported the petition and the suggestion that all of Trafford would benefit from the re-instatement of the railway in the area, whilst if improved road links were needed, a bridge to the west would work from an ecological and sustainable solution rather than a road over moss.

Councillor Coggins: Spoke of the issues associated with the proposed road:

- biodiversity loss in one of Trafford's wildest and greenest spaces;
- carbon emissions and air pollution from the extra traffic it would invite over many decades;
- the lost carbon sequestration opportunities as a result of building over degraded wetland rather than restoration; and
- the potential health and wellbeing impact through increased car dependence.

Carrington and Partington were struggling with congestion and poor transport options but measures were available to the Council to tackle them. Whilst there was evidence of new roads attracting new traffic, no modelling had been undertaken on projected usage and congestion.

Following the discussion the Leader of the Council, Councillor Andrew Western thanked Ms. Chopping and the residents for bringing the petition to Council and summarised the Council's response.

The Leader acknowledged that it was clearly a significant issue that was controversial across Trafford communities and wished to state that the Controlling Group had been consistent on its position as to why the relief road was needed, fundamentally the transformative impact it would have on the Partington and Carrington communities. The Council had heard alternative measures suggested that evening, however, they would not solve the problems of poor connectivity and poor transport infrastructure in the area. Whilst the Council would mitigate as best it could, the right to a good quality job and a safe and warm home were the Council's priorities.

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