

8842/IC1

Inspector Roy Foster
c/o The Programme Officer,
Louise St John Howe,
Claypit Hall,
Foxearth,
Sudbury,
Suffolk,
CO10 7JD

Mr R. J. Saunders,
Hansell Rd.,
Thorpe St Andrew,
Norwich,
NR7 0LZ.

Jan 31st 2011.

Dear Inspector,

Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk – Inspector’s Possible Changes: Flexibility and Resilience of the JCS in relation to the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NNDR) – issued 5 January 2011

I wish to object to the proposed changes to the Joint Core Strategy **Policy 10 and Policy 20** because the transport strategy they outline for north-east Norwich and the adjacent area of Broadland District is not the most appropriate when considered against the reasonable alternatives. They also leave the Joint Core Strategy open to review in just five years time and create uncertainty for local people.

You requested these changes as a ‘partial alternative Plan B’. However, the changes amount only to a scheduling of housing developments to deliver the original Plan A and a re-timing of the NNDR to 2016/17. As such they do not form a ‘Plan B’ which you invited the Greater Norwich Development Partnership to consider due to the uncertainty over NNDR funding at the time of the strategy’s adoption in March.

Community and environmental groups oppose the Postwick Hub and NNDR within the Joint Core Strategy as they have not been properly tested against alternative transport policy options and it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that they will reduce congestion and deliver a sustainable transport system. They would require substantial public money (c.£130m) at a time of spending restraint. Continuing with these schemes places undue reliance on them as ‘critical infrastructure’ when funding is unknown.

The uncertainty surrounding the NNDR/Postwick Hub will continue to create uncertainty for the local communities affected by a proposed NDR.

Further, keeping alive the possibility of a NNDR/Postwick Hub through the Joint Core Strategy has encouraged Norfolk County Council to spend more public money on them. In January 2011, the County Council agreed to spend up to £1.5 million over the next two years on further NNDR work. These funds have been taken from budgets originally intended for safety and community transport schemes planned across Norfolk.

The GNDP propose a review in 2016 if the NDR has not been built. I urge you to consider the alternative of creating, at this stage, a real Plan B that has no dependency on an NNDR and Postwick Hub. Whilst this may take time, there are enough existing permissions for housing development not to be delayed during this period. A plan B is a more realistic proposal in the current economic situation, it would relieve community uncertainty, and it would not leave the JCS open to a likely review in just five years time.

It was also significant at the hearings, that the potential developers are in complete disagreement with the percentage of affordable housing defined in the JCS and they clearly stated that any such development at such a level would not be viable for them. One would have thought that such a basic ingredient would have been discussed and agreed between all parties before such an important hearing took place.

Finally, and perhaps most important of all, the NDR is a totally flawed concept. It does not target any particular important economic or strategic point. It does not link up with the Southern Bypass to form a complete outer circular for Norwich. It simply ends somewhere around the northern Norwich suburbs, near the airport. There have been suggestions that it will bring employment and companies to Norwich. Has Norfolk County Council substantiated this broad claim with a definitive list of companies who have stated in writing that they are willing to expand or relocate to Norwich because of the NDR? Have they published also, firm statistics on the personnel who will be moving to the area on a permanent basis and be bringing wealth to the local economy?

It therefore appears absolutely critical that you have a further public hearing to consider such an alternative Plan B as this important matter was not discussed at the hearing on 9 December.

Yours faithfully

Robin Saunders.