

Appendix D – Summary of Comments at Political Group Consultations on 14th March 2024.

Two Political Group consultations were held on 14th March 2024. The meeting at 2pm was held in person at the Plough Lane offices of Herefordshire Council, while the 6pm meeting was held online via Teams.

Each meeting was chaired by Cllr Price, Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure, and lasted for approximately one hour.

2pm Meeting

The Green Party commented that the evidence provided for the meeting was inadequate and requested that the evidence base and report should be published in full.

The Green Party requested that provisions are made to mitigate safety risks given that additional road capacity and junctions are proposed to be delivered.

The Conservative Party supported the full western bypass noting Eastern River Crossing and Link Road (ERiC) only provides localised benefits whilst the western bypass meets requirements to bypass the A49.

The Green Party requested that any statistics quoted in documents should include a source.

The Green Party asked why the objectives for the Local Transport Plan (LTP) hadn't been used in the New Road Strategy for Hereford (NRS) report and why separate objectives have been developed for the road schemes.

The Liberal Democrats were supportive of detrunking the A49, noting there are schools and houses currently very close to the road.

The Green Party queried the scheme costs and how they had been built up.

The Green Party believes proposals are not compatible with LTP guidance and asked why, rather than just deciding to build a road, the most cost effective ways to reduce congestion, improve safety and meet our carbon commitments are not being considered.

The Conservative Party asked whether the scheme costs included junctions and environmental mitigation works.

The Conservative Party believe that the Southern Link Road (SLR) on its own would provide benefits for traffic travelling between South Wales and the Rotherwas Estate.

The Green Party asked whether active travel costs are included in the costs.

The True Independent Party is not supportive of a western bypass as it will not do anything for the economy and doubts whether it would get planning permission due to the high water table and flooding issues.

6pm Meeting

The Green Party queried whether the formal Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) had been followed in the ERiC Strategic Outline Case report and whether the options considered were a wide enough range of possible solutions.

The green Party agreed with objectives to boost the local economy and reduce congestion but felt that other objectives should have been included such as reducing carbon emissions, improving public health, reducing deaths and injuries and protecting and enhancing nature.

The Conservative Party appreciated the clarity of the map and supporting data in setting out the routes and the options.

The Liberal Democrats Party considered that the strategy should be addressing the transport decarbonisation agenda.

The Conservative Party raised a query over how the increased flood design levels might affect the bridge over the River Wye for the Hereford Western Bypass (HWB).

The Green Party raised concerns over the risk that the HWB may become an access road for housing sites and whether the factor of induced demand as a result of increased capacity had been considered.

The Independents for Herefordshire Party queried the costs and risks associated with detrunking and the liabilities of the existing road and bridge.

The Independents for Herefordshire queried how the costs had been calculated for the three scheme elements.

The Independents for Herefordshire queried the completion date of 2031.

The Green Party would like to see more objectives considered in the assessment of the options such as elements for the environment and protecting and enhancing nature.

The Independents for Herefordshire Party asked to see the detail behind the cost modelling to understand the differences between the various options.

The Independents for Herefordshire Party queried whether active travel measures were included in the costs quoted.

The Independents for Herefordshire Party raised the issue of the DfT considering roads only after all other options had been considered and would like to details of the other options considered.

The Independents for Herefordshire Party queried whether the increased flood risk on all strategic sites had been taken into account when calculating numbers of homes and whether the impact on the traffic had been modelled.

The Independents for Herefordshire Party queried whether the value for money calculations for the SLR would be for a stand-alone scheme or as part of the full HWB.

The Independents for Herefordshire Party asked whether the schemes were all modelled using the same data assumptions and whether it was using up-to-date traffic data.

The Independents for Herefordshire Party questioned whether the £102m of Local Transport Funds were being considered for schemes across the county.

The Independents for Herefordshire Party queried the status of the draft Hereford Masterplan.