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1st November 2018

Raymond O'Neill
Secretary of Coalisland Traders Association

To Whom It May Concern

RE: Opposition to One Way System on Main Street, Coalisland

As secretary of Coalisland Traders Association, I have gathered and collated, from residents and traders, concerns and information laid out here over the past year in regards to the proposed one way system on Main Street Coalisland, which form the basis of our objections to this proposal. Below are following points which were forwarded in November 2018 explained in detail.

(1) Deprivation of Emergency Services

In Coalisland In 2017, there was an incident of a lady being knocked down on Lineside, which led to police and emergency services having to close down Lineside completely to traffic, for over an hour. Subsequently, all traffic moving in and out of the town did so along Main Street's two-way system. If this, or similar incident re-occurred while, theoretically, Main Street was a one-way street, the town would come to a complete stand still. If for that or any other reason Lineside was inaccessible, that would deny access and in particular, deny "emergency services" access to Main Street and any part of the town leading off Main Street towards Washingbay Road and Stewartstown/Annagher Road.

(2) School Traffic Congestion

60- 70% of Coalisland's population live beyond the roundabout at the junction of Washingbay Road, Stewartstown Road/Annagher Road and Main Street. Diverting all the traffic from those roads onto Lineside would cause serious congestion and bring traffic to a halt at specific times of the day. For example, during school runs to the two schools and two nurseries on the Brackaville road with approx. 2000 students and staff.

(3) Bin Collection Grid-Lock

Every Tuesday and Thursday there are bin collections along the 53 properties on Main Street and every second week, there are 2 separate bin collections, brown and black on a Thursday. A one-way system would lead to serious congestion at these times and would cause total grid-lock on Main Street, forcing all traffic onto Lineside, which would only cause more congestion and grid-lock in that area too and to the five main roads which service the town.

(4) Oil Delivery Grid-Lock

If a one-way system was implemented on Main Street, whenever any of the 53 properties require an 'oil-heating' delivery this would seriously impact on traffic flow on Main Street and again cause congestion and grid-lock throughout the town.

(5) Services/Parcels Delivery Grid-lock

There are 38 businesses and 15 domestic properties on Main Street, from a total of 100 in the town, (which equates to 38% of all businesses in the town) of which most require service vehicles for goods in/out on a daily basis. To give an example, one of the 3 pharmacists in the town said at a recent meeting with Mid Ulster Council and architects WDR and RT Taggart that on that particular day they had 12 medical deliveries to their shop. Again, if a one-way system was in place, there would be on-going congestion and grid-lock due to vehicles being forced into a bottleneck, which would consequently delay delivery of vital medical supplies to two of the pharmacies.

(6) Business Closures Leading to Poverty

To force a one-way street on Main Street would lead to a severe decrease in vehicular traffic for consumers and would lead to the devastation and debilitating collapse of businesses on Main Street. This proposed one way system would inevitably lead to business closures and put more people out of work, with no wages and consequently putting families and children into poverty.

(7) Rates Impact

Firstly, approximately ¼ of a million pound is collected annually from properties on Main Street of which 40% goes directly to Mid Ulster Council. This equates to approximately 38% of businesses in the town centre and some people would say that a one way system on Main Street is a great idea. If their business or residence isn't on Main Street of course they would say it's a great idea, for someone's loss is another's gain. Therefore, if traffic flow decreases due to a one way system on Main Street, business on Main Street would decrease accordingly, and subsequently business in other parts of the town would increase. This is a disproportionate situation, almost verging on discrimination, as the 38% of businesses on Main Street should be given appropriate consideration of this nightmarish suggestion. Secondly, if businesses closed due to lack of turnover caused by a one way system on Main Street, rates to the council would decrease by 50% and businesses and residents would be clamouring for rates reduction, re-adjustment or ultimately not be able to pay any rates due to loss of custom. Financially, it would cripple families and lead to more poverty etc..

