

Phase 2 public consultation, 6 February 2018 to 20 March 2018

1. Overview

This Community Consultation Statement sets out how Herefordshire Council (the Council) proposes to undertake Phase 2 of (non-statutory) consultation with the people of Herefordshire in relation to a proposed bypass and walking, cycling bus and public realm improvements, referred to as the Hereford Transport Package (HTP). This second phase of consultation will commence on Tuesday 6th February 2018 and run for a six week period, closing on Tuesday 20th March 2018.

The first phase of consultation took place from the 4th of April 2017 to the 22nd of May 2017.

2. Summary of Proposals

The HTP would combine a bypass to the west of Hereford city and walking, cycling bus and public realm improvements, to encourage people to travel more sustainably for short distance journeys within the city.

The aim of the HTP is to address a number of the current transport challenges in Hereford including:

- Delays for long-distance journey times
 - Heavy congestion and unreliable journey times arising from low speeds
 - A single river crossing struggling to cope with current traffic levels
 - Extensive queuing on the network
 - High numbers of short distance car journeys
 - Large numbers of heavy goods vehicles using the key roads
- Barriers to growth
 - Difficulty in attracting new businesses and jobs
 - Difficulty in retaining existing businesses
 - Unable to build new homes
 - Discouraging young people leaving the area
- Safety
 - Accidents and breakdowns
 - Busy roads are difficult to cross
 - Traffic and congestion is intimidating to
 - Walkers and cyclists
- Poor local and regional connections
 - Long distance freight travelling through the city
 - Limitation to growth of Hereford Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas
 - Poor connections to Wales and the Midlands
 - Economic impact of unreliable journey times

- Health and the environment
 - Poor air quality and emissions due to
 - High levels of congestion and heavy goods vehicles
 - Barriers to safe walking, cycling and bus use
 - Traffic noise and vibration from heavy goods vehicles
 - Busy roads are difficult to cross
 - Damage to our historic environment
 - Increasing levels of obesity due to unhealthy travel habits such as short distance car use

The objectives of the HTP include:

- Encouraging sustainable development by creating attractive alternatives to car usage for journeys within the city.
- Encouraging healthier lifestyles by enabling people to walk and cycle for short distance trips in the city.
- Facilitating economic growth by reducing peak hour journey times across the city and improving access to the Hereford Enterprise Zone.
- Improving regional connectivity by improving local and regional connections through better and more reliable journey times on the A49.
- Reduce severance by improving connections for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Provide network resilience by reducing the impact of accidents, breakdowns, and maintenance work on the city's main road network.
- Improve air quality and reduce noise by lowering levels of air pollution and noise from traffic in the city centre.
- Improving safety for all road users.

The proposed bypass would provide additional network capacity and a new river crossing, thereby reducing congestion in the centre and freeing up road space for walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements. The bypass would also support delivery of 6,500 new homes, 6,000 jobs, a new university and expansion of the Hereford Enterprise Zone – all key initiatives in the *Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 - 2031*. The Core Strategy corridor was defined by the Core Strategy and adopted by Council in 2015.

New or improved infrastructure for pedestrians, and cyclists will only be made possible by development of the bypass, as the bypass would enable vehicles to go around Hereford and free-up much-needed road space in the city. The extent and location of the walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements have not been decided at this time, and will be planned based on the outcomes of public consultation.

3. The Planning Process

The route to secure planning consent is yet to be determined through discussion with the Department for Transport, and will be subject to further legal advice.

Regardless of the planning process undertaken, Council will undertake three phases of consultation:

- A first phase to provide an opportunity for people to learn about the HTP project, comment on the proposals and suggest alternative options/ solutions for consideration. The first phase of consultation was carried out between April and May 2017.
- A second phase (the focus of this Community Consultation Statement) to present possible bypass routes and the possible types and locations of walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements.
- A third phase to present the preferred bypass route, and walking, cycling bus and public realm improvements. This final round of consultation will be the statutory consultation period which would be required as part of the planning consent process.

