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Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-556
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/03036/14

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

14 August 2014

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 30 July regarding Petition P-04-556 'No to Junction 41 Closure'.

The trial part time closure of the westbound on-slip at M4 Junction 41 began on 4 August and will end in March 2015. The times for the trial closure are 0700-0900 and 1600-1800 Monday to Friday. The eastbound off-slip at J41 will remain fully open during this time.

I met with representatives of Neath Port Talbot on 4 June to discuss the trial closures and to agree how we will share information as the trial progresses. Councillor Ali Thomas, Leader of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council; Steve Redmore, Manager of Aberafan Shopping Centre; and Steve Garvey, President of Port Talbot Chamber of Trade were present. Canon Nigel Cahill and Rose David were also present as representatives of the community.

To establish any impact on the town centre traders and businesses, we will be using Port Talbot town centre car park ticketing data to monitor car park usage, and we will monitor footfall data adjacent to the Aberafan Shopping Centre before and during the trial. The Council are monitoring air quality.

Temporary signs on the approach to the on-slip advise the times of closure and are supported during the closure periods by variable electronic message signs warning drivers that the closure is in place. A signed diversion route is provided for affected traffic.

Information about the trial is on display at the Neath Port Talbot Civic Centre, Aberafan Shopping Centre, St Agnes' Church and St Mary's Church. Further information regarding the trial can also be found on the Traffic Wales website at the following link:

<http://www.traffic-wales.com/VoyagerNews.aspx?NEWSID=1214>

We will be inviting comments from the public on the Traffic Wales website from October 2014 to March 2015, prior to reviewing the effect of the peak time closures and taking a decision on the way forward.

Public consultation would take place as part of plans for any permanent closure.

As part of the ongoing study, a number of options have been considered, including a variety of closure options and hard shoulder running, supplemented by improved speed enforcement using variable speed limits or average speed enforcement. Hard shoulder running was discounted on grounds of safety and value for money. Average speed enforcement (ASE) was selected as the desired alternative for speed enforcement and is being installed currently.

Access to the Port Talbot Parkway will remain available via Junction 40.

We will continue to work closely with Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and local representatives to ensure that the changes are implemented as smoothly as possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. M. C.', located at the bottom left of the page.