

**MINUTES of the meeting of General scrutiny committee held at Council Chamber, The Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX on Wednesday 18 July 2018 at 10.00 am**

**Present:** Councillor WLS Bowen (Chairperson)  
Councillor BA Baker, (Vice Chairperson)

Councillors: JM Bartlett, PGH Cutter, EPJ Harvey, JF Johnson and PD Newman OBE

**In attendance:** Councillors ACR Chappell, PE Crockett, BA Durkin (Cabinet Member), CA Gandy, J Hardwick, AW Johnson, JG Lester (Cabinet Member), PP Marsh, RI Matthews, FM Norman, RJ Phillips, AJW Powers, PD Price (Cabinet Member), P Rone (Cabinet Member), NE Shaw (Cabinet Member), D Summers and EJ Swinglehurst

**Officers:** Herefordshire Council: G Hughes – Director Economy, Communities and Corporate, R Ball, Assistant Director Environment and Place (ADEP), M Lane – Head of Infrastructure Delivery (HID), A Lovegrove – Chief Finance Officer, C Ward – Monitoring Officer, J Coleman – Democratic Services Manager/Statutory Scrutiny Officer.  
Balfour Beatty Living Places: D Neal – Project Director, BBLP (PDBBLP)  
WSP Consultants: M Brookes – Project Director, WSP (PDWSP), M Thomas – Environmental Lead, WSP (ELWSP), M Steward – Design Coordinator, WSP, A Hallam – Planning Coordinator, WSP (PCWSP), K Emmerson Business Case Co-ordinator WSP and S Charman – Communications Lead, WSP

**9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor SP Anderson, A Johnson, A Warmington and SD Williams.

**10. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Councillor PGH Cutter substituted for Councillor A Johnson, Councillor EPJ Harvey for Councillor A Warmington, Councillor J Johnson for Councillor SD Williams and Councillor PD Newman for Councillor Anderson.

**11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Agenda item 6: Hereford Transport Package**

The Monitoring Officer reported that Councillor TL Bowes, who had submitted a written statement on this item, had declared a schedule 1 interest.

**12. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

A copy of the questions from members of the public and the answers together with a supplementary briefing on issues raised by those questions is attached at appendix 1.

A Member requested that their dissatisfaction with the approach adopted in responding to public questions be recorded.

### 13. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

None.

### 14. HEREFORD TRANSPORT PACKAGE (HTP)

The Committee undertook pre-decision call in scrutiny of the Cabinet's proposed decision to select a preferred route for Hereford bypass as part of Hereford Transport Package.

The draft report for submission to Cabinet on 27 July was appended to the report.

Councillor PD Price, cabinet member – infrastructure, (CMI) made an opening statement.

The principal points were:

- The Hereford bypass was a key infrastructure project that was necessary to drive the economic growth of Hereford and the region. It was recognised as a priority project not only in the council's Economic Vision, Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) and Local Transport Plan (LTP) but also within the Marches Strategic Economic Plan and Midlands Connect regional transport strategy.
- The Hereford Transport Package would enable the delivery of essential future housing, employment and the new University. It would provide an alternative route for traffic which currently travels through the city reducing the current impact on air quality and noise within the city in particular in relation to homes and schools close to the existing A49 road. The bypass would provide a reliable and resilient route around the city which would have significant regional benefits. It would improve road safety in the city, enable significant improvements to the city's public realm and encourage healthy lifestyles by helping more people to walk and cycle.
- The consultation had a total of 4,351 responses. In their response 68% of people said they agreed that the HTP would help to address the transport problems in Hereford and enable growth. 59% believed a bypass should form part of the package of measures and 87% said that they agreed a package should include walking, cycling, bus and public realm measures.
- Consultants had assessed the environmental, engineering, economic and traffic factors affecting the different routes and prepared detailed reports. The recommendation was that the red route should be the preferred route for further development.
- The red route would mean fewer homes were exposed to excessive noise; fewer homes would need to be demolished; a lower impact on Belmont Park and the setting of Belmont Abbey, a lower impact on ancient woodland and important trees and a lower impact on Yazor Brook which would mean a lower cost of mitigation.
- Subject to cabinet's decision consultants would carry out further work to develop detailed proposals for the design of the red route which would then be subject to a further public consultation later in the year. The results would inform a future cabinet decision to confirm the bypass scheme and associated package measures in early 2019.
- Alongside scheme development, the Council continued to engage with relevant Government departments and agencies regarding the funding for the scheme.

The Head of Infrastructure Delivery (HID) presented the draft cabinet report.

A video showing the shortlist of possible bypass routes that had been used during the phase 2 consultation was shown.

The Project Director WSP (PDWSP) then gave a presentation a copy of which is attached to these minutes at Appendix 2.

Local ward members for wards where there was potentially a particular impact had been invited to attend and make a statement highlighting issues that had been identified by residents in the respective wards.

Councillor TL Bowes was unable to attend the meeting. She had submitted a statement that had been circulated to members of the Committee and was read to the meeting by the Chairman on her behalf. In summary this stated:

- She was one of the residents affected by the proposals.
- From personal experience, as well as from residents in and around Belmont, she was aware of the traffic chaos in Hereford. Like all residents she wanted the traffic problems in Hereford to be fixed. However, she did not believe the proposal would address the issues faced by residents. Studies showed that eighty percent of Hereford city traffic was local, with only 20% of traffic through traffic. The proposal to build new homes would mean a much larger increase in traffic with most of those people wanting to get into the City.
- Belmont Rural Parish Council's formal response to the consultation stated if the road were to go ahead then their preferred option would be the olive/black route as this would have less impact on Belmont residents. Their feedback and that of local residents appeared to have been ignored.
- The proposed road will have a massive impact on residents. There were options which meant the road could be built further away from existing homes, lessening the impact, pollution and noise levels but the red route which had the most impact on residents had been chosen.
- In the consultation exercise residents had very clearly shown they want the council to prioritise walking, cycling and active transport measures. It was suggested these should be considered first rather than after the consultation. There were other options such as building another bridge (a bridge to the East is already being investigated by the City Council), it would cost a fraction of the money, could be built relatively quickly and would be used by many businesses especially those on Rotherwas, remove some traffic lights, subsidise buses, create more cycle routes.
- More housing was needed in Hereford, especially low-cost housing for local people. The council needed to plan but could be innovative in its choices and be a "leader" rather than a follower.
- The Committee should consider residents affected by the plan and, if the bypass was to proceed, listen to residents and parish councils and choose the route with the least impact. It was stated that the red route had the least environmental impact. It had a massive impact for many Belmont Residents and account should be taken of their views.

Councillor RI Matthews made a statement. In summary he stated that the principal constraints in respect of the road were: the proposal had a damaging impact on homes and businesses, the landscape character, the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and Site of Special Scientific interest (SSI) and surrounding wildlife habitats. The need for a high level viaduct over the River Wye would introduce extra noise and vibration and light pollution. There was an adverse effect on the Yazor brook flood plain. The geography meant that aquifers could be close to the surface adding to engineering problems. There was an Environment Agency groundwater protection zone. There was a risk to bore holes at the Three Elms relied on by Heineken and Cargills. There would

also be an adverse effect on archaeology, the Hatton trail, and Belmont Abbey. There would be blocking of bridleways. The bisection of the Three Elms housing site would cause noise vibration and air pollution. Destruction of and harm to of ancient, veteran and notable trees. Destruction of parkland at Belmont House. High level crossing of River Wye SAC/SSI east of Warham house. Impacts on homes and businesses in Warham, the Queen Elizabeth II jubilee field held in trust, Warham farm including the community farm, destruction of old woodland and plants alongside the river, surface water pollution, destruction of the avenue of lime trees on Kings Acre Road. Referring to a case in West Sussex he suggested a decision to proceed would be subject to judicial review. He also expressed dissatisfaction with the cabinet member's approach suggesting that it was time for someone else to lead on the issue, taking an independent approach.

Councillor PE Crockett commented that she endorsed the comments made by Councillor Bowes and Matthews. The main issue raised by her constituents was how it was possible to proceed with a decision in the absence of responses to the consultation from Highways England and Natural England.

Councillor J Johnson commented that he was an adjoining ward member but the route did not directly affect his ward.

*(The meeting adjourned between 11.12 and 11.30.)*

The Committee commenced its debate by seeking in the first instance to address the points that had been raised by public questions before proceeding to raise other issues.

In discussion the following principal points were made:

- It was asked whether Warham Community Farm had been taken into account during consultations and in the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA).

The cabinet member infrastructure stated that this was the case. He outlined several discussions that had taken place. The upshot was that the landowner had indicated he was prepared to safeguard the farm as an enterprise within his landholding.

The PDWSP added that the EqIA identified issues relating to the community farm as did the route selection report.

Members proposed that the landlord and the operators of Hereford Community Farm should be asked to confirm their position in writing.

- Clarification was sought on the production of a value for money assessment.

The PDWSP commented that a benefit cost ratio analysis was not relevant to the route selection process. That analysis would be presented to the Department of Transport as part of the submission of the business case for the Hereford Transport Package as a whole.

A member commented that there was an opportunity cost to the council of allocating funding to the HTP that could be used elsewhere and the council therefore had to demonstrate the value for money of that expenditure.

The PDWSP commented that once the preferred route was agreed further detailed work could be undertaken on active travel measures. Some major aspects of these measures were dependent upon the bypass, others could be progressed independently of it. Everything was being done in line with national guidance.

The Assistant Director Environment and Place (ADEP) commented that the council would have to make a decision based on overall value for money. That would be based on overall cost benefits when a decision to progress it was required and having regard to funding provided by government and what would be expected to be

provided locally. Development undertaken to date was in accordance with the Core Strategy and the Local Transport Plan.

- It was questioned to what extent the active travel measures and projects such as the university were dependent upon the bypass.
- Members proposed that it would be helpful if high level information to aid understanding the process of delivering a new road scheme were to be provided to members and the public.
- Members also proposed that presentations delivered to the Committee be made publicly available with the cabinet papers. Officers also acknowledged comments that setting out the 'summary of the suite of documents' more prominently would assist members and members of the public to access the information.
- It was asked whether there was any action the council could take to divert traffic from the A49 through the City onto the bypass if the existing route were not detrunked.

The CMI commented that detrunking would be a decision for the Secretary of State to take once the road had been built.

The ADEP commented that the Council was working closely with Highways England on the bypass scheme and active travel measures. Any measures with a bearing on the A49 if it were not detrunked would need to be agreed with the Department of Transport. However, the council controlled the other radial roads and working with Highways England a number of measures could be taken regardless of whether the A49 was detrunked.

The PDWSP added that the council would be able to influence the choice of route by drivers through signing and other measures. People would soon realise that it was quicker to use the bypass.

- Assurance was sought that the conclusions presented to the Committee were the result of a robust and objective process. It was requested that it be highlighted to the Committee where there were any report areas where the underlying studies and analyses may have been relatively incomplete or weak.

The ADEP commented that it had been emphasised to the consultants that the reports needed to be comprehensive. The technical process had been subject to independent review by Atkins, a separate consultancy. That had concluded that the process that WSP and BBLP had followed had been satisfactory and appropriate. Independent legal advice had also been sought and that had concluded that the paperwork to be presented to Cabinet was satisfactory to support the decision making process.

