

Document x – Email received from the agents for the viaduct site on 15/9/14.

Dear Sirs

Hereford Core Strategy Pre Submission Draft - Objections by Blencowe Associates

Following discussions with the Council, we have the following comments for clarification on our submitted objection to the Pre-submission Draft of the Herefordshire Core Strategy.

First, I would like to confirm that the Hawkins and Lane families (the landowners) support the proposed allocation of the land north of the viaduct for mixed-use development. The site has been subject to extensive research on ecology, archaeology, transport and accessibility, landscape sensitivity, noise, surface water drainage and flood risk and I confirm that it is both developable and viable for the development proposed in the Pre- Submission Core Strategy.

Our concerns relate to matters of detail which we consider are most appropriate to consider at planning application stage rather than through very detailed requirements in policies of a strategic plan, and our comments were of a general nature intended as an example of why Core Strategies should not be too detailed.

An obvious example of this is the proposal for employment land. We accept the principle of providing an appropriately located employment site within the location, but consider that its configuration should be a matter for detailed negotiations at a later stage in the planning process. We are also unconvinced that the vehicular access should be predominantly from the south under the viaduct. This was introduced into the plan at a late stage and, as far as we can ascertain, without technical research. We can demonstrate that vehicular access can be provided from Bromyard Road, and that this provides significant benefits.

While we do not rule vehicular access under the viaduct out, its pros and cons have not been considered in the Core Strategy, nor the requirement justified. It is a matter that we suggest should be left open for consideration in the context of a planning application.

We assure you that the allocated site will provide an attractive housing development and riverside park, acknowledging the canal-side potential. We also confirm that this is deliverable in the short term. The reason that a planning application has not been submitted to date has been, in agreement with the Council officers, to allow the development plan process to take place, but given the low level of objection which the proposal has apparently elicited, and the publicity of other proposals, an application will be submitted shortly. We have engaged with a house builder/developer team for the site and discussions are at a very advanced stage and we anticipate their involvement in follow up meetings with the Planning Officer.

Yours faithfully

Tom Blencowe