

Proof of Evidence:

Torrisholme Resident

**Presented to the Public Inquiry
in relation to
Lancashire County Council Planning
Application Reference: 11/05/1584
Completion of the Heysham to M6 Link**

**Planning Inspectorate Reference:
APP/Q2371/V/07/1200928 &
APP/Q2371/V/07/1200929**

Submitted by John Gow on behalf of:

Transport Solutions for Lancaster and Morecambe (TSLM)

- 1 I am a long time resident of Torrisholme, having lived in my house on the eastern side of Russell Drive - which looks out over the fields and the lane that runs from Broadoak up to the crematorium - for some thirty years. Before settling down in Torrisholme, I spent many years at sea. When I first began to look for somewhere to live all that time ago I had a picture in my mind of exactly what I was looking for.
- 2 It needed to be quite, with an open aspect and yet it needed to be relatively close to all of the amenities – somewhere that was like living in the country but where I wouldn't need to necessarily drive. I never looked at anywhere else. My current house was the only one that I ever looked at and I was sleeping in it within a month after having first seen it. I have had many opportunities to move since but have never wanted to.
- 3 It would be futile to try and deny that my original interest was anything other than pure "NIMBY ism" but as time and the plans for the road progressed, it became more and more apparent that there were broader issues involve.
- 4 The road would devastate the village of Torrisholme. It would devastate acres of pure green field land and would do nothing to alleviate the major traffic problems that we have in the area – the congestion in between Morecambe and Lancaster and the congestion in Lancaster itself. The escalating cost seems to be spiralling ever upwards and out of control.
- 5 I am sure that most of these issues are being dealt with by people far better qualified to cover them than I. But what I would like to do is to try and paint a picture of Torrisholme for those of you who don't really know the area.
- 6 Torrisholme is essentially a village community, sitting as it does on the very edge of the only green belt area in between Morecambe and Lancaster. It has everything that you would expect from a village. A mini supermarket with a butcher, newsagents, hairdressers, a pub, fish and chip shop, chemist, travel agent, optician, estate agents - even a betting shop.
- 7 The loss of the Broadoak Garden Centre and the threat to the very existence of the college is I'm sure, being covered by others but as a resident I must just say that they are part and parcel of our community and their loss or demise will be very much felt – not only with regards to the services that they provide but of course the threat of job losses.

- 8 We have an exceptional primary school and safe places for the local children and toddlers to play. There can't be many places where the kids can feed the cows through farm gates as they walk to school. These fields are an integral part of our lives. As I said earlier, it's just like living in the country but with the amenities of the village close at hand and that's why people stay. That's why I chose to stay and bring up my family here.
- 9 What this massive, ugly, elevated four lane highway will do is to completely bisect and devastate not only the village, but the fields and the grazing land that make it what it is. The picture of how it will be transformed is easy to imagine.
- 10 From my own point of view, the quiet and peace of the open aspect will be dominated by a stream of traffic – predominantly heavy goods vehicles. Others will be able to do 70 MPH level with my bedroom window and a matter of a few hundred meters away. Quite evenings on the veranda with a barbeque and a drink will be gone. Most mornings in the summer, with the windows open, I can hear the sound of the cattle pulling up and chewing the grass at the bottom of my garden. This will all be gone.
- 11 Continually and fully lit at night, the light intrusion is something that is hard to imagine. Not only the permanent road lighting but of course the headlights will completely obliterate the night sky which currently is such a delight to all of us in the area. Of course it will be worse for those of us on Russell Drive and Endsleigh Drive, but at the projected height and intensity, it will affect the whole village. In certain parts of the village, there will be no darkness – ever!
- 12 Running parallel with the light of course is the noise and the increase in air pollution – all exacerbated by the height, rising as it does from the 25 feet at the Broadoak Corner to over 40 feet as it crosses the railway line. I'm not in a position to give facts and figures but it surely needs little imagination to get an idea of how things will change. From being in the country, we are suddenly going to be living in what to all intents and purposes will be a major industrial suburb type of environment.
- 13 I don't profess to be an expert in traffic patterns but surely it makes sense to suggest that with a massive new traffic intersection at the site of the McDonalds roundabout - one of the two current routes between Morecambe and Lancaster will be bisected. It would seem to be reasonable to assume that traffic will back up to Scale Hall and to the Shrimp Roundabout and at that point, motorists will look for an alternative – which of course will be through Torrisholme.

- 14 The village is obviously not equipped to deal with this extra volume. By its' very nature, Torrisholme attracts a mix of elderly and families with children. The safety element of the narrow, residential streets alone is horrifying and of course we come back again to an increase in noise and air pollution. Additional traffic, frustrated drivers trying to get out quickly, parked cars and revving engines all add up to a recipe for disaster.
- 15 I know that the situation with regards to the loss of parking at the Lancaster and Morecambe College of Further Education will be covered elsewhere but, if that parking is lost, the displaced cars will have to go somewhere. There is of course only one place for them to go and that is onto the streets of Torrisholme - into an area that is totally unequipped for this sort of extra pressure. Again, we come to the danger and the congestion element of addition cars looking for somewhere to park.
- 16 As I understand it, the current road will be diverted to pass underneath the projected new highway, which makes it sounds like some sort of racetrack chicane! Sadly, in this day and age, we all know exactly how this sort of underpass ends up. It will be the only route for pedestrians. In many cases it will be the only way for our children to get to and from the village.
- 17 I know that I wouldn't want my child to be using it and am very certain that the majority of parents will feel exactly the same. It is inevitable that it will become dirty, misused, inhospitable and noisily frightening. Will the elderly and women on their own use it? Of course not. The village will be simply cut in two with no real or easy access from one side to the other.
- 18 So that is a picture of Torrisholme before and of course after – and it's not a very petty picture. If the projected road were going to be of any help or benefit at all to the community as a whole then perhaps this devastation would be worthwhile. But it won't serve any useful purpose and it must not be allowed to go ahead.
19. This whole presentation seems very much slanted to 'ME' – which of course it is. But it must be seen as much more than that because there are hundreds of people just like me in the village – and it will affect them in exactly the same way.

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