The independent reviews had not identified the absence of a response to the consultation from Highways England and Natural England as a weakness. As the briefing supplement issued to the Committee noted the project team was working closely with these and all other appropriate statutory bodies.

Members proposed that Natural England and Highways England should be requested to make a consultation response on the route selection, if they wished.

- It was observed that BBLP had not formally signed off the quality control section on the front of the reports before the Committee.

The Project Director BBLP (PDBBLP) confirmed that he had seen the reports and had submitted them to the Council. Subject to any updates, such as might arise as a result of the Committee's meeting, he was content to sign the final version.

Members proposed that it should be ensured that all reports presented to cabinet were formally signed off by BBLP, to provide assurance.

- Whilst there had not been a formal response from Highways England or Natural England to the consultation process it was asked if these bodies had made any

separate submissions or expressed opinions that it would have been appropriate to include in the information before the Committee.

The HID commented that whilst they were working closely with Highways England they had expressed no preference on the route. Highways England remained supportive of the scheme.

In relation to Natural England there were impacts associated with the scheme and work would continue with them to develop mitigation measures that were satisfactory to them.

The ADEP commented that Highways England had made clear on the public record that the bypass was a scheme Herefordshire Council was promoting. Highways England were part of Midlands Connect and that organisation's strategy included the Hereford bypass as an early priority. Highways England was therefore supportive of the principle of the bypass. As it was a council scheme they were consultees on the detail but were not responsible for choosing the route.

- The anxiety of residents needed to be recognised.
- In response to a question the PDBBLP commented that at this preliminary design stage the red route was some 270m from Belmont Abbey, 425m from Belmont House, 95 metres from Warham House and from the eastern side of the bypass it was some 100m to the edge of the community farm buildings. The route did clip the Warham farm outbuildings as it crossed the lane at lower Breinton.
- In relation to the economic viability of the Bay Horse Inn on King's Acre Road, the HID commented that construction of a roundabout in that location meant the approach to that would require some land from the corner of the Bay Horse car park. The building itself would not be affected; the access to it from King's Acre Road would require examination.
- On the subject of peak journey times the PDWSP commented that whichever route was agreed it would be tested in conjunction with the active travel measures. This would enable traffic flows and journey times to be assessed. This work remained to be done and the detail of the interaction between the bypass and the active travel measures was not known at the moment.
- It was suggested that given the volume of technical information a matrix summarising the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the routes and why the red route had been selected would be beneficial. The PDWSP commented that this could be done but this would not reflect the logic and the reasoning set out in the route selection report.

Members discussed this proposal but the consensus was that sufficient information was available within the existing documentation and the production of a summary should not form a recommendation.

- The documentation in a section on the impact on people and communities (appendix 3 section 13.6) referred to subjectivity in the assessment of views and a reliance on modelling that was 20 years old.

The HID commented that the DMRB standards were national standards to which local authorities and Highways England worked. A number of these were 20 years old but they remained the current standards that authorities were required to follow. The council would use new guidance as it was produced.

- With reference to public questions 14 and 15 the PDWSP commented that the standard of the road had not yet been decided. This depended on the traffic modelling work. If this indicated all or parts of the road needed to be dual carriageway this could be accommodated within the route corridor. An assessment had been carried out on noise and air quality. Overall the red route was the best performing route.

- In relation to reduction of HGV traffic through the City the PDWSP commented that this was not relevant to the selection of a preferred route because the same amount of diversion would be expected whichever route were to be selected. The assessment to date had focussed on comparing the relative impact of the routes. The benefits in air quality in noise reduction and from active travel measures had not been presented to the Committee.
- It was asked why, as local residents in the Belmont Rural ward had indicated a preference for the olive route, the red route been preferred at that point. The PDWSP stated that at that section of route it was clear that yellow, cyan and orange routes were worse in terms of noise. The choice between olive black 1 and red/black 2 was a much finer choice initially. In terms of noise levels, olive black 1 affected 12 properties, red black 2 affected 13. However, it would be difficult if not impossible to provide acceptable noise mitigation on olive black 1. It would involve noise bunds that would have an adverse impact on an historic environment and its setting. It would be much easier to provide noise reduction measures on red black 2 given the topography and this would not have the same impact on the historic setting.
- A question was asked as to whether in assessing consultation responses any greater weighting had been given to responses from organisations as opposed to individuals. The PDWSP explained how the report on the outcome of the consultation had been compiled including responses to the questionnaire and written responses. No relative weighting had been applied between questionnaire responses and written responses. The information that had been received had been presented in the report.
- The Environmental Lead, WSP commented on discussions with the Woodland Trust. The Trust had wanted to avoid impact on Drovers Wood and on ancient woodland and ancient veteran trees. The red route avoided Drovers Wood and avoided direct impact on ancient woodland. The red route had one of the lower impacts on ancient and veteran trees along its length.
- The HID commented that the detailed design would seek to mitigate the impact of the route.
- The PDWSP confirmed in relation to public question 3 that the increases in cost estimates applied to all routes. The red route was the second cheapest. However, cost had not influenced the choice of route. There was little difference between the routes in terms of traffic and engineering. Environmental and social impacts, including noise and the impact on the historic environment, had been strong differentiators.
- The HID outlined the provisions for compensation for those whose properties were directly affected. There was a frequently asked questions section on the council website and the council had offered support and advice. She confirmed that the council could consider discretionary powers.

Members proposed that a range of discretionary powers to compensate households impacted by the proposed route be considered and options presented back to this committee at the appropriate time.

- It was suggested that every effort should be made to ensure that good practice was followed in relation to measures to facilitate movement corridors for wildlife and people.

The HID commented that the detailed mitigation measures would be set out in the stage 3 consultation and if a planning application were made these would need to be included in an environmental statement. Part of the project brief was to achieve a net positive biodiversity gain.

Members proposed that detailed proposals on the biodiversity measures come back to this committee for their own scrutiny once a decision on a preferred route has been taken with a detailed design at an appropriate time.

- It was asked if account was being taken of lessons learned from other similar projects across the country.

The PDWSP commented that active travel measures were key in this regard and that was the single biggest lesson that had been learned by the industry. The bypass and the active travel measures were a package and it was crucial comprehensive measures were implemented to improve travelling conditions in the city for pedestrians and cyclists.

It was asked whether consideration of active traffic management techniques would form part of the future consideration of the project and contribute to more sophisticated traffic modelling.

The PDWSP commented that there were a number of simple measures identified in the consultation responses that would benefit pedestrians and cyclists, including being able to cross roads and negotiate junctions more easily and safely. It was important in considering more ambitious aspects of the package that these simple measures were not overlooked. There was a limit to what could be considered within the HTP. He understood the council was looking at other measures outside that package.

It was observed that it was important that lessons were learned from some active travel measures that had been implemented in the county that had not proved successful, for instance some cycle schemes. The ADEP commented that there was a wish to design schemes to the best possible standard. There were some exemplary schemes within the county and expert input was being sought. The council was part of the government's local cycling and walking infrastructure planning process giving access to additional support from the Department of Transport to design and develop plans for cycling and walking in the city.

Members proposed that detailed proposals on the active travel measures come back to the committee for their own scrutiny once a decision on a preferred route had been taken, with identification of those active travel measures that can go ahead regardless of delivery of the by-pass at the appropriate time.

*(The meeting adjourned between 13.07 and 13.55 pm.)*

- With reference to public question 10 it was remarked that Appendix 3 section 4.9.2 stated that it was assumed there was no scenario under which the Hereford Bypass would be constructed without the Southern Link Road (SLR) first being in place.

The ADEP referred to the paragraphs on this subject set out in the supplementary briefing note concluding that the SLR was a committed development and had no bearing on the choice of a preferred route.

- It was asked whether the level of consultation response was sufficient for weight to be given to it.

The PDWSP confirmed that the response was large enough to take account of the views submitted. All responses had been reviewed and assessed and taken into account. The specific views of specific businesses had not been taken on explicitly. In contrast, the response from Historic England was one to which particular regard had been had. Their response in relation to Belmont Park had expressed their view that red black 2 would be preferable having regard to the effect on the historic environment.

- The PDWSP explained that the company carried out similar work for many other local authorities, for Highways England and for the Welsh Government.
- In the consultation process the public had been provided with plans showing the lines of the route. However, these did not show the effect of the routes within the landscape of the numerous embankments and cuttings and enable the public to gain



a real impression of them. It was questioned whether an informed response could have been given in such circumstances and whether this undermined the consultation response.

The PDWSP commented that the usual approach had been followed. The Government process that had to be followed was based on proportionality. This meant giving sufficient information at the appropriate time to enable people to make reasonable and sensible decisions. It would be extremely expensive to provide such modelling along what was an 8km route. He did not consider that the consultation response had been undermined. It was normal not to provide that level of detail at this stage for a scheme that was so long and complex.

The PDBBLP confirmed that further work had been undertaken since the consultation but the information was only indicative. The detailed design work would provide full detail. At the moment there was a 50 metre corridor for each of the 7 options. Engineering drawings had been made to enable comparison of the 7 routes.

A Member recorded concern that detailed information had not been available for key locations and crossing points, noting with regard to cost that several stretches of the route coincided.

The ADEP commented that the design to date was for indicative purposes to enable comparisons to be made. The council had not determined the final design of the scheme.

- Appendix 3 (5.7.31) indicated that the national expectation was reductions in emissions would be achieved through improvements in vehicle technology. It was asked whether the modelling was assuming the same number of cars, and therefore no reduction in congestion, but reduced emissions as a consequence of this technological improvement.

The PDWSP commented that the issue did not have a bearing on the route selection. The traffic forecasting methodology was laid down by government. This took account of a range of factors including demographic change, fuel price and technology. The bypass and active travel measures would improve traffic flow and journey times through the city centre.

- It was questioned why percentages were used at some points in the reports and actual numbers at others. The PDWSP commented that the aim had been to provide both and that the full information was available within the documentation.
- A Member suggested that the statistics quoted by the CMI in his introduction in relation to those expressing support for a bypass required clarification in that the reference was to those who had responded to that question in the consultation document. Not all respondents had answered that question. The PDWSP commented that the figure quoted, that 59% of people supported the bypass, was in answer to a direct question within the consultation. Account could only be taken of those who answered specific questions.

Another Member noted that the relevant information was available within the consultation report.

- Page 30 of the consultation report 6.1.43 stated that people were negative about whether the scheme would meet its objectives. It was suggested that this should be explicitly considered moving forward to increase public confidence on this point.
- It was asked how, in view of the severe impacts it was stated the scheme would have, the claim that biodiversity would be improved would be monitored and evidenced, over what timeframe, and what action would be taken if it was found not have improved.

The HID reiterated that it the aim was to have net benefit biodiversity gain. The ADEP added that the question related to the detailed design and monitoring of the scheme not to the selection of the route. There would be a monitoring process and that would be set out at a later stage.

The ELWSP outlined the approach to mitigation, achieving biodiversity net gain and how this would be monitored and measured.

Members proposed that detailed proposals on the biodiversity measures were reported to the committee for their own scrutiny once a decision on a preferred route has been taken with a detailed design at an appropriate time.

- It had been stated that the red route had less impact on the Yazor Brook area. Clarification was sought on the mitigation proposed in that area.

