

11 March 2019

Dear Madam/Sir,

HEREFORD TRANSPORT PACKAGE – walking, cycling, bus and public space CONSULTATION RESPONSE

1 Introduction

1.1 The Campaign to Protect Rural England [CPRE] is a national environmental charity with over 50,000 supporters and a branch in every county. CPRE stands up for the countryside, seeks to protect it from the threats it faces and shape its future for the better.

1.2 CPRE Herefordshire has over 350 members. We have responded to previous consultations on highways matters around Hereford.

1.3 Our prime focus is the landscape of Herefordshire. Major new roads can have significant detrimental impacts on the Herefordshire countryside. Mitigation attempts cannot hide the fact that road building causes significant damage to the natural environment which in many cases is changed for ever. There are wider impacts on local communities including noise, air and light pollution as well as increased traffic. We refer you to the findings of the national CPRE report '*The Impact of Road Projects in England*' 2017.

2 Objections to the Hereford Transport Package (HTP) Proposals

2.1 It is not our intention to go into the detail of each and every one of the proposals which are essentially urban issues. We simply wish to state that, in our view:

- the vast majority of what is being proposed could be achieved without the proposed bypass. You have a report dated 2018 from WSP that states this clearly
- the proposals will not achieve their objectives. They reduce the available road-space for the approximately 80% of traffic which your own figures show still wish to reach central Hereford. They will increase delays at junctions (in the name of improvements for cyclists and walkers) and raising surfaces will do the same at junctions and crossings. These will all reduce speeds so much that congestion, noise, air pollution and road safety will not be improved. This is before any available space is taken up by traffic generated by the new housing in and around the city. We do not therefore believe that the proposals will meet any of the short list of objectives that are given in the questionnaire at **Question 3**. These are not the full list of objectives. Why not?
- The consultation is fundamentally flawed and misleading since it focussed on engineering solutions to what is essentially an issue of human behaviour and choice while at the same time it does not point out its detrimental side effects on the approximately 80% of traffic that will remain. The consultation does not look at

20mph zones or behavioural change programmes including travel plans. These are the only two methods with proven success rates. **This is our answer to Question 21 on the quality of the consultation materials**

2.2 CPRE Herefordshire does not believe that the proposed bypass that underpins these HTP proposals is the answer to walking, cycling, bus or public space concerns in Hereford and we repeat our previous objection to it. As we have said before

- The proposed bypass is a waste of money and does not represent value for money
- The proposed bypass will do immense damage to the landscape surrounding Hereford including the Wye Valley SAC and SSSI
- The proposed bypass will not produce the increased economic development predicted. As our national study referred to earlier shows, there is very little evidence for this ever happening. More fundamentally Herefordshire has virtually no road dependent businesses that depend on strategic roads
- The proposed bypass will create car dependent suburbs for the city. These are not the 'sustainable urban extensions' that the consultation documents have now renamed them. Without adequate transport provision these are not the right houses, in the right place at the right price

2.3 We note the many vague orange arrows on various maps indicating proposals for improvements to walking, cycling and horse riding connections between the city and the countryside. These are not explained in detail and, in many cases, already exist in the form of footpaths, bridleways and quiet country lanes. We are concerned that the rural areas bordering Hereford might become peppered with urban street furniture etc. if the focus on engineered solutions evident in the rest of the consultation documents is applied to these areas. They deserve to be treated with much greater sensitivity. In many cases the existing 'green infrastructure' that Hereford is so fortunate to be surrounded by simply needs to be left undisturbed

Yours sincerely

R Widdowson / T Geeson
Vice Chairs CPRE Herefordshire