

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 28 September 2017

Question 1

Mr C Rumsey, Westhope

Hereford Bypass

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Is it not the duty of all officers of the council to inform the members fully on all matters concerning a Hereford Bypass (east or west). Why have the recommendations of the inspector, who chaired the round table meeting held twenty years ago not been sent to all members? The recommendation was for the proposed Bypass to be constructed to the far east of the Lugg meadows.

Reply

The findings of the independently chaired 'Hereford Traffic Conference' held in 1993 were sent to the secretary of state who in 1995 announced a modified preferred route (to the east) that the then Highways Agency should pursue. However in 1997 the government announced that this scheme had been withdrawn from the trunk road programme.

More recent options appraisals of routes both east and west have informed the decision taken. Those appraisals took into account current planning and environmental policies and regulations rather than historic proposals. All these reports are available on the council's website

Question 2

Mr R Palgrave, How Caple

Flood Risk Strategy

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Page 51 of the Strategy (Planning Application Process) says, "For all new developments, the developer will be required to demonstrate that the development will not cause any notable increase in flood risk to people, property or infrastructure elsewhere." The qualifier "notable" is meaningless and immeasurable. Why does the strategy not require that developers should demonstrate that there will be no increase to flood risk?

Reply

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) sets out the broad approach and is not an adopted statutory planning document. Individual planning decisions will be taken in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out the requirements for developers to follow.

Question 3

Mr E Morfett, Breinton

Flood Risk Strategy

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Please explain why the updated Yazor brook hydrogeological modelling and flood impact assessment of proposed Core Strategy Housing Development at Three Elms is not included in the Strategic Flood Risk Management Strategy.

Reply

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) details how flood risk will be dealt with at a strategic level it is not intended to provide flood risk assessments for specific sites or watercourses.

Question 4

Ms J Wise, Breinton

Flood Risk Strategy

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

I seek assurance that due consideration has been given to the risk of flooding which may arise if a bypass were to be constructed to the west of Hereford. Contingent on this also is the viability of house construction where no study of the drainage from such development has been undertaken. Lessons should have been learned from the unfortunate deficiencies which occurred in the Furlongs development.

Reply

I can confirm that the design and route selection for the bypass, and planning determinations in relation to development will follow appropriate guidance and will take into account flood risk.

Question 5

Mrs W Steel, Lower Breinton

Flood Risk Strategy

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Given that there is a deadline to get a flood risk management strategy to the government to support this proposal and, as such, you have a meeting on 28th September to finalise this, have Herefordshire Council carried out any proper analysis on the area proposed for the bypass up until this point? If so can full details be provided.

Reply

Route assessment work for the bypass is currently underway and reports will be published in due course. The design and route selection will follow appropriate guidance and will take into account flood risk.

Question 6

Dr P Ronan, Breinton

Flood Risk Strategy

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Please explain why Herefordshire Council is planning to build on flood plains given the mandate not to build on flood plains subsequent to the disastrous flooding experienced in the North of England in recent years?

Reply

When considering planning applications for development of land within flood plains, the council will consider policies contained within the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy and any neighbourhood development plan for that area. It will also have regard to the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, specifically paragraphs 100 – 104, and the technical guidance on flood risk which supports that framework.

Question 7

Mr K Farnes, Hereford

Flood Risk Strategy

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Why does the Strategy (Planning Application Process) not require developers to demonstrate that there will be NO increase in flood risk to people, property or infrastructure?

Reply

I refer to the answer given in response to public question number 2.

Question 8

Dr N Geeson, Hereford

Flood Risk Strategy

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

New developments must “comply with strict run off control measures to ensure they do not worsen existing run off rates”. But can you provide assurance that sufficient data (such as from hydro-geological surveys) and local knowledge will be collected to determine the extent of necessary measures accurately and be made publicly available?

Reply

The council requires developers to submit for approval their drainage strategies and designs to ensure there is no increase in runoff rate. Parameters used in these calculations are selected on the basis of site investigation information. Hydro-geological surveys are not appropriate for the majority of developments, as they will impact on groundwater movements. Instead developments typically have soakaway tests undertaken to ensure water can

dissipate. Drainage flood risk reviews and approvals related to planning applications are uploaded to the council website as correspondence against each planning application.

Supplementary question

How can the short, single page, Herefordshire Council Action Plan 2016-2022 (Appendix A-1) in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy possibly be effective while it remains vague and limited in relation to essential implementation details and delivery dates?

Reply to supplementary

The action plan is an action plan on a strategic document and I think your question relates to actual developments when they come along which is to deal with the specifics of a planning application. What I think is confusing you is the action plan of a strategic document as against an action plan of a development when a development comes along that will be dealt with as part of that application specific to the drainage and water issues. I think we are a little bit at odds over what the action plan refers to in relation to a developer who is wanting to develop a planning application.

The strategy is around how growth happens and how we go forward with applications from developers our strategic growth as to how we deal with preventing flooding from getting worse. The action plan is as it is and if we need to review in due course no doubt we will do so.

Question 9

Ms J Smith, Hereford

Flood Risk Strategy

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Yazor Brook designated SINC
Environmental and Hydrogeological concerns
Huntington Hamlet Conservation Area on a Flood Plain, especially considering extreme weather (especially rainfall) conditions associated with Climate Change.

How to resolve the problems of flooding, land drainage, etc.
Revised FRA not completed by Developers

Herefordshire Council have not included the Updated Yazor Brook Hydrogeological Modelling and Flood Impact Assessment in the FRAS.

WHY HAS IT NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE FRAS?

Reply

I refer to the answer given in response to public question number 3.

Supplementary Question

In your report you mention the sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS), mentioning soakaways where the BRE365 test has been mentioned. Normal procedures say an oil inception test should be carried out and also a geotechnical assessment which identifies where the site surrounding area susceptible to inundation and settlement effects on ground slopes, on downhill waterlogging and ground instability. We also know that not all sites are suitable for attenuation basins, infiltration trenches are used instead. I see no mention in the SUDS anything about infiltration trenches, which is part of the SUDS.

Reply

I will take your comments on board. I will ensure that officers are aware and get a detailed written answer in due course.

Further written response

The LFRMS is a high level strategic document and so does not address this level of technical detail. Please note that infiltration trenches, their use and the policies associated with them will be covered in detail in the soon to be published Herefordshire SuDS Manual.

Question 10

Mr J Trimble, Hereford

Flood Risk Strategy

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Please explain why Hereford Council is planning to build on flood plains when the consensus is not to build on flood plains subsequent to the disastrous flooding experienced in the North of England in recent years.

Reply

I refer to the answer given in response to public question number 6.

Questions 11

Mr B Lunt, Lower Breinton

Flood Risk Strategy

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Floodplains provide vital protection against damaging flooding. I am concerned that the council proposes to build a Western Bypass crossing the river Wye and floodplain with a road and elevated bridge. Heavy machinery, concrete foundations, building materials and steel sections will compact and cause great damage to the floodplain and its ability to prevent flooding. What steps will the council take to prevent damage to the floodplain?

Reply

Any temporary works during construction and permanent works constructed within and around the flood plains will be subject to a detailed flood risk assessment and environmental impact assessment. These will inform the construction and design of the bypass to avoid, minimise or mitigate environmental impacts. Both the temporary and permanent works will be subject to agreement with the Environment Agency.