The PDWSP commented that the red route crossed at a narrower part of the flood plain so it required a smaller structure to mitigate the effect. He confirmed that this required less concrete to be used and was cheaper.

- It was asked what the impacts were on the domestic and commercial water supply and whether the red route had a better or more detrimental impact.

The CMI commented that it was part of Welsh Water's Asset Management Programme to meet future demand in Hereford. It had no relevance to the road and route selection.

The ADEP added that Welsh Water's scheme would be delivered in advance of the road scheme. The detailed design of the road scheme would take account of the assets of Statutory Undertakers, in the same way as any other scheme would.

- It was asked whether regard had been had to neighbourhood development plans in particular Breinton NDP B15 and B16 where the new bridge would cross the river.

The ADEP commented that planning policies were set out in documentation and consultants had taken them into account. The Planning Coordinator, WSP stated that all adopted neighbourhood development plans were referred to in the route selection report and had been given weight.

- It was asked whether mindful of cost a decision in principle only should be taken on a preferred route until it was confirmed that the southern link road could be delivered as planned.

The HID explained the remit of the Public Inquiry relating to the exercise of powers to acquire land for the SLR. Discussions were ongoing with landowners and the inquiry would take place if agreement was not reached. The Inquiry would deal specifically with land required for that scheme alone.

The ADEP commented that the costs identified in the report were the costs of doing the next stage of work. Any impact would be on the delivery timescale of the bypass. The Core Strategy envisaged the bypass being delivered part way through the core strategy period to enable growth in Hereford to take place.

The CMI added that it was likely that slippage in the programme would mean increased cost. The intention was to avoid this and deliver the scheme as quickly as possible.

- A planning inspector had stated that the HTP route decision should be delegated to the Hereford Area Plan (HAP). It was questioned what implications there were of taking a decision on a route ahead of that Plan.

The CMI commented that the HAP would take account of the decision on the route.

- In response to a question about the loss of grade 1 and 2 agricultural land the PDBBLP commented that this amounted to some 50 hectares and there was very little difference in land take between the routes.
- It was asked what areas of the decision relating to the selection of the red route caused the most concern in each topic area.

The PDWSP commented that he was confident that the documentation produced represented a sound professional piece of work that correctly identified the relative advantages and disadvantages of the options and enabled the routes to be compared against one another in a consistent way leading to the conclusion as to which was the best performing route overall.

The ADEP added that the assessment highlighted the issues that had been taken into account. The body of work stood as a whole.

- A Member commented that the Committee had been examining whether the appropriate evidence base had been assembled and whether the process and analysis and decision making was robust to support the selection of the red route. He had not observed any weaknesses in the approach that had been taken. The Committee should be cautious if it was minded to recommend any fundamentally different outcomes.

A majority of members indicated support for the selection of the red route.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That (a) the executive be recommended:**

- I. **that Natural England and Highways England are requested that they make a consultation response on the route selection, if they wish;**
  - II. **the landlord and the operators of Hereford Community Farm be asked if they would be prepared to write a statement as to the impact of the preferred route on the deliverability of their service;**
  - III. **presentations delivered to the scrutiny committee be made publicly available with the cabinet member papers; and**
  - IV. **it be ensured that all reports presented to cabinet are formally signed off by BBLP, to provide assurance;**
- (b) the executive be advised that the committee feels able to support the proposed red route based on the current evidence presented, subject to the above recommendations;**
- (c) a high level members briefing seminar for all members on understanding the process of delivering a new road scheme be provided, from which councillors can disseminate that understanding to members of the public and the information be placed on the council website;**
- (d) detailed proposals on the active travel measures come back to the committee for their own scrutiny once a decision on a preferred route has been taken, with identification of those active travel measures that can go ahead regardless of delivery of the by-pass at the appropriate time;**
- (e) detailed proposals on the biodiversity measures come back to this committee for their own scrutiny once a decision on a preferred route has been taken with a detailed design at an appropriate time; and**

- (f) a range of discretionary powers to compensate households impacted by the proposed route are considered and options are presented back to this committee at the appropriate time.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 10 September 2018 at 10:15 am.

**Appendix 1 - public questions and answers**

**Appendix 2 - Presentation 18 July 2018**

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm

**CHAIRMAN**

draft

## **PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO GENERAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18 July 2018**

### Question 1

**Mr J Milln - Hereford**

The impacts on society and well-being of the proposed red route (as indeed all routes) - bad enough already - are shown by the Equality Impact Assessment to be have a disproportionately adverse impact on the less advantaged. In respect of its bypass how does the Council propose therefore to comply with section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which places a duty upon it to advance equality of opportunity?

### **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

### **Supplementary Question**

Disturbingly the council's response to my question shows that it believes that to comply with its duty under the 2010 equality act to advance equality of opportunity it needs only to demonstrate a 'process of assessment and review'. Further, the council concedes that the proposed road has the potential to impact disproportionately upon the disabled and other less advantaged groups, even presuming beneficial impacts for them (see appendix 7 table 9). Yet, even its assessment acknowledges (section 5.2.9) would likely render the community farm at Wareham that provides land based therapy for the disabled unviable. That so, will the committee kindly advise the cabinet to abandon its road or at the very least withdraw its mendacious claim in respect of the disabled?

### **Response**

The committee explored the issues raised by your question and have recommended to Cabinet that further information be sought from the community farm about the impacts of the proposed route on its viability.

### Question 2

**Mr J Lewis - Marden**

As demographics dictate that more roads are not required why would new road building be in the public interest?

### **Response**

Thank you for your question. The query that you raise does not form part of the proposed decision of Cabinet which the committee will be scrutinising. The rationale for a new road has been explored through the Local Plan Core Strategy and Local Transport Plan processes and informed the decisions of full Council when they adopted these plans.

### Question 3

#### **Mrs E Morawiecka - Breinton**

According to the Resource Implications table in the main report, the cost estimates of all the routes have increased since the Spring 2018 consultation by 17-18%. The preferred Red Route cost has increased by over £24million from a figure of less than £129million in the Spring 2018 consultation to a current cost estimate of £153million.

How does the increased cost of this road affect the Benefit Cost Ratio of the "Bypass" project, which I was unable to find in the main report to the committee?

#### **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

#### **Supplementary**

The inquiry on the core strategy local plan planning inspector said the by-pass risks viability of the whole plan. The answer provided in the supplement says the benefits costs ratio does not form part of the methodology for determining a route for the by-pass. However, the cabinet and the general scrutiny committee are being asked at recommendation C to inform future decisions on the Hereford Transport Package for maximum cost of £2.45m. According to the report to full Council on 13th July, Herefordshire Council is having to borrow all of the £2.45m referred to in this report. If the road fails to show that it will deliver best value for money over any alternatives, why would HC wish to pursue any route if they will not secure government funding and this route will make the whole core strategy economically unviable. Where is the assessment of value for money for this road project and a comparison against the alternatives to inform both the scrutiny committee and the cabinet?

#### **Response**

Major schemes of this nature rightly require a significant amount of assessment and feasibility work; as the development of the scheme progresses the level of detail increases. In order to progress those assessments, which at this next stage will include benefits cost ratio, it is necessary to invest in the appropriate technical expertise, research and analysis. The strategic outline business case referenced in the resources section of the draft cabinet report provides an initial assessment of options and this assessment is reviewed and refined as the project moves forward in accordance with the recognised methodology for such schemes. The approach taken to establish value-for-money for the Hereford Transport Package has followed the approach laid down by the Department for Transport's WebTAG process. This recommends a proportionate approach to be adopted at all stages of scheme development. The value-for-money assessment will consist of an assessment of the costs and benefits of the Bypass with the Active Travel Measures as set out in that guidance.

We previously developed a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) in 2015 and this is available on the Council's website

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/13069/hereford\\_transport\\_package\\_strategic\\_outline\\_business\\_case\)](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/13069/hereford_transport_package_strategic_outline_business_case)

The SOBC indicated a strong value-for money.

We will produce an Outline Business Case (OBC) later in 2018. This will combine the costs of both the bypass and the Active Travel Measures, with the benefits of the full HTP. The OBC will be presented to the Department for Transport for their consideration.

It should be noted that the issue of value-for-money is not relevant to the choice of bypass corridor.

#### Question 4

##### **Mrs J Richards – Hereford**

The consultation report mentions that a number of phase 1 consultation responses were not included in the Phase 1 report and analysis and that matters concerning funding and the environment were not included in the consultation. With no written responses published for either Highways England or Natural England for the Phase 2 consultation, how can the public be confident that all the Phase 2 consultation responses have been correctly analysed and reported for the Cabinet decision?

##### **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

##### **Supplementary**

I asked if there were written responses from Highways England and Natural England, surely this means that the consultations of the conclusion and the consultation report may be inaccurate and the scrutiny committee does not have all the information that they need to scrutinise effectively.

##### **Response**

The committee explored the issues raised by your question. It was explained that both organisations were engaged in the scheme development, but had not responded to the consultation. The committee have recommended to Cabinet that both organisations be invited to provide their views.

#### Question 5

##### **Mrs V Wegg-Prosser - Breinton**

Appendix 6 of the Hereford Transport Package Report to this Committee contains an impressive list of active travel measures (ATMs) in 11 movement corridors across Hereford. They involve better use of public space, junction improvements for non-motorised traffic, crossing improvements on main roads, and enhancement of existing traffic free paths. Implementing these ATMs will be proportionate to the Council's obligation to reduce private car dependency in Hereford. Can the Committee please be assured that the action to implement the Hereford Bypass is justified in terms of proportionality, before these reasonable and achievable ATMs have been developed and implemented? If the assurance cannot be given, then the Committee should recommend to Cabinet that the ATMs be introduced before the Bypass development goes ahead.

##### **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked

for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

### Question 6

#### **Mr P Chapman – Breinton**

The HTP report says that the aim of the bypass is to “Enable the improvement of regional connectivity by achieving acceptable peak hour journey times on the A49 through the city”. Can you define what is an acceptable peak hour journey time on the A49 through the City, and what comparisons of journey times have been made compared to similar sized towns/cities?

#### **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

#### **Supplementary**

The supplementary reply cannot be right. Paragraph 1 said detailed traffic modelling is to be undertaken and that conflicts with paragraph 4 about monitoring of journey times. Para 4 is obviously ‘tosh’ otherwise nobody would use the tube. Can I be sure that the council has assessed the success of the previous A49 route alterations in terms of journey times? For instance the A49 by-pass at the town of Weaverham promised alleviation of congestion, economic growth and better living standards just like Hereford. However, twenty years later in their design and parish landscape statement they said that the High Street is very narrow and that it’s insufficient for some of the heavy goods vehicles that continue to use it, and the large scale developments may add to this problem. Because of this it has in recent years been overwhelmed by modern traffic which has contributed to it decline as a commercial centre. After this road building failure, doesn’t it seem perverse that Herefordshire Council is seeking to follow this disastrous route which will lead to a decline in our city and can the chair tell me when comparative traffic flow information will be properly open to scrutiny before the decision of the preferred route?

#### **Response**

The committee explored the issues raised by your question. Traffic modelling will be undertaken as part of the next phase of development. Comparison of average journey times with other cities are not appropriate given the significant range of variables involved relating to each location.

