



A380 South Devon Link Road (Kingskerswell Bypass)

Public Inquiry

**Devon County Council's Response to
Written Representation by Simon Wright**

(Obj 43): OBJ/Wright/(43)/WR/1

Response by Robert Hetherington

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Response (**DCC/REB/20**) to the Written Representation of Simon Wright (**OBJ/Wright/(43)/WR/1**) has been prepared by Robert Hetherington.

1.2 Simon Wright in his letter to the Department of Transport dated 6th November 2008 objected to the Scheme on a number of grounds:

- That there are other solutions to the traffic congestion in Torbay and neighbouring areas – Absence of need.
- The flow of traffic on the existing A380 is caused by excessive amounts of school traffic. More children should be encouraged to use public transport.
- The traffic flow is slowed by traffic lights at Penn Inn and at Kingskerswell. Traffic lights cause congestion.
- The existing road is adequate but modifications should be made.
- The A380 congestion is not as bad as elsewhere.
- Improvements to roads within Torquay, Paignton and Brixham should take priority over the Scheme.

1.3 Responses to these grounds are provided in the following Proofs of Evidence: DCC/P/1 at paragraphs 11.3.1 to 11.3.5; DCC/P/3 at paragraphs 11.1.79 to 11.1.80 and 11.1.91 to 11.1.92; DCC/P/4 at paragraphs 15.2.1 to 15.2.5, paragraphs 15.3.1 to 15.3.1 to 15.3.9, 15.5.1 to 15.5.5 and 15.6.1 to 15.6.2; and DCC/P/5 at paragraph 5.2.1. The Matrix of Objections provides the detailed cross referencing of each of the grounds to the appropriate Proof of Evidence.

1.4 In his written representation Simon Wright states:

'I work for Torbay Council and along with other members of staff we were informed by Caroline Taylor, Torbay Council's Deputy Chief Executive, during a 'staff communication' meeting that:

“Torbay Council has recognised that Exeter is the established business hub for South Devon and as such it is in Torbay Council's best interests to support the construction of the proposed A380 link road to promote and provide the best possible commuter links to Exeter”.

I see this as a contrary to claims that the proposed A380 link road needs to be built to promote and improve business interests in Torbay. It appears that Torbay Council's primary future interests will be in promoting Torbay as a place to live but Exeter as the place to work. The road may be built primarily to allow commuters to rush out of Torbay in the morning and rush back in in the evenings. The traffic flow rates along the existing Newton Road already supports the fact that in the mornings more vehicles travel out of Torbay than in and vice versa in the evenings as greater numbers of commuters flow back from Exeter and the M5 corridor. Businesses in Torbay may be unaware of this significant standpoint and policy direction that Torbay Council appears to be taking. I do not see that a revival in business opportunities in Torbay, on the scale that is being constantly promoted, will materialise if the proposed A380 link road is built primarily for commuters to Exeter's business interests. Torbay Council's 'Mayoral Vision' for Torbay includes various plans and proposals for considerable developments in housing and accommodation but little for actual business expansion which supports my concerns. If Torbay Council wants to support Exeter as 'the place to work' and Torbay as 'the place to live' then I think this can be done without spending £130 million destroying a beautiful area of the South Devon countryside while alternative transport initiatives go unexplored.

2.0 Response

- 2.1 It is acknowledged in **DCC/P/5** that increased movement may be one economic benefit of the Scheme. Paragraph 3 of the Summary of the Wider Economic Impacts Proof of Evidence (DCC/SUM/5) refers to one of the wider economic benefits as being improved access to jobs.
- 2.2 Devon County Council has contacted the officer alleged to have made the remarks. She has stated that she does not recall the event and has confirmed that her view is that the Scheme is vitally important to Torbay's economy.
- 2.3 It is not possible to comment further on an alleged statement by the officer of Torbay Council – it is not known, for example, whether the comment was made in the context of other benefits of the Scheme.