

Response to Cllr Hitchiner's Questions Raised at Cabinet on 28 March 2024, regarding the New Road Strategy for Hereford.

The questions were raised at the time of the Cabinet meeting and confirmed later by email to Cllr Lester. Cllr. Hitchiner has requested written replies to the questions that are made public.

Cllr. Hitchiner met with Mark Averill and Geoff Pickford on 23 July 2024 to discuss the background to these questions.

Q1 - For the reasons I explained at the meeting, will the Cabinet agree that the Clehonger turn roundabout needs to be looked at again as building the currently planned roundabout does not take into account the link to the Western Bypass? Will they commission AECOM to do the design work so that information is available to make a decision on the current road which has PP, based on all the facts?

The Hereford Western Bypass (HWB) comprises two schemes - Phase 1 (Southern Link Road) and Phase 2 (Western Bypass). Both will be reviewed in order to understand the impact of changes in design standards, guidance and conditions that have occurred since the schemes were last worked on around five years ago.

Part of the Phase 1 review work will consider options for phasing the roundabout construction, the associated costs, the impact on planning permissions and the overall scheme programme. Once complete it will be possible to make a balanced decision on the best way forward, having due regard to the benefits and disbenefits of each approach.

Q2 - Clehonger, Kingstone and Allensmore will see an increase in traffic, according to clause 69, for Clehonger and Allensmore of over 80%. Madley will see a reduction of 31%. Could the residents of Allensmore and Clehonger have an explanation of these figures please?

The traffic figures set out in the Cabinet report of 28th March 2024 have been derived using the current 2016 traffic model. Traffic increases predicted on the B4349 and A465 in Clehonger and Allensmore are due to traffic re-routeing away from the B4352 through Madley and minor roads between the A49 and A465 near Callow.

Work is almost complete on a new traffic model for Herefordshire that incorporates up to date traffic data, including post-Covid changes to travel patterns. The new traffic model will be used in the next stages of development of both Phase 1 and Phase 2 to provide up-to-date forecasts of the impact of the bypass and to update the scheme business cases.

Q3 - Could both communities be provided with an assessment of the effect of these increases on them with an indication of what can be done to reduce any negative effects? The B4349 is already dangerous for cyclists. A near doubling of traffic is going to make this worse.

The traffic modelling will be re-assessed using the new transport model and it would be most appropriate to consider any mitigation measures as part of the scheme design once this latest modelling information is available.

Q4 - I also seek some clarification on these figures. I think I am right in saying that these figures are based on the whole of the Bypass being completed. What please is the effect while only the SLR is complete?

The figures quoted in the Cabinet report are for the whole Hereford Western Bypass (HWB) with both Phases 1 and 2 complete.

The impact of Phase 1 alone shows that there will be noticeable increases in traffic on the B4349 east of Clehonger compared with the current situation, as shown in the table below:

Peak Hour	Direction	Do Nothing (DN) (vehicles per hour)	Phase 1 (Southern Link Road)		
			Vehicles Per Hour	Increase on DN	Percent Increase
Morning	Eastbound	239	375	136	57%
	Westbound	187	257	70	38%
Evening	Eastbound	192	318	126	66%
	Westbound	256	385	129	50%

Changes on the A465 are not significant for Phase 1 when compared with the Do Nothing case, with northbound traffic in the morning peak showing a 9% decrease, while the same direction in the evening peak shows a 4% increase.

Q5 - Hereford becoming a City with a bypass will attract traffic heading for Shrewsbury which would previously have travelled along the M50, M5 and M54 saving 34 miles of travel and potentially being quicker. What evidence has been gathered to show how much induced travel is likely? What extra traffic is estimated will use the A49 from Ross to Shrewsbury? This is of particular note in the context of the advantages of the Road to be seen by other members of the Marches Partnership.

The current Hereford transport model covers the A49 from Ross-on-Wye to Leominster, but not specifically the M50, M5 and M54 routes. It has limited ability to identify changes in route for traffic between Ross and Shrewsbury as a result of the bypass and the improvement of journey times along the A49. Currently there is no significant increase shown in modelled through traffic on the A49 between Ross-on-Wye and Leominster as a result of the HWB.

The new Herefordshire Transport Model has a wider coverage and covers the M50/M5/M54. This should give a better indication of the level of traffic that could switch to the A49 or other route options with the bypass in place. The impact of the scheme will be assessed using this new model as part of the next stages of business case development.