

10 February 2003

Dear Sirs

Proof of Evidence

Application for the proposed River Tyne (Tunnels) Order

Your Ref: TWA/02/APP/03/OBJ/358

My case against the proposed second Tyne Tunnel, as set out in my letter of objection of 16 July 2002 and my statement of case of 31 October 2002, is that the proposal is against stated government policies and if built will not achieve the benefits stated in the application by the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority.

Accordingly, the matters I wish to put forward for consideration at the enquiry are that the additional traffic generated by the proposed new tunnel (as set out in the application by the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority) would result in:

- additional pollution from vehicle exhausts resulting in additional CO2 emissions and additional emissions of other pollutants, which is against government policies to reduce CO2 emissions and to reduce emissions of other pollutants by motor vehicles;
- additional noise pollution;
- additional congestion (on adjacent routes) which is against government policies to reduce congestion. Experience is that building more roads results in more car use rather than a decrease in congestion, and the proposed new road tunnel will, at best, move existing congestion elsewhere, but is more likely to result in an overall increase in congestion;
- a decline in the health of residents adjacent to the entrances of the proposed tunnel and adjacent to roads used to access the proposed tunnel;
- a disincentive to other forms of transport instead of encouraging the use of public transport, cycling and walking, which is a government policy;
- an increase in social exclusion instead of an increase in social inclusion, which is a government policy – in Tyne & Wear 39% of households do not have access to a car, and accordingly the majority of individuals must not have personal cars so transport expenditure should be directed in a manner which will increase the transport opportunities available to the majority and not to the minority of car owners.;
- an increase in the (already excessive) incidence of obesity and general lack of fitness of the population in general and, more specifically, of schoolchildren, instead of improved fitness levels and a reduction in the incidence of obesity, which, again, are government policies. The increase in obesity and general lack of fitness is caused to a large extent by car use instead of walking and cycling for journeys of less than two miles.

The application by the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority states that the proposed new tunnel will result in economic regeneration – I am not convinced that additional motor car usage will result in economic regeneration, but even if it did this would not be 'sustainable development' and so would again be against government policy. In addition, with the existing levels of unemployment in both North Tyneside and South Tyneside, there is an adequate supply of labour living locally to any proposed new jobs in the area without the need to travel large distances.

Furthermore, I would wish the enquiry to consider the effects of pollution and disruption arising during the construction of the proposed new tunnel if it is approved.

On the matter of disruption during the construction period, I am concerned that the existing cycle routes to and from the tunnel and east-west cycle routes on both sides of the Tyne will not be properly available for cyclists. My experience as a cyclist is that where major infrastructure projects cause disruption to existing transport routes, every effort is made to maintain routes for motor vehicles or to provide properly signed and designed alternative routes (in advance of any disruption to the existing routes), while cycle routes are usually closed without warning, with no signs (usually the first indication that a route has been closed is an impassable barrier) and that when an alternative is provided it is normally only provided a considerable time after the closure of the existing route and usually it is so badly designed that it is not possible to cycle on it.

Yours sincerely

John Turvey