### Question 7

#### **Mr S Williams – Hereford**

In the Foreword to the bypass consultation document it is stated that "without new infrastructure, we will have no chance of delivering our ambitious plans to establish a world class university". Does this mean that if the bypass is not built, there can, and will, be no university?



## **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

## Question 8

### **Mr R Palgrave – How Caple**

The final recommendation for pre-decision scrutiny today seeks authorisation for further expenditure to progress work to inform future decisions on the Hereford Transport Package. In support, on page 15 under "Alternative Options", the report says, "Not progressing this work will mean the HTP objectives and core strategy growth targets cannot be achieved."

To allow this claim to be given appropriate weight, would the Scrutiny Committee ask that Cabinet publish any evidence relied on during development of the core strategy to support the assertion (in Appendix 5 of the Core Strategy on page 46) that only circa 4800 indicative net housing could be delivered prior to delivery of the Hereford Relief Road by 2027?

## **Response**

Thank you for your question. The query that you raise does not form part of the proposed decision of Cabinet which the committee will be scrutinising. The rationale and evidence base for a new road and growth targets has been explored through the Local Plan Core Strategy and Local Transport Plan processes and informed the decisions of full Council when they adopted these plans.

## **Supplementary**

(repeated original question)

## **Response:**

The information that you are requesting was published as part of the core strategy and local transport plan preparations and is available at:

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/123/adopted\\_core\\_strategy](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/123/adopted_core_strategy)

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200185/local\\_plan/137/local\\_plan\\_-\\_core\\_strategy/1](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200185/local_plan/137/local_plan_-_core_strategy/1)

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200136/travel\\_and\\_transport/220/local\\_transport\\_plan/1](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200136/travel_and_transport/220/local_transport_plan/1)

## Question 9

### **Dr N Geeson – Hereford**

The consultation report makes no mention of any written responses from Highways England or Natural England. If they have been part of ongoing discussions rather than responding to the consultation, why are these documents not publicly available?

## **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

## **Supplementary**

On page 325 of appendix 1 – we read this from the Campaign for Better Transport: 'like the woodland trust we doubt that either of the two proposed bridging points over the river wye does actually avoid ancient woodland as claimed'. I know that the woodland trust met with Herefordshire Council on 22 February to talk about the threat to woodland from a by-pass. Especially about their own Drovers Wood, but there is no mention of their views in these scrutiny agenda documents. Why not? And how many other unreported consultations from other organisation are missing and cannot be scrutinised?

## **Response**

The committee explored the issue of unreported consultation responses raised by your question and received confirmation that all responses received are referenced. A number of meetings were held with interested parties, at their request, to provide them with further information. However not all organisations then went on to respond to the consultation.

## Question 10

### **Ms D Toynbee - Hereford**

The first stage of the Hereford 'Bypass' - the Southern Link Road - is not a confirmed project. Land acquisition is contingent on compulsory purchase orders being confirmed, which could take until 2019, after the public inquiry this autumn. A second planning application awaits permission, and the business case to release £27m from the Department for Transport has still not been submitted! To avoid a potential waste of public money funding a third consultation on the preferred route for the 'Bypass', and developing a detailed design for the road, would it not be prudent to wait until we know if the Southern Link Road is viable?

## **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

## Question11

### **Mrs C Palgrave – How Caple**

It is reported that in the HTP public consultation only 1789 questionnaires (out of 4351, equalling 41%) showed support for a bypass and that only 1747 respondents (40%) answered the question "Which Bypass route would you prefer?" A significantly higher number (2427) of respondents said active travel measures should be included in the Package. Does this not clearly indicate that active travel measures should be a higher priority than building the bypass?

## **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

## Question 12

### **H Powers – Breinton**

The consultation report states that Red route had the second lowest level of support from respondents. To what extent were the views of residents taken account of in selecting the Red route as the preferred option?

## **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

## **Supplementary**

More organisations who responded to the consultation were against any of the route options, including the red route, than those who were in favour. Were the responses from organisations appropriately weighted when compared to individual response?

## **Response**

The committee explored the issues raised by your question. Responses from organisations were, appropriately, given the same weighting as those from individuals.

## Question 13

### **Ms K Sharp - Hereford**

In the recent Statement of Case for the SLR, there is reference to an 'area wide transport model' created on SATURN (in appendix - Mrs Sharp, objection letter number 14, point 5) to inform how journey times would allegedly significantly improve in the South Wye once the SLR is built. To date there has been no sign of the model or its findings. Please now supply the raw data as well as the results of the model and evidence please that a similar model has been created and analysed by the Cabinet as part of the proposed decision to select a preferred route for Hereford bypass as part of the Hereford Transport package.

## **Response**

Thank you for your question. The query that you raise in relation to the Southern Link Road does not form part of the proposed decision of Cabinet which the committee will be scrutinising. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet in relation to the Hereford Transport Package and will ensure that the issue you raised in relation to this is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

#### Question 14

##### **L Stephens - Hereford**

The cabinet report claims that one of the objectives of the Hereford Transport package is to reduce the impacts of noise and air quality from transport within the city. How will the red route achieve this when it is designated to be a 60mph trunk road passing through residential housing estates of over 2000 new homes inside the city boundary.

##### **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

#### Question 15

##### **Mr A Gilliat - Breinton**

Having witnessed capacity problems with the Worcester bypass and seeing Roman Road already becoming choked, how can a single carriageway version around Hereford become other than a circular traffic jam?

##### **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

#### Question 16

##### **Mr S Allen - Hereford**

The Hereford western bypass is ostensibly intended to reduce traffic on the A49 through Hereford city. It is also intended to facilitate the building of 6,500 new homes in the western part of the city. The residents of those new homes would, on a conservative estimate, own perhaps 10,000 cars, which they would use to travel into Hereford city centre. What projections has Herefordshire Council obtained to show that the resulting increase in local traffic using the A49 at, for example, the "Old Market" roundabout junction with the A438, would not be greater than the corresponding decrease in through traffic which would use the bypass instead?

##### **Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.

#### Question 17

##### **Mr T Kidson, Hereford**

We would like you to evaluate the cost and benefits of park and ride, electric buses and safe cycleways for Hereford before any further work is done on the bypass. Please advise.

**Response**

Thank you for your question. The committee will be scrutinising the evidence and rationale for the proposed decision of Cabinet and will ensure that this issue is explored. I have asked for further information on this point to be published in advance of the committee meeting to inform our consideration of the matter.



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<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>General Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>18 July 2018</b>
	<b>HEREFORD TRANSPORT PACKAGE (HTP) – SUPPLEMENTARY BRIEFING RE ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b>

## **Introduction**

Herefordshire Council's Cabinet is due to consider reports and recommendations regarding the Hereford Transport Package which will include considering the preferred route for the bypass at a meeting on Friday 27 July 2018 at 10am.

In advance of this, the council's General Scrutiny Committee has called in the decision for pre-decision scrutiny; and will consider the issue on Wednesday 18 July 2018 at 10am.

The report for General Scrutiny Committee, associated technical reports and appendices were available to view on the council's website from 19:00 on 10 July 2018 and members of the public and elected members were, in accordance with the council's constitution, able to submit written questions to the committee by 5pm 12 July 2018.

A total of 14 valid questions have been submitted and a further three valid questions submitted for the committee meeting held on 2 July have been re-directed by the Monitoring Officer to this meeting. No questions were received from elected members.

Responses to the 17 questions have been published. Where questions relate to the proposed decision under scrutiny, the issues raised by the questioner will be explored by the committee. To inform their consideration of these issues this supplement provides clarifications, information, and where appropriate highlights the relevant parts of the technical papers published as part of the proposed cabinet report, by reference to the question number.

## **Issues:**

### **1. Equality Impact Assessment Approach**

A comprehensive Equality Impact Assessment Screening Report has been produced as part of the delivery of this project and the recent consultation and is contained in Appendix 7 of the cabinet report. This report considers the potential impact of the bypass project on vulnerable people and this report will ensure that any decision made about the project reflects the Council's equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.

This report does not indicate that the Red Route, or any of the route options, will have a disproportionate adverse impact on the less advantaged. It identifies that there are certain protected characteristic groups (gender, age, disability and pregnancy and maternity) which have the potential to be disproportionately impacted and which need to be considered at every stage of the project.

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The council's equality impact assessment process will provide a means of developing mitigation where required and will also identify how the benefits to these groups can be realised in the detailed design of both the bypass and the Active Travel Measures; a full equality impact assessment will be developed to inform the next decision. The preparation of an Equality Impact Screening Report is the appropriate level of assessment at this stage of scheme development. It will ensure that as the project goes forward, the potential impacts of the scheme on protected characteristics groups are properly assessed, and through this process of assessment and review the council demonstrates its compliance with its public sector equality duty.

### 3. Current Scheme Cost Estimates and the Assessment of Value for Money:

Detailed information on the estimated scheme costs are contained with Appendix 2 to the cabinet report and summarised within the Resources Implications paragraphs of the cabinet report.

The latest estimated costs for each bypass route corridor have been developed on a consistent basis across all route corridors and are presented as current year 2018 prices. This is to ensure a fair comparison for route selection purposes based on an assumed standard for the road at this stage of development. Whilst the estimates for the different route corridors range from £149m to £166m, the assessment undertaken to identify a recommended preferred route has not identified the cost of the scheme as a key differentiating factor.

The costs for schemes of this kind are regularly updated as a project progresses to ensure estimates are presented in current prices taking into account inflation and refinements to the detail of projects, in accordance with Government guidance. The spring 2018 consultation cost estimates were based on 2016 prices, the current cost estimates are based on 2018 prices as the design and risk assessment of the seven shortlisted routes has progressed since the consultation.

Once a route is chosen work will be done to confirm the design and standard for the scheme prior to confirming the cost estimate for the scheme to be delivered. At this point a further review of cost estimates will be undertaken prior to a decision to proceed.

The Benefits Cost Ratio for a scheme is part of the basis on which Government assesses the overall benefits to society of investment in infrastructure. It does not form part of the methodology for determining a preferred route corridor for a bypass. Once a preferred route corridor is selected, further technical and modelling work will be undertaken to develop the required business case for submission to the Department for Transport. This will be based on the detailed design of the preferred route for the bypass and package of active travel measures and will include a Benefits Cost Ratio to enable a comparison of the overall costs of taking forward the scheme against the benefits which would accrue for this investment.

### 4. 9. & 12. Consultation with the public and stakeholders

The Phase 2 Public Consultation Report is included in Appendix 1 of the cabinet report. This sets out a detailed analysis of the results of that consultation and includes the full details of responses received from organisations in Appendix F of that report. The council invited a wide range of organisations to respond to the consultation and over 30 responded representing a wide range of environmental, social and business interests.

Not all statutory organisations chose to respond directly to the public consultation; responses were not received from either Natural England or Highways England. However, the project team is working closely with all appropriate statutory bodies and will continue to do so throughout the development of the scheme. Natural England have been to the site to see the shortlist of route options and the issues associated the route selection process. Given that the A49 is a trunk road, the project team has been



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meeting regularly with Highways England to ensure they fully understand the development of the scheme. Highways England has been supportive of the council's approach to developing this scheme and have provided funding towards development costs.

The absence of a consultation response at this stage does not invalidate the option appraisal process. Future consultation in phase 3 and any planning approval process will provide further opportunities for the two statutory bodies, and any other interested parties, to provide their views.