4. Previous Consultation

The principle of the HTP has been developed and tested through extensive stakeholder engagement and public consultation as an integral element of the Council's growth proposals, which are now set out in the adopted *Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 - 2031*, adopted in 2015. The Core Strategy corridor to the west of the city was defined in the Core Strategy.

The HTP has broad public support and the Council has received specific support from a number of businesses and representative organisations including the Hereford Enterprise Zone Board, Highways England, Welsh Government, Powys, Gloucestershire and Monmouthshire County Councils, the Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce, the Herefordshire Business Board and promoters of NMITE University.

5. Proposed Consultation

The aim of this consultation is to present the possible bypass routes and the possible types and locations of walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements. The HTP will involve three phases of consultation with the public and key stakeholders described below.

Phase 1 consultation

The first phase of the HTP consultation was carried out from the 4th of April to the 22nd of May 2017. The aim of consultation was to:

- Raise awareness and inform local residents and businesses about the proposed bypass including:
 - the project objectives;
 - planning and design process; and
 - their opportunity for input.
- Raise public awareness of the benefits of walking, cycling and bus travel, with the ultimate aim of contributing to behaviour change in Hereford.
- Invite people who may have an interest in or may be affected by the proposals to have a say.

- Facilitate feedback about the proposals including:
 - the benefits and constraints of the bypass;
 - the type and location of walking, cycling, bus and public space improvements; and
 - other matters we need to consider prior to undertaking further planning and design work.
- Inform the three key stages of the Department for Transport's WebTAG (transport appraisal process).

Phase 2 consultation

The second phase of the HTP consultation (current stage) will:

- Invite people who may have an interest in, or may be affected by, the proposals to have a say to help shape future options to ensure they are fit-for-purpose.
- Explain how Phase 1 consultation feedback has helped shape the development of the HTP
- Explain the selection process that was undertaken to develop a shortlist of possible bypass routes and walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements
- Present the possible routes for the bypass and allow the public to make informed decisions about the bypass options
- Present the possible types and locations of walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements with the ultimate aim of contributing to behaviour change in Hereford.
- Seek feedback and gauge overall levels of support about:
 - The possible routes for the bypass
 - The possible types and locations of walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements
 - Benefits and constraints for seven possible bypass routes, reduced from 24
 - Alternative bypass route suggestions
 - Demographic and travel behaviour.

Phase 3 consultation (statutory consultation)

The project would be classed as Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development under the Infrastructure Planning (EIA) a 2017 or Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017. The EIA would consider the potential impacts of the project including air and water quality, noise, landscape and townscape, ecology, archaeology and heritage, people and communities, geology and spoils, materials and waste and cumulative impacts. If the project is determined to be an NSIP, as part of the third phase of consultation, Herefordshire Council would publish a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). The PEIR would present preliminary assessments of the likely significant environmental effects, both positive and negative, of the construction, operation, and maintenance and decommissioning phases of the Project, as well as provisional mitigation measures. It will not set out the final findings; these will be included in the Environmental Statement that will accompany the application.

The consultation approach for the third phase of consultation will be documented in a Statement of Community Consultation which will be an updated version of this document.

The third phase of the HTP consultation will:

- Ensure compliance with requirements of 2008 Planning Act if required.
- Explain how Phase 2 consultation feedback has informed the development of the HTP.

- Present the preferred bypass route.
- Present preliminary environmental impacts and proposed avoidance and mitigation measures.
- Present proposed walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements.
- Seek feedback about:
 - The preferred bypass route.
 - The preferred walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements.
 - Issues and constraints.
 - Demographic and travel behaviour.

After all phases of consultation, a Consultation Report will be prepared to document how the consultation was undertaken, who was consulted and to outline the feedback received. The Consultation Report will be submitted with the planning application as evidence of stakeholder engagement and public consultation and will be made available on the Councils website..

