

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 January 2016 15:06
To: Howells, Mathew
Subject: Local Transport Plan 2016 - 2031
Attachments: Hereford Term Time Traffic 2010.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Mr Howells,

For the reasons listed below, this LTP is fundamentally flawed and needs to be significantly rewritten and resubmitted for public consultation.

1. It is not a plan, as success is not defined and it cannot be monitored

I note that the very limited set of performance indicators listed on page 36 of the Strategy document, under “Evaluation and Monitoring”, are not quantified, have no current values (baseline) and no target values with deadlines. Therefore the effectiveness of the LTP is not defined and cannot be monitored. The LTP 2013 - 2016 did have quantified targets and deadlines for all its performance indicators.

2. It does not include an imaginative and properly resourced sustainable transport strategy for Hereford city

On page 13 of the Strategy document, under “Opportunities”, it states:

The majority of transport demand, including vehicle traffic, is for short trips which start and finish within the urban area. This pattern will continue as the city grows. It provides a strong opportunity to increase the proportion of trips on foot, by bike and on the urban bus network.

Yes, we all know this !! So lets have an imaginative and properly resourced sustainable transport strategy for Hereford, which would have huge environmental and health benefits, and make the city a great place to live and work (and study, with the new university).

Yet despite the favourable city geography, and overwhelming evidence of travel patterns, the Council has no real commitment to sustainable transport. They will only make token efforts if they have to tick some boxes with central government to get cash to build their pointless and damaging roads.

3. It is biased because it does not provide a fair assessment of the Southern Link Road, which cannot reduce city centre congestion and will be a massive waste of taxpayers’ money

The section on the Southern Link Road needs to include prominently the Editorial from the Hereford Times on 14th January 2016 which said:

It does not take a PhD in urban planning or an expensive traffic survey to know that a new road connecting the A49 to the A465 will not reduce congestion in Hereford as much as a new bridge over the River Wye near Rotherwas.

However, Herefordshire Council - in sticking to its belief that the best side for a Hereford bypass is to the west of the city - is now committing itself to spending upwards of £27 million on a road joining up the main routes to Ross-on-Wye and Abergavenny.

Hereford MP Jesse Norman is therefore right to make a claim for the money to be spent going east, even without going into the exact details of any proposed route. The most obvious starting point would be to continue the Rotherwas Relief Road over to the B4224 Hampton Bishop road - and there the ELR would probably end. For, if it were to run further north, it would hit the Lugg flats- and all the arguments heard since the 1980s. But at least the money will have paid for something that would take traffic out of the city centre.

That is not something that can be said of the council's Southern Link Road which really could end up becoming a true road to nowhere, especially as the most expensive part of the bypass through the hills of Breinton will not be built in our lifetimes - if ever at all.

4. It excludes the Eastern Link Road, linking Rotherwas to the A438 Ledbury Road via a new river crossing

Further to the Hereford Times Editorial, the LTP is flawed because it does not include the Eastern Link Road, described by our MP Jesse Norman as "the most cost effective single piece of road infrastructure".

5. It is biased because it does not provide a fair assessment of the Hereford Relief Road, which cannot reduce city centre congestion

The section on the Hereford Relief Road needs to include prominently the important paragraph 54 from the Planning Inspector's Report on the Core Strategy, which was published on 29th September 2015.

Paragraph 54 states:

54. However, the HRR is not identified in the Council's Local Transport Plan [C46a] as planned infrastructure, the funding is not secure and it is not part of Highways England (HE) Road Investment Strategy for 2015 – 2020 (Statement of Common Ground between the Council and HE). The route has not been modelled or identified in detail and there is a high degree of uncertainty about whether the HRR is viable and can be achieved within the plan period. A key consideration for soundness of the plan is, therefore, whether the substantial growth identified for Hereford is deliverable.

6. Addressing transport to schools and colleges is the priority issue for Hereford, not spending £30m on a new road.

Everyone living south of Hereford knows that the traffic "problem" (which is intermittent, hard to predict, and not serious compared to other cities) magically disappears during school holidays.

There is a 2010 Council document which confirms our common sense view (copy attached as PDF), which should have been included prominently in the supporting evidence for the LTP. Why was this critical document excluded from the "Evidence Base" on the consultation website ?

This document shows the huge decreases in peak traffic flows across the city outside term time, ranging from 23% to 52%.

The Council propose to spend £30m of our money on the pointless and environmentally damaging Southern Link Road. A fraction of that amount spent on the school transport issue would result in significant traffic and health benefits.

Conclusion

I think it is very sad for the County, and reflects very badly on the Council, that such an unimaginative, uninspiring, biased and seriously flawed “plan” was ever published.

Yours sincerely,

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