Detailed analysis of the responses to questions about the bypass and seven possible bypass routes are set out in the consultation report contained within Appendix 1 of the cabinet report. 59% of respondents indicated their support for a bypass. Many of these respondents support the delivery of the scheme and did not express their preference for a route – they simply wish the scheme to be delivered.

Only 40% of the total number of respondents chose to answer the question asking them to select a route or state a preference for a particular route. Of these only 20% of all respondents chose to rank all seven possible routes. Given this it is difficult to be conclusive over the public's preferences over the different route options, although the overall support for a by-pass as part of the package is clear. The recommendation that the red route be the preferred route results from it being the best performing route from the technical assessment as detailed in appendices 4 and 5 of the report to cabinet and the consultation report does not support any other recommendation.

#### 5. 11. & 17. Active Travel Measures:

The inclusion of Active Travel Measures as part of a Hereford Transport Package has been identified throughout the scheme development as crucial to achieving the overall objectives of the package. The Local Transport Plan makes clear the importance of encouraging greater use of walking, cycling and public transport. Appendix 6 of the cabinet report contains a detailed update on the development of the walking, cycling, public transport and public realm projects that could form part of the Hereford Transport Package. The Phase 2 Consultation Report highlights that the Active Travel Measures (ATM) are widely supported and should be taken forward.

In order to achieve the objectives of the Hereford Transport Package, both a bypass and active travel measures are required. Many of the measures indicated in the ATM report would not be deliverable without the bypass, most obviously those proposed on the existing A49 through the city. Without the bypass, giving greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists in these locations would lead to increased congestion for road vehicles. The bypass is required to remove traffic from the centre of the city to provide the opportunity for these measures to be introduced. Further development of these measures will continue following the selection of a route for the bypass and this work will include an assessment of locations where it may be possible to deliver improvements in advance and as the bypass is delivered. This would be the subject of further reports.

#### 6. Journey Times and Regional Connectivity

The assessments undertaken indicate that the traffic benefits of the Hereford Transport Package are broadly similar regardless of the choice of route corridor for the bypass. Once a preferred route is selected, detailed traffic modelling will be undertaken as part of the next stage of scheme development.

The bypass has been identified as a priority within the Midlands Connect Regional Transport Strategy. It will enable north-south through traffic on the A49 to avoid the centre of the city, providing more reliable journeys for long distance movements and improving regional connectivity between England and Wales and also within the West Midlands Region.

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In addition, improved resilience of the road network associated with the provision of a new river crossing will improve conditions for long distance regional journeys supporting business and the economy of the region.

Monitoring of journey times within Hereford shows that current average speeds on the network are amongst the lowest of any city in the country and at peak times can be lower than central London. The impact of this on the local economy is considered unacceptable.

## 7. Benefits to University Development

The bypass is an integral part of the Hereford Transport Package, taking through traffic away from the centre of the city and allowing many other journeys starting and/or finishing in Hereford to do likewise. The bypass will provide the additional network capacity which will enable the planned growth set out in the Core Strategy to be delivered. Without it the planned growth in housing and employment and economic benefits cannot be achieved. The need for the bypass to support the delivery of a successful University in Hereford is clearly set out in the response from the NMITE team to the consultation in the report contained in Appendix 1 of the cabinet report. The response sets out how the bypass will reduce congestion and enable the city to flourish and fulfil its potential as a tranquil place to study, work and visit, enable students to enjoy the public realm and enable Hereford to develop into an attractive university city.

## 10. Southern Link Road and the Hereford Transport Package

The Southern Link Road forms part of the South Wye Transport Package which is a separate project and seeks to address transport problems within the south of the city. The Southern Link Road (SLR) is a confirmed scheme, having received planning approval in 2016.

Funding for the project has been secured from Growth Fund, with the final business case to be submitted to the Department for Transport when tender prices are known in the autumn. This is the normal process for funding of infrastructure schemes.

The Public Inquiry in relation to the Compulsory Purchase and Side Road orders for the scheme is scheduled to commence in late October. Subject to the outcome of this process the land required to commence construction in spring 2019 would be secured. This Inquiry is not a planning inquiry and will determine the council's case for acquiring any land which cannot be secured by negotiation.

There is a robust case for the SLR based on the benefits it will deliver for the south wye area and the Hereford Enterprise Zone.

There is no reason not to progress the development of the Hereford Transport Package, including the selection of a preferred route for a bypass. All route options for the bypass have a common starting point at on the A465 where there would be a roundabout to connect with the SLR and the A465.

## 14. Noise & Air Quality

The impacts of possible routes on air quality and noise have been assessed in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively within the Stage 2 Environmental Assessment Report which is contained in Appendix 3 of the cabinet report.

Air quality and noise modelling concluded that overall, the proposed scheme is predicted to redistribute traffic that currently goes through Hereford onto the bypass, leading to improvements in air quality in the centre of Hereford. This will mean improved air quality and reduced noise associated with traffic on homes, schools and communities adjacent to the existing A49. The implementation of

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Active Travel Measures within the city centre would also contribute to improving the environment for those living and working within the area.

The delivery of bypass will have minimal impact on air quality in the area surrounding the new road as the route will be mostly free flowing and not stop start as is the case currently at peak times on the existing A49 and subsequently emissions will disperse quickly in the surrounding area. Noise assessment information contained with the Stage 2 Environmental Assessment report contained in Appendix 3 of the cabinet report sets out that with mitigation the increase in noise at any affected properties can be reduced.

#### 15. Bypass design and capacity.

The design standard of the bypass is yet to be determined. For the purposes of route comparison a design standard has been assumed to enable a route selected for further development and detailed design. This detailed work will include traffic modelling which will inform the final standard of the bypass on the red route. This work will ensure that the road standard can accommodate traffic growth in future years.

#### 16. Traffic Growth / Congestion Relief

The delivery of the bypass will enable significant growth in housing and employment as set out in the council's adopted Core Strategy. Growth in housing will have associated growth in traffic, however with a bypass in place it is predicted that there will be relief to the existing A49 and other routes in the wider Hereford area with decreases in delay per vehicle and improved journey times by taking the longer distance strategic journeys out of the city and on to the bypass.

Modelling work is ongoing and is currently progressing to inform the Department for Transport business case. The Hereford Transport Package will reduce the number of shorter distance car journeys that are currently a prevalent factor in the levels of congestion in the city. By moving strategic trips out of the city and onto the bypass we can create a safer environment for walking, cycling and public transport trips.

The business case will also include an Options Assessment Report outlining the work assessing and sifting a variety of transport interventions that best meet the objectives of the Hereford Transport Package. As set out in the Phase 2 consultation and Active Travel Measures reports cycleways and other ATM projects are a key component of the Hereford Transport Package.





# Hereford Transport Package

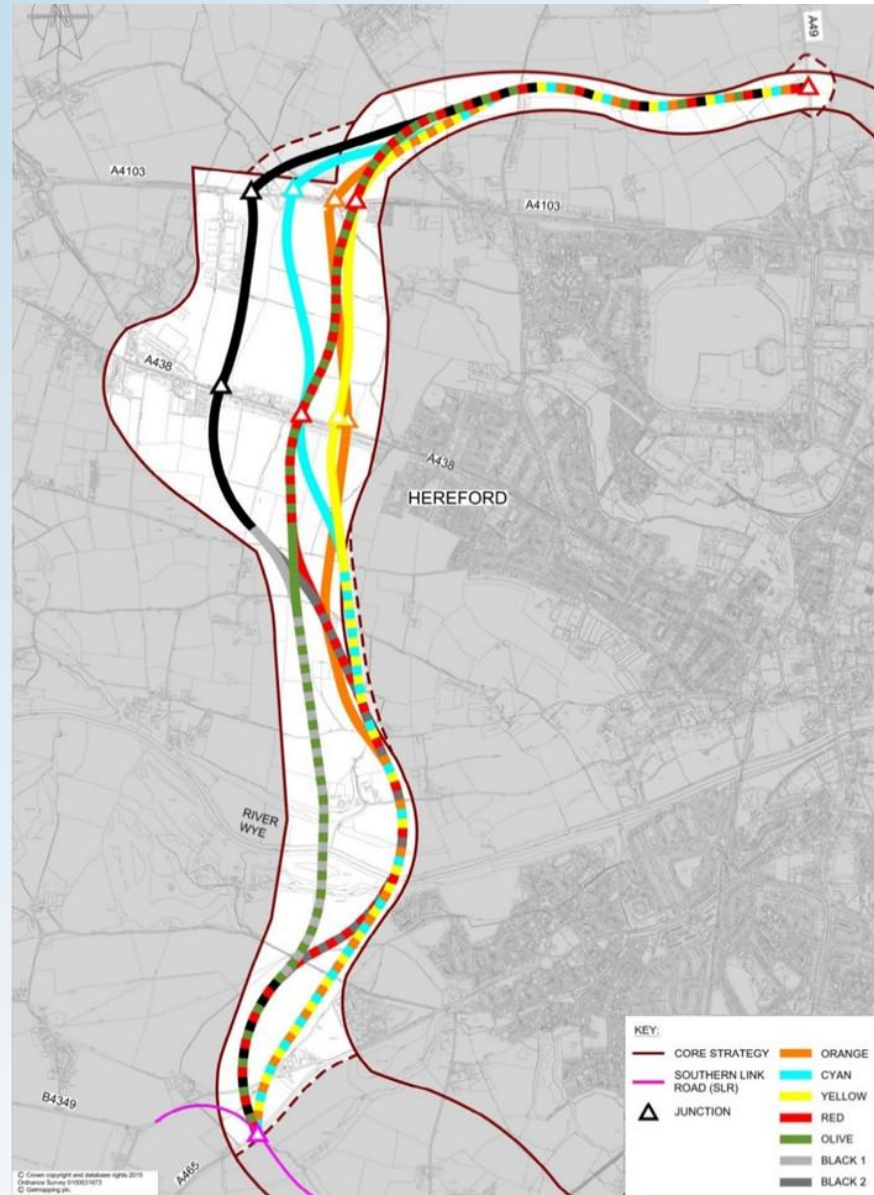


**Balfour Beatty**

 Herefordshire Council

Working for Herefordshire

# Consultation Film



**Balfour Beatty**



Working for Herefordshire

# Cabinet Report

## The purpose of the report to cabinet:

- To consider feedback to the HTP Phase 2 consultation
- To be advised of the assessment of the shortlist of possible bypass route corridors
- To consider the recommended preferred bypass route corridor
- To be updated about the development of associated active travel projects
- To confirm Phase 3 consultation.