6. How Herefordshire Council will promote the consultation

The Council will promote phase 2 consultation by:

- Distributing a letter to landowners, partners and businesses advising them the cabinet report containing the shortlist of possible bypass routes was published (see distribution area in Appendix A). This report was considered by Council's cabinet on Thursday 18th January 2018 and subject to approval, phase two consultation will start in February.
- Placing newspaper advertisements in the Hereford Times (see Hereford Times outlets map in Appendix B).
- Distributing press releases to the local press at key milestones (publishing of the Cabinet report, consultation periods, surveys and other works the community should be aware of).
- Putting up posters in the local area (Appendix C).
- Promoting the consultation via the Council's website and Hereford Times' paper and website, Radio and social media channels.

Consultation brochure, information panels, a questionnaire, leaflet and a questions and answers document will be prepared to support phase 2 consultation. All consultation material will be available on the project website. Consultation materials will also be written in plain-English and can be translated upon request.

7. Who Herefordshire Council will consult

The consultation will provide an opportunity for the following to have a say on the proposals:

- Landowners, residents and businesses that may potentially be impacted by the possible routes for the bypass and the walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements being implemented.
- Residents across Herefordshire, as the proposal will have benefits beyond this area, and extend to those living, working or visiting the local area will also be consulted.
- Stakeholders including members, parish councils, relevant environment, transport, economic and community stakeholders.
- A broader range of community members including workers, road users, pedestrians and cyclists.
- Minority, hard to reach and seldom heard groups.

8. How Herefordshire Council will consult

During the consultation, the Council will provide opportunities for the above parties to understand and comment on the proposal and its likely positive and negative effects.

The consultation will include the following activities.

Public exhibitions

Three public exhibitions during the first week of the consultation. These exhibitions will be held at The Old Market Pod, Newmarket St, Hereford HR4 9HR at the following times:

- Tuesday 6th February 2018 11am- 8pm
- Wednesday 7th February 2018 11am- 8pm
- Thursday 8th February 2018 11am- 8pm

For people who cannot attend the exhibitions during the day, an evening exhibition will take place at Whitecross School, Three Elms Rd, Hereford HR4 0RN at the following time:

- Tuesday 13th February 2018 6pm-9pm

- At the public exhibitions there will be an opportunity to discuss the proposals with a member of the project team and to record comments in writing.

Display exhibition

- An unstaffed exhibition will be on display at Hereford Library, Broad St, Hereford HR4 9AU between Friday 16th February 2018 and Tuesday 20th March 2018.
- Members of the project team will be at the display exhibition between 11am-2pm on Saturday 24th February and Saturday 10th March 2018.

Website

Background information on the proposal, copies of the consultation materials, virtual exhibition, possible bypass route fly-through and a link to the online survey will be available on the Herefordshire Council website at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/HTP.

Consultation survey

A consultation questionnaire has been developed to collect feedback on the proposals. This questionnaire will be available online and will be available for completion at the public exhibitions. A hard copy of the questionnaire will be posted to people upon request.

Written feedback

Written feedback will be able to be submitted to HerefordTransportPackage@balfourbeatty.com

Responses may be made public, subject to data protection laws, once the application has been submitted either to the Local Planning Authority or to the Planning Inspectorate, or during any subsequent public examination.