(8) 7 Spoke Roundabout Syndrome Created

60-70% of traffic comes from the combined flow from the Stewartstown Road, Annagher Road and Washingbay Road and they link up with Main Street and Lineside to form a roundabout. Currently at that particular roundabout there are four 90 junctions with an 8 spoke layout (4x entrances and 4x exits). If Main Street was made into a one way street, that roundabout would become a "7 spoke" roundabout. Consequently, to make all incoming traffic travel down towards Lineside would create more congestion, as cars can currently drive up Main Street and keep traffic flowing throughout the day in the town. If a one way system was implemented on Main Street, thus creating a 7-spoke roundabout, traffic exiting Main Street would always be 'giving way' to traffic approaching from Lineside and with no entry onto Main Street at that roundabout, there would be no break in traffic for vehicles to exit Main Street, therefore creating gridlock. At present, vehicles approaching the town from Annagher Road/ Stewartstown Road and Washingbay Road, can see if Lineside is gridlocked with vehicles, especially buses 8-9 am and 2-6 pm, so drivers can drive up Main Street to access or exit the town. Similarly, as it currently stands, traffic coming into the town from Brackville Road or Dungannon Road, if seeing Lineside busy, motorists can drive down Main Street

to exit town, thus avoiding congestion. Therefore if Main Street was 'one-way', it would be continuously jammed with traffic as lorries and vans deliver on Main Street all day, six days a week.

(9) Special Need Access

On upper left Main Street there is a 'traveller primary children after school club', which requires special needs primary school children to be dropped off and picked up daily. This requires vehicles to be able to pull in close to the proximity of the building enter and exit quickly. A one way system on Main Street would not facilitate this. There is also a kids dance studio nearby which has the same dynamic of young children being dropped off and picked up and the same repercussions would apply as before, if a one way system was implemented on Main Street.

Even more alarming would a one way system on Main Street be for the recently opened Mid Ulster Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. Based on upper left Main Street, they have recently opened a clinic and daily they deal with some very vulnerable people, who again require quick access and exit and some even find it difficult to cross a road. Therefore a one way system would severely disrupt access to this clinic and the other 2 aforementioned clubs.

(10) Policy Context and Surveys

The people of Coalisland have never been informed or advised of the Policy Context of this drastic proposed transformation of our town's Main Street. At a recent meeting with Mid Ulster Committee and the architects WDR and RT Taggart, I asked to see any surveys or traffic counts of traffic through the town, which was not forthcoming. If such data exists or is to be produced in the future, the survey would need to take place over a full working week and especially when approx. 2000 pupils and staff are travelling to and from the two schools and two nurseries on the Brackaville road.

Also Dungannon Council spent over 20 thousand pounds commissioning URS-Aecom "Town-Planners", over a two year consultation framework for Coalisland. This comprehensive and detailed report was printed in October 2016 and is available to view in the local library. One statistic that jumps out of this extensive report is that it found 62% of people surveyed were in favour of Main Street remaining 'two way'. I have enclosed a copy of some of their excellent work for you to browse over part of which supports a two-way traffic system on Main Street.

Having attended meetings with architects, council and local councillors we have yet to be convinced of any positive effects that a one way system on Main Street would create. My-self and others have brought to their attention the debacle which occurred in Dungannon Town Centre Public Realm Scheme. This occurred not once but twice in the last 5 years which cost the rate payer millions of pounds to rectify. The concerned people of Coalisland do not wish to witness a repeat of this in our town if the one way system, as we predict, doesn't work, it will again divert rate payers monies away from essential services such as Health.

We have also discovered on the original planning application there was no flood report submitted or deemed necessary. Unfortunately, there were two floods in mid- December, one on Lineside and the other on Kings Row (Stewartstown Road). This can be verified by Road Service, as they erected signage on these flooded roads, resulting in traffic being diverted from Lineside to Main Street.

As a representative of concerned traders, residents, shoppers and commuters we request the relevant bodies to reconsider and re-engage with input to this detrimental plan of a one way system on Main Street. We consider it a prerequisite that emergency services ie Ambulance, Firebrigade and Police be informed of the decision made by the planning committee and to how it would impact

on them providing their services throughout Coalisland. We would request the same input of your decision from Translink, SELB, Taxi Drivers, Bin Collectors, and any other vehicles servicing the town on a daily/weekly basis.

We also feel the decision will have an adverse environmental effect and the complete dynamic and the aesthetic fluidity of a street that has served the people of the town so well for over 350 years .

We appeal to the powers that be to take a last opportunity to monitor the traffic flow, as a temporary one way system on Main Street will occur from Monday 28th January 2019, when NI Water commence essential works , creating an apparent one way street. Therefore we think it essential for all concerned in this process, to monitor the traffic count on Main Street and Lineside when schools are in operation, and compare to traffic count as it stands, a two-way system.

Yours faithfully


Coalisland Traders Association