# Cabinet Report

## Recommendations

- (a) having regard to the feedback to the HTP Phase 2 consultation report, the Stage 2 Scheme Assessment Report, the Stage 2 Environmental Assessment Report, the Route Selection Report and the Preferred Route Report, the red route (as identified in Appendix 5) be approved as the preferred route for further scheme development for the Hereford bypass;**
- (b) subject to approval of recommendation (a) above, a further round (phase 3) of consultation on the detailed proposals for a scheme based on the red route corridor and complementary active travel measures be undertaken to gather stakeholder feedback to assist with informing a future decision by Cabinet to confirm the route for the bypass and recommended active travel measures which will together form the Hereford Transport Package, prior to submission for planning and other necessary permissions;**
- (c) the director for economy, communities and corporate be authorised to take all necessary steps to progress detailed design and, consultation including commissioning external professional advisers as required to inform future decisions on the Hereford Transport Package to a maximum cost of £2.45m**



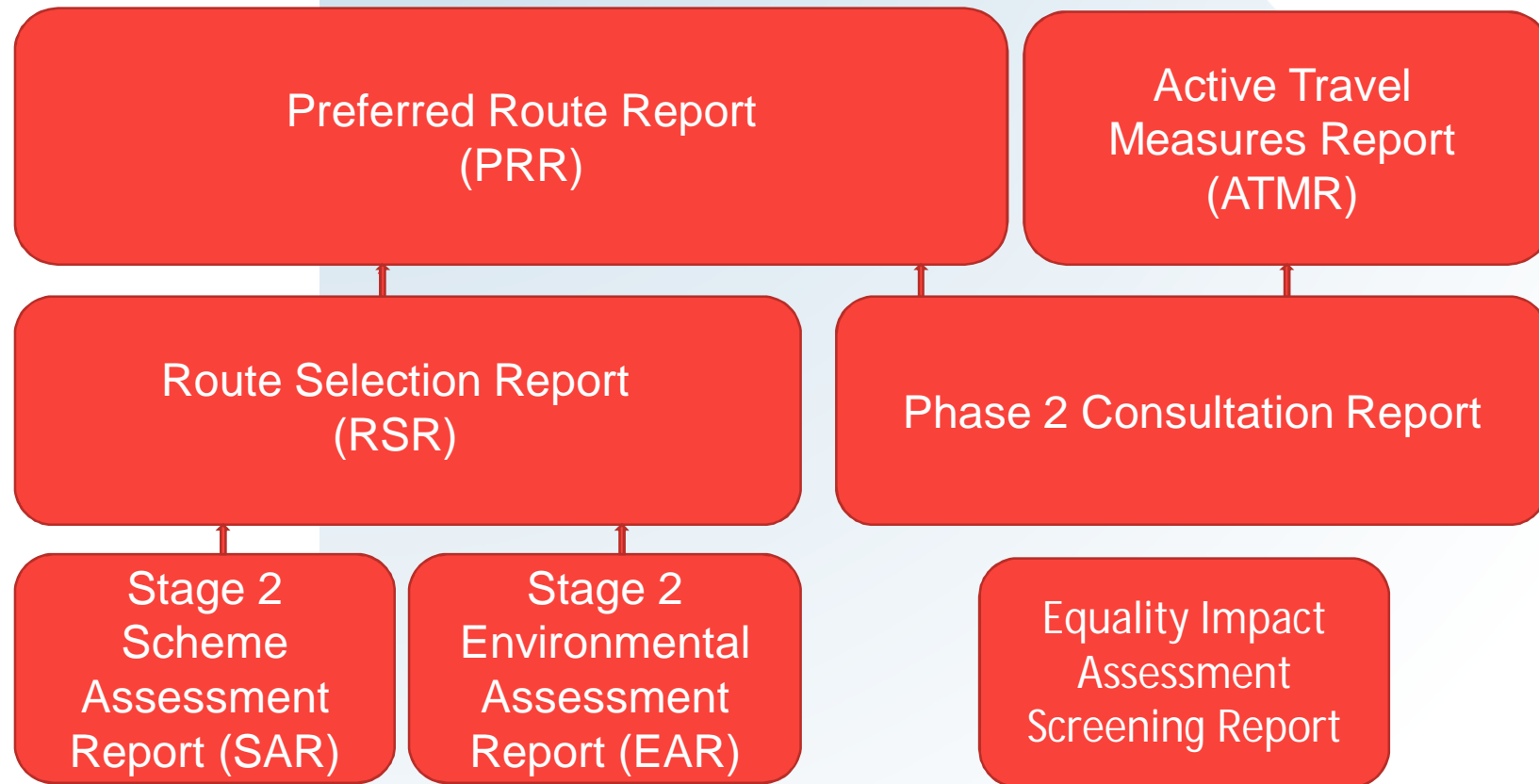
# Cabinet Report

## Key Considerations

- Consultation Feedback
- Impact Assessment
- Route Comparison – Route Selection
- Preferred Route Recommendation
- Active Travel Measure Development

# Assessment Process

A comprehensive suite of reports



# Route Selection Report (RSR)

## Key Findings

Traffic and engineering & cost considerations were very similar between all seven route options

The key differences were identified as environmental and social (ie impact on ecology, heritage and landscape, and impact on communities such as noise and severance)

The Red Route was identified as the best performing route option

# Phase 2 Consultation Report

## Key Findings

4624 responses received from statutory and non-statutory organisations, and local residents (4351 questionnaires and 273 written responses)

68% agreed that the HTP objectives will address the transport problems in Hereford and enable growth

59% agreed a bypass should be part of the package

All routes received a degree of support but there was no clear overall preference for any of the seven route options

87% agreed walking, cycling, bus and public realm improvements should be part of the package

Overall strong support for the Hereford Transport Package

# Preferred Route Report

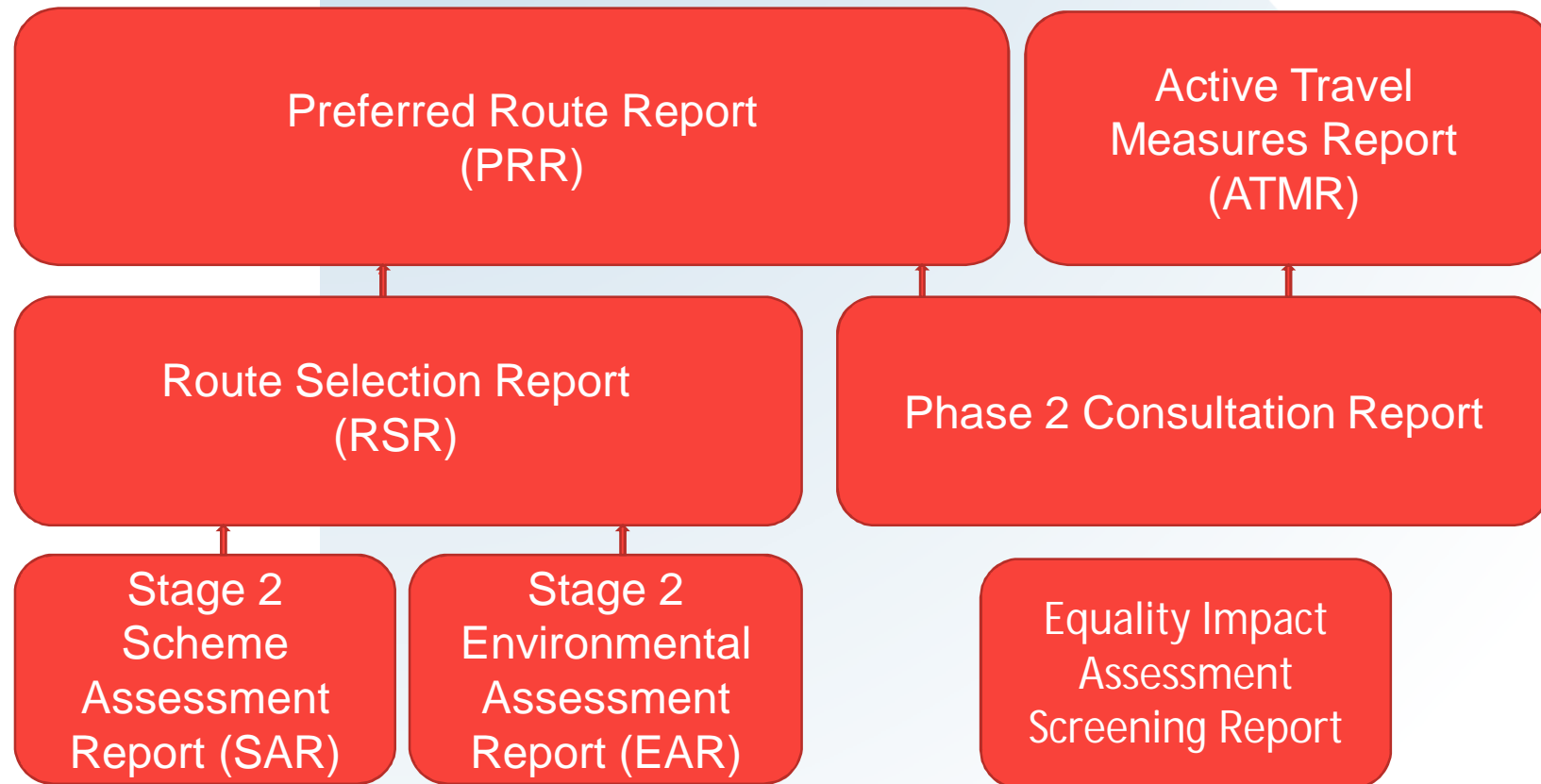
## Key Findings

The report recommends the Red Route Corridor option as the Preferred Route for the Hereford Bypass based on:-

- The Red Route was the best performing route following the traffic, engineering and environmental assessments
- The Phase 2 Consultation confirmed support for a bypass but there was no clear preference for any one option