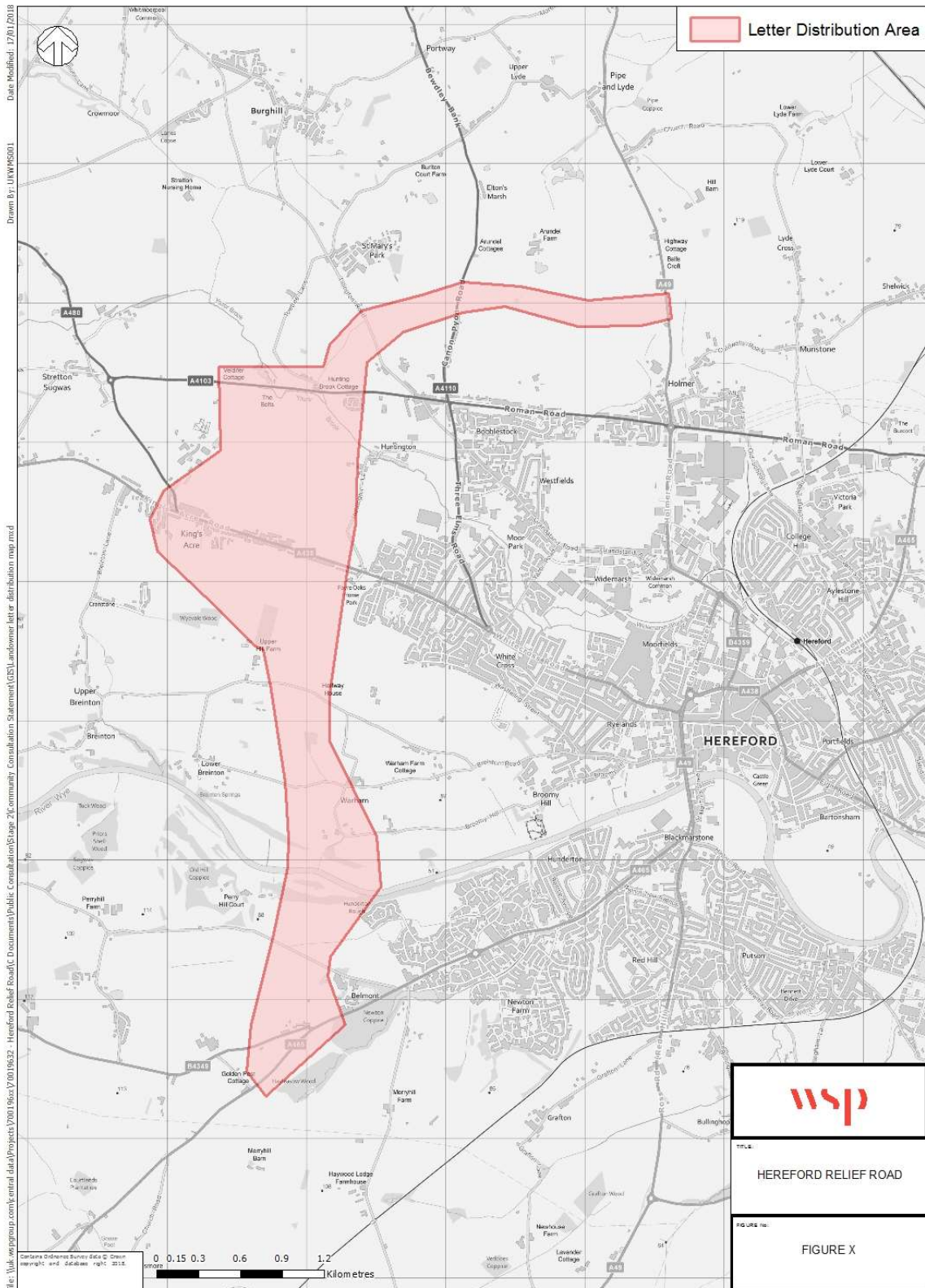
The second phase of consultation will close on Tuesday 20th March 2018 and comments should be received by Herefordshire Council by this date.

9. Outcomes of the consultation

The outcomes of the consultation will be analysed and published in a Consultation Report. The purpose of this report will be to document the approach taken to the second phase of consultation. This report will be made publically available on the project website and will include:

- A summary of the consultation process undertaken.
- Details about how Herefordshire Council met the relevant consultation commitments as outlined above.
- A summary of the feedback received during the consultation.
- A summary of the key issues to be considered when progressing the planning and design of the crossing.

APPENDIX A – Letter distribution area



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 Date Modified: 17/01/2018
 Drawn by: URWPS001

Leintwardine Library	Community Centre/High St, High St, Craven Arms	SY7 0LZ
Leominster Library	8 The Buttercross, Leominster	HR6 8BN
Peterchurch Library	St Peter's Church , Church Road, Peterchurch	HR2 0RS
Ross-on-Wye Library and Customer Service Centre	7 Cantilupe Rd, Ross-on-Wye	HR9 7AN
Weobley Library	Old Police Court, Back Lane, Weobley,	HR4 8SG

