

COMMENTS BY COUNCILLOR HUBBARD AT CABINET 15/9/11

I have a preliminary request followed by more specific comments & questions related to specific points in the report. I will be as succinct as possible, whilst recognising the importance of the decisions being taken today by Cabinet and the effect they will have on Herefordshire over the next twenty years.

PRELIMINARY

Please will Cabinet give a commitment that the final version of the 'Core Strategy - Draft Revised Preferred Option Background Paper, July 2011' be amended to include accurate representation of the significant opposition to the preferred options for Hereford, including the Movement Policy with a Western Relief Road and the City Centre policy, as well as the 'scale of new housing development' referred to in para 2.d (p3) of the Background Paper.

KEY POINTS SUMMARY PG 10 2ND BULLET POINT

I'd like to remind Cabinet that their consultants TPI have now modelled several variants of the 'East is Best' proposal and other consultants have reviewed the results. But they did not model a No Road alternative put forward at the same time, why not?

Given that either route has significant impact on the Special Area of Conservation (S.A.C.), the River Wye. This alternative is considered the lowest risk option by IOC as it removes any impact on the S.A.C.

What will the Council do, given *'the importance of the relief road scheme to the overall Revised Preferred Option'* if it is once again rejected by the public or, if not, a court challenge results from the proposal to damage the R. Wye SAC when a credible alternative exists?

Introduction and Background Pg 10

para 3

Please will it be noted that while 'further research and advice on a number of topics' has been carried out at the instruction of the Cabinet in February, the council has still not resolved fundamental issues relating to the environmental capacity of Herefordshire to accommodate growth and this Cabinet apparently intends to proceed with consultation before the issues have been resolved.

Can I ask what advice you have had from planning officers on the implications for the soundness of the plan if these fundamental issues are not resolved before the plan goes to the Examination in Public, and also what it will mean if they are not resolved before the plan goes out to this next round of consultation?

KEY CONSIDERATIONS PG 10 & 11

Have the Council's planners resolved or will they have resolved the issues of

- Air Quality,
- Water Quality
- Sewage treatment capacity

Before the consultation commences on 26th September, so that consultees will understand the impact of their choices.

This is a critical issue that should be addressed before consultation. Why should the people of the county and Hereford specifically be asked to accept a strategy which cannot promise good water quality and sewage treatment?

With regards to air quality it is particularly important as Parsons Brinckerhoff stated:

'The impact on the Air Quality of Hereford city centre is a key issue that needs to be confirmed it is essential that this assessment is carried out before the next stage.' (PB para 3.1.7)

Thus the preferred option cannot be said to be sound with particular respect to Air Quality in advance of this assessment. WHEN WILL THIS ASSESSMENT BE MADE AVAILABLE?

Will the following also be available for consultation:

- the evidence from the traffic modelling for the Western Route with the reduced housing numbers
- a viability study that relates to the proposals that will be set out in the Revised Preferred Option consultation
- the Infrastructure Delivery plan so that we know the plan on which we are being consulted on can actually be delivered in the plan period.

COMMUNITY POLL (PG 11 PARA 12)

I should like to request that my comments about a legal challenge over damage to the SAC be noted in the context of this paragraph.

Pg12 para 14, 2nd bullet

Presumably the problem with a no vote to a poll is identical to a rejection of the road as a result of consultation.

What does the Council propose in the event of a rejection of their proposals at consultation and how long does it consider it would take to put the LDF process back on track?

Risk Management

Pg 13 para 19

I would like it minuted that It's Our County considers that this council has actually **increased the risk** that the plan will be found to be unsound by testing one alternative submitted during the November consultation (East is Best), but ignoring another one, more technical and better related to their modelling (Metropolitan Transport Research Unit 2010 republished 2011).

How will they demonstrate that their testing of alternatives has been adequate now that they have gone so much further with examining Relief Road schemes?

And finally! **Consultees**

para 19

Ask for clarification. Does '5000 comments' mean 5000 separate responses? If not, how many separate responses by individuals and stakeholders did the Council receive?