# Assessment Process

A comprehensive suite of reports



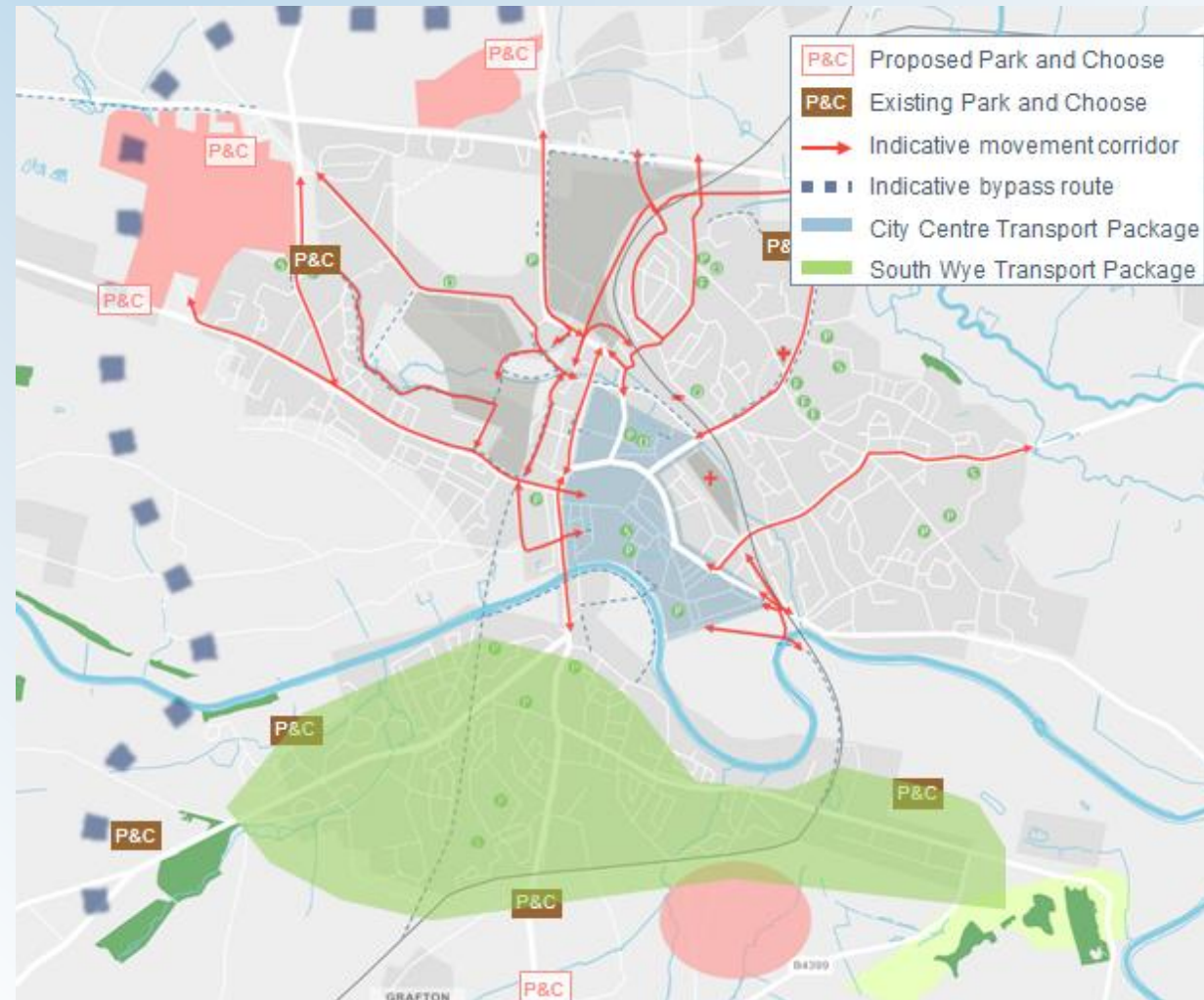
# Active Travel Measures

Walking

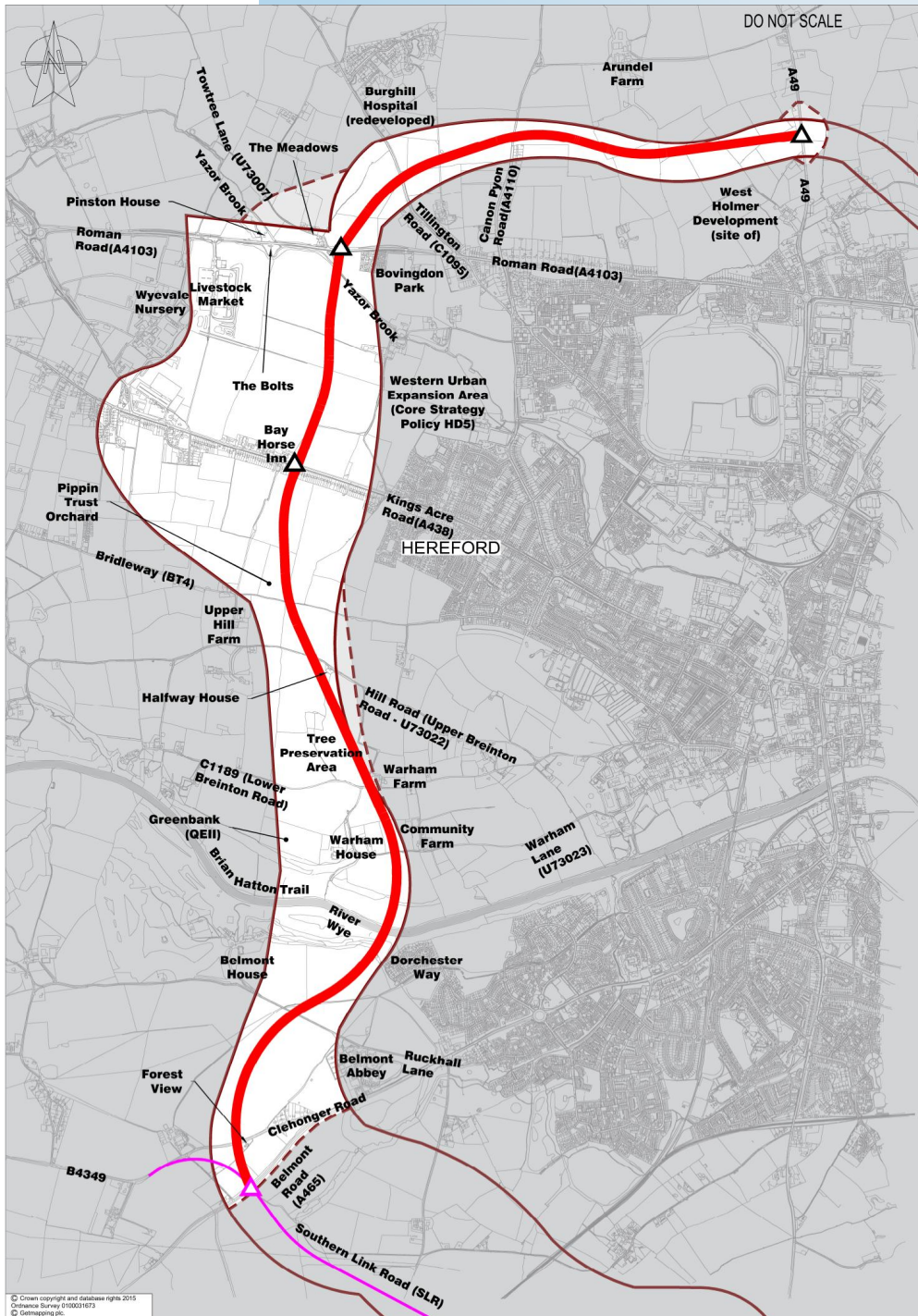
Cycling

Public transport

Public realm improvements







# Preferred Route (Red Corridor)



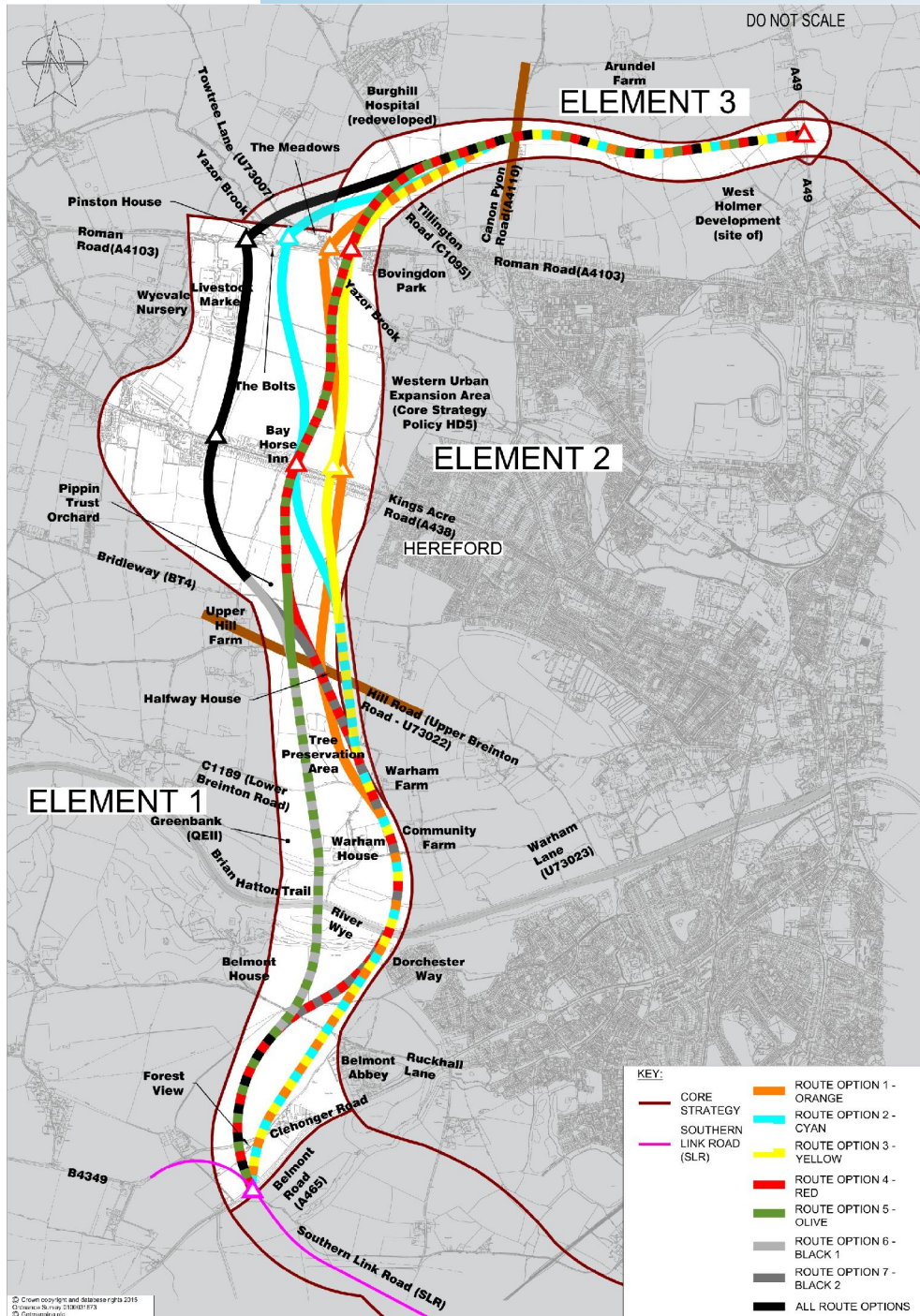
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# Elements



