



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Herefordshire Core Strategy
Strategic Planning
Herefordshire Council
PO Box 230
Blueschool House
Hereford
HR1 2ZB

30 June 2014

Dear Sir or Madam

HEREFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN - CORE STRATEGY 2011-2031

LDF REF: 3202

I am writing to respond to the above consultation. As Member of Parliament for Hereford and South Herefordshire, I have confined my response to those issues most likely to affect my constituents.

The pre-submission publication is a vast document and I note that respondents are being asked to comment on the legal compliance and/or soundness of the proposals rather than their general merits. I would refer to my response to the Draft Core Strategy document (dated 22 April 2013) for my detailed views on the merits of the proposals. I do not express a view as to whether the Core Strategy is compliant with legal procedures and have therefore focused my comments here on the soundness of the proposals.

Strategic objective 3: I am pleased to note the Council's commitment to higher education as a tool to support education, lifelong learning and retention of our young people, but would also stress the potential of higher education to regenerate our economy and strengthen our cultural offering. There should be a specific mention of the New University for Herefordshire project and the Council's commitment to make land available for it in the centre of Hereford city.

Strategic objective 6: it is quite right to identify the universal provision of a high bandwidth broadband service as a priority but attention also needs to be paid to 3G and 4G mobile phone coverage. Not all areas of Herefordshire have 3G reception and this is already acting as a break on growth and social wellbeing.

Strategic objective 7: an Eastern Link Road is perhaps the most serious omission from the Core Strategy. The Draft Core Strategy consultation revealed significant support for



the Eastern Link Road, particularly from business, and it is unclear why this has not been reflected in the pre-submission publication. As the Council recognises, the Eastern Link Road does not compete with a western bypass but is a relatively low-cost proposal that could quickly achieve a number of the Council's stated objectives, including a substantial reduction in congestion and an improvement in air quality, in Hereford city. As I have argued and will continue to argue, there is an overwhelming case for including an Eastern Link Road in the Core Strategy and nothing is lost by so doing.

This letter is being transmitted by email, with a hard copy in the post for the file, and is being copied to Alistair Neill for information. I very much hope that the Council will take these widely shared concerns into consideration.

With all good wishes,

Jesse Norman
Member of Parliament
Hereford and South Herefordshire