

**Mr Roy Foster MA MRTPI**  
c/o Claypit Hall  
Foxearth  
SUDBURY  
Suffolk CO10 7JD

12 November 2010

Dear Mr Foster

**EXAMINATION OF THE JOINT CORE STRATEGY FOR BROADLAND, NORWICH AND SOUTH NORFOLK**

I write with regard to your examination of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership's Joint Core Strategy (JCS) which commenced in Norwich this week, and in particular with regard to the elements of the JCS pertaining to the proposed housing growth and bypass for the village of Long Stratton in my constituency, which is due to come before you on Thursday 18 November 2010.

A key element of the JCS concerns proposals to provide 1,800 new houses and a bypass for Long Stratton. The section of the A140 that runs through the centre of Long Stratton is an appalling bottleneck and there is widespread agreement that a bypass will bring major benefits to the local community. It would eliminate the dreadful tail backs, which can be up to three miles long, and ease congestion on a key strategic route into Norwich. There would also be significant benefits for pedestrian safety and air quality.

Following the General Election in May this year it is clear that the planning landscape is changing. The Government has declared that those who know their communities best, i.e. local residents, should drive planning decisions. I believe this is long overdue. In my experience, the planning system has often seemed opaque and unresponsive to local concerns. The Coalition Government's recently published Local Growth White Paper represents a statement of government policy and indicates the intended direction of travel for future legislation on planning matters. The White Paper makes it clear that localities themselves are best placed to understand the drivers and barriers to local growth and prosperity, and as such localities should lead their own development to release their economic potential. I have noted Mr Justice Sales's ruling that the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Mr Eric Pickles, acted unlawfully in his decision to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies. However, I believe that this ruling should be viewed in the context of the fact that the abolition of regional housing targets is in the Coalition Agreement and the imminent Localism Bill will make clear the Government's approach to local policy formulation. The Government's thinking on this matter is clear: regional housing targets no longer have a role in the planning system.

It is beyond question that my constituents in Long Stratton both want and need the A140 bypass to be built. Due to the current financial climate and the severe constraints on the public purse, it is also clear that the bypass will only be built by private sector contributions in connection with housing.

I would be very grateful if you could give the case for Long Stratton made within the Joint Core Strategy the most serious consideration and, I venture to hope, your support.

Yours sincerely

Richard Bacon

**MP for South Norfolk**

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