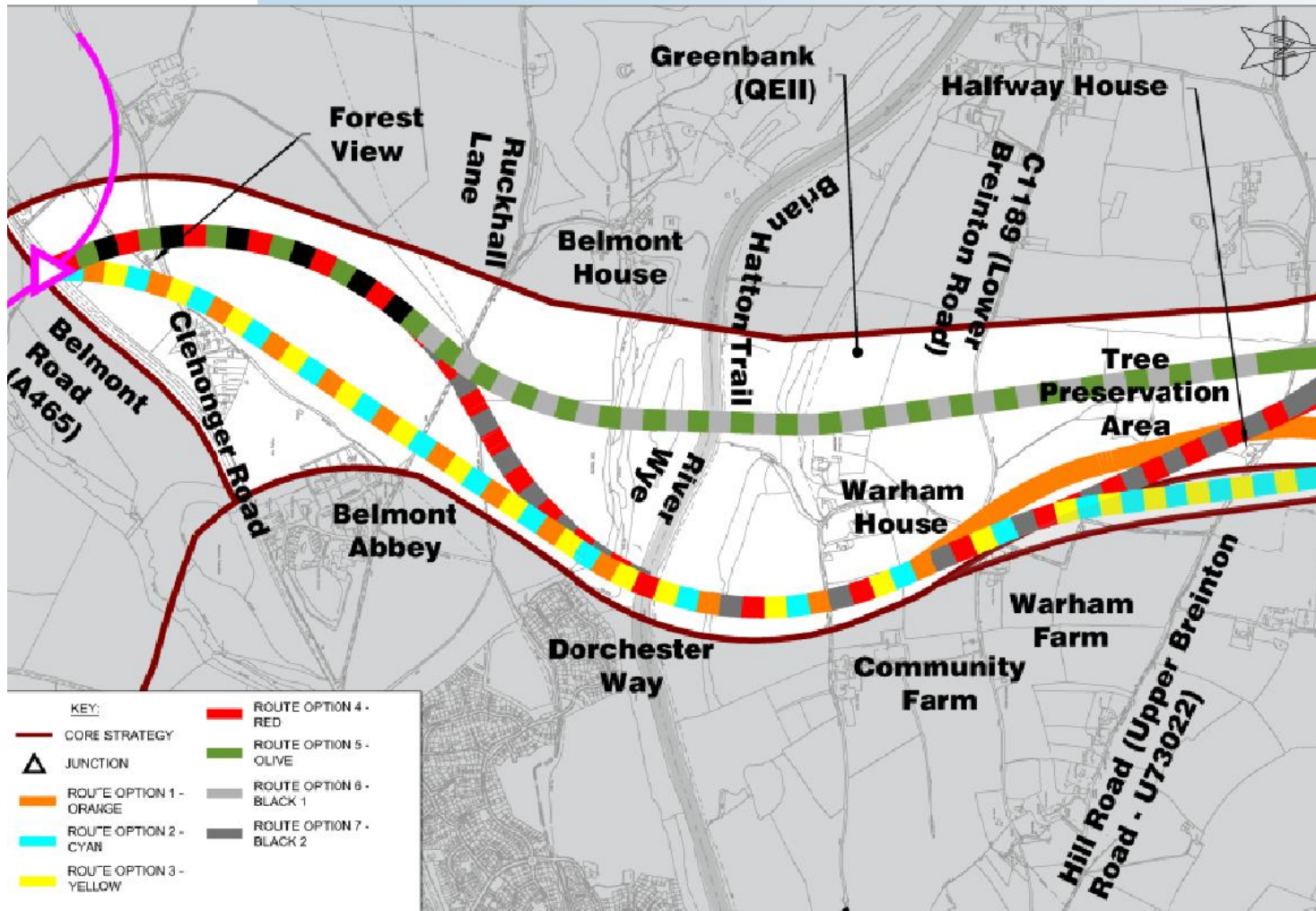
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# Preferred Route (Red Corridor): Element 1



# Element 1 – A465 to Hill Road (Upper Breinton Road)

## Key factors for Red/Black2

Less impact on historic environment of Belmont Park, including lesser impact on setting of Belmont Abbey & Belmont House

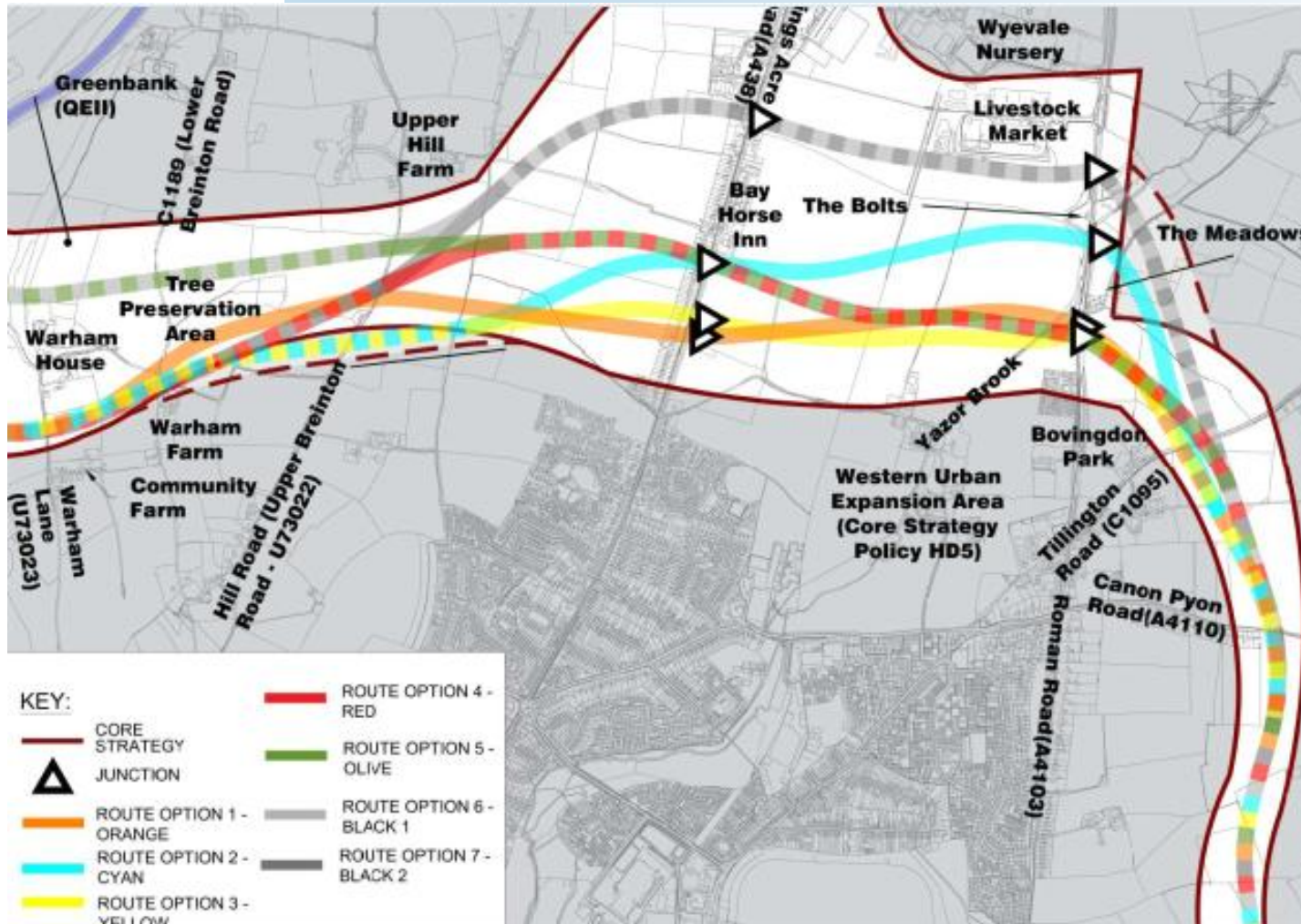
Fewer dwellings exposed to excessive noise

Avoids Greenbank Meadow and its statutory protection

Lower impact on ancient woodland and important trees



# Preferred Route (Red Corridor): Element 2



## Element 2 – Hill Road (Upper Breinton Road) to Canon Pyon Road

### Key factors for Red/Olive

Fewer number of homes requiring demolition

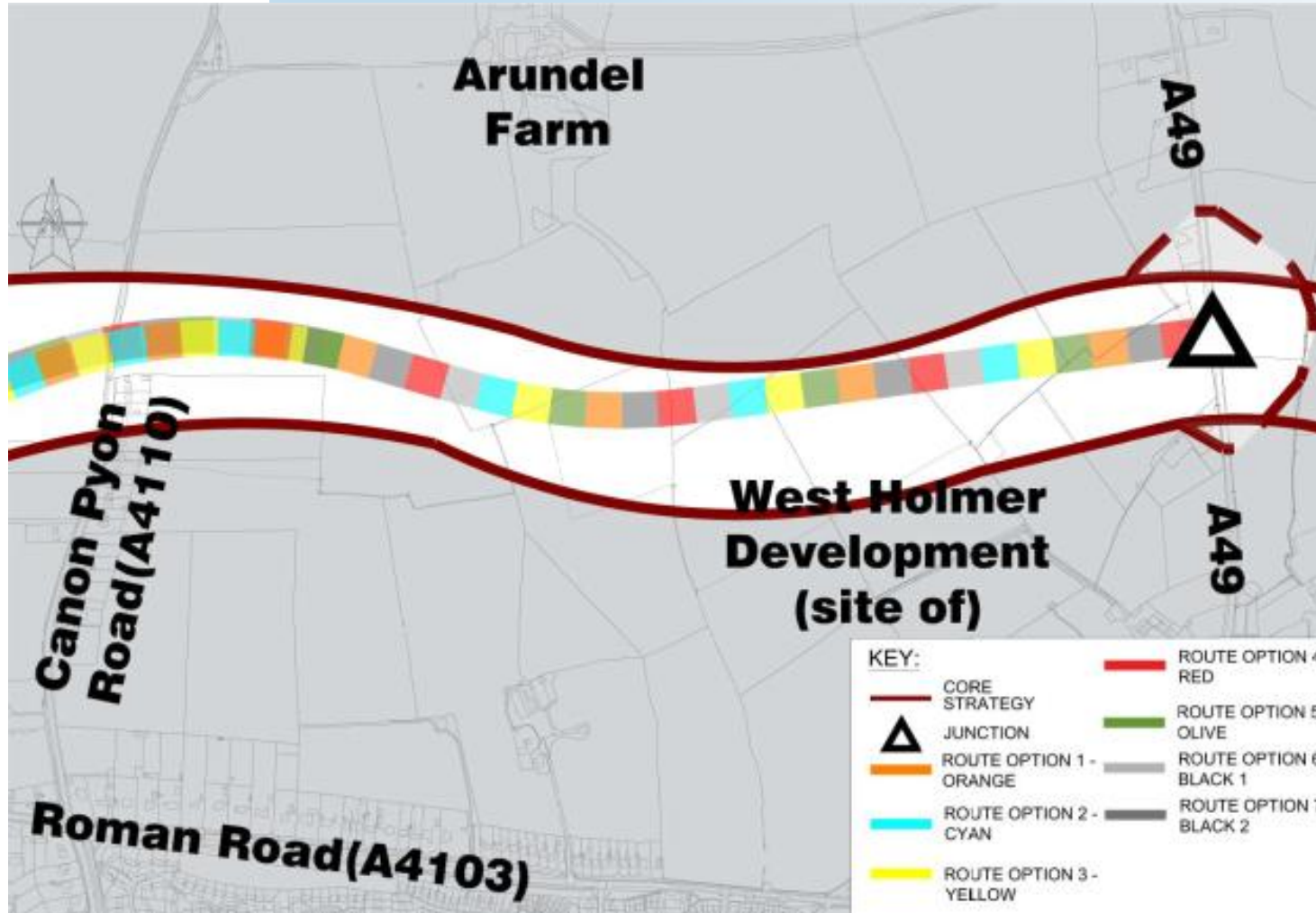
Fewer homes exposed to excessive noise levels

Lower impact on Yazor Brook flood zone and lower cost of mitigation

Supports core strategy Policy HD5 – Three Elms SUE

Lower impact on important trees and avoids Drovers Wood

# Preferred Route (Red Corridor): Element 3



## Element 3 – Canon Pyon Road to A49

### Key factors

All routes are aligned – no relative advantages and disadvantages

# Summary of whole route considerations

Southern element 1 – Red/Black2

Middle element 2 – Red/Olive

Northern element 3 – no differentiators

Overall, Red is the best performing option



# Key outcomes of choosing Red as the Preferred Route

Homes - fewer number of homes requiring demolition

Noise – fewer dwellings exposed to excessive noise

Flood risk – lower impact on Yazor Brook and lower cost of mitigation

Cultural Heritage – lower impact on Belmont Park and setting of Belmont Abbey and Belmont House

Ecology – lower impact on ancient woodland and important trees

Communities - avoids Greenbank Meadow and its statutory protection

**Thank you**



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