

Dear Councillor

You will be aware from Tuesday's full council meeting that the proposal to **narrow the road to Newham Industrial Estate** in Truro was given the green light to commence from next week **despite more than 40 strong written objections from our business community.**

Please allow me on behalf of the businesses of Newham a few moments of your time to articulate why this scheme **should never be permitted to proceed.** Indeed, we are alarmed that this scheme has reached this stage.

- Cornwall Council stated that Newham Industrial Estate comprises a majority of B1 businesses and therefore that justifies its decision to reduce the road to 6.5M in line with a residential road. May we respectfully point out that whilst the number of B1 classified businesses may be greater in number, the floor area of the B2 and B8 premises and the vehicle movements associated with these businesses is far higher. With that in mind, we believe that **Cornwall Council are contravening their own policy** at [Development Layout Design \(cornwall.gov.uk\)](https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/development-layout-design) That stipulates an industrial estate of this nature should maintain a carriageway of 7.3M.
- Check out the [attached list of businesses](#) and a snapshot of vehicle movements and see if you agree with the definition of **Newham being a 'minor' industrial estate.** We find this very disrespectful; our combined rateable value is similar to many town centres in Cornwall such as Camborne. Would councillors describe Camborne as a 'minor' town centre? We think not.
- **Some of the businesses contract with Cornwall Council** – E.g First Buses, Biffa, Macsalvors, Truro Recycling Centre, Jewsons and Cornwall Council has land owned by the Harbour Authority. How can these businesses service the Council and community if access is poor in the future?
- Narrowing the road to our industrial estate will mean that two HGVs or Cranes passing each other at the same time are very likely to collide given that there will be just a **10cm gap** between wing mirrors once the road is narrowed to 6.5M. Let's put that into perspective; **it's about the width of your hand.**
- Furthermore, the wing mirrors of these HGVs will overhang the pavement where it is intended to encourage cyclists and pedestrians with their families to walk/cycle. It is not a question of 'if' there is a serious accident, it is 'when'. **Who will take responsibility then?**
- In 2016, CORMAC accepted that the road needed to be widened between Gas Hill and Lighterage Hill and the report says ***'the road is demonstrably unsuitable for the mixture of traffic that uses it: pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles, including not-in-service buses and a high proportion of heavy goods vehicles.'*** Since then, the scheme has remained on the Council's transport programme; the current proposals seem to completely reverse that intention and commitment from Cornwall Council to improve the highway. Getting people out of vehicles seems to override any other rationale thought here. **We refer back to Newham being an industrial estate not a leisure park.**
- The reality is that the scheme Cornwall Council has agreed is **not safe**; you need to ask the businesses who use the estate every day rather than relying on data modelling or a flawed road safety report that only considers the needs of cyclists. **The Road Safety Audit is also attached undertaken by CORMAC who will deliver the scheme. We question the independence of this.**
- Despite repeated invitations, no Council representatives have visited Newham to actually measure the HGVs that use our estate daily apart from one Saturday morning visit to Macsalvors. We are appalled no other measurements have been taken of other vehicles before approving the scheme. **The private sector places high emphasis on operating safely,**

and is indeed, heavily regulated. We would have reasonably expected a thorough appraisal of the scale and volume of the heavy vehicle usage on Newham before Cornwall Council endorsed this scheme.

- Since the Newham Trail was resurfaced with no barriers installed on the approach to Lighterage Hill as part of the CORMAC implemented scheme, there have already been two serious accidents, the most recent of which was on Friday 31st March 2023. We know for sure that those involved in the first accident have life changing injuries and psychological trauma.
- Our businesses who have to comply with strict health and safety requirements, do not wish to risk lives or indeed their business livelihoods for the sake of a shared cycle and pedestrian path; there are far more suitable places such as the opposite side of the river at Boscawen Park, clearly an identified leisure area. **Mixing pedestrians/cyclists on a path close to HGVs with no barrier, is in our view, irresponsible and in direct contravention of Sustrans recommended guidelines.**
- We are an industrial estate, first and foremost and that is Newham's primary role; a function it performs very well servicing our community with transport services, waste services, emergency services, food, mail services and care services for the most vulnerable members of our community and much much more. There are truly some outstanding businesses who ask for little more than good access in return for their business rates. **We urge you to check our attached list or look here - <https://www.newhamtruro.co.uk/explore/business-directory>**
- If safety becomes a real issue and a serious business risk, **these businesses will leave** and with no recent investment by Cornwall Council in industrial land, it is likely that they will **need to relocate outside the County with the loss of jobs, income and loss of services** - think public transport, bins being emptied, emergency services, handling of sewage, some of the most basic needs for all.
- Macsalvors, one of the businesses based on Newham provides a 24-hour emergency call out service for Cornwall Council, South-West Water, Western Power, Devon and Cornwall Police and the MOD at Falmouth Docks and Devonport Dockyard. If they were unable to operate from Newham, there would be severe implications for response times to emergencies.
- Newham is a vibrant, thriving business quarter for Truro employing circa 1,200 people and generating a level of cumulative turnover which far outweighs the funding secured for this ill-conceived scheme. **It is sought after as a business location to work and invest;** industrial units are quickly relet when they become available. On hearing of the proposals, some Newham businesses are already considering pulling out of Truro. Furthermore, with a narrow entrance, it is very unlikely that Newham will attract new investment in the future. **Is Cornwall Council not interested in economic development?**
- **Cornwall Council should be immensely proud of what Newham provides,** should be supporting our businesses and encouraging new investment; instead, we see the Council hellbent on impeding their operations to the point that they may be unviable with the real risk of the HGV drivers being involved in a serious accident through no fault of their own. And to top it all, businesses are now being asked to pay higher business rates in return for dangerous access.

This really is a very poorly considered project that serves to benefit nobody at all.

We understand that you have made your decision but urge you to reconsider.

Please do the right thing for public safety and to support that businesses that support you and our community in Cornwall.

We urge you to have a rethink over the weekend.

If you have reached the end of this email, we appreciate you listening.

Regards

Mel Richardson
Newham BID Manager