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Andrew Davies
Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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November 12th 2006

Dear Mr Davies

Train Connections, Wales-Hereford,

We were very interested to read the interview in this week's Hereford Times regarding the railhead at Rotherwas and your positive attitude towards it. At our last meeting members asked that I write on their behalf and applaud you for your interest and wish you every success.

We have written several letters over the years with regard to Unitary Development Plan and Local Transport Plan consultations urging expansion of rail not road, both for freight and passengers. We were dismayed at the Rotherwas road proposal, considering it an unnecessary destruction of beautiful countryside and know that the rail alternative has never been properly explored.

As a group we have been campaigning for several years to expand the rail infrastructure in Herefordshire. We are lucky to lie on what is now a good service between Wales and Manchester. But the congestion that the city suffers on the single-track route going west to Birmingham and London inhibits the economy and 'liveability' of the town. Without improvements this will get worse. Recent pronouncements imply that Hereford has been identified as a city that will expand by 9000 houses in the next ten years. Ironically it is probably because the city lies at the junction of rail lines going north south and west east that it has been selected, regardless that the single track can hardly support the current service.

We are very pleased at the positive attitude the Welsh Assembly takes to rail improvements and train travel generally and wish that this were the case this side of the border. If you would like any support in your rail work, especially with regard to Rotherwas, please get in touch.

Finally, we wondered if you or a colleague might be able one day to talk to our group regarding the Welsh Assembly's powers and plans for rail. We meet in the Green Dragon, Hereford and could arrange to hire a room here for the event. Experience suggests that about 40 well informed people would attend.

¹ Rail for Herefordshire is a rail user group based in Hereford, formed in 1998. It is concerned with maintaining and improving train services in the county. It has a membership of 80+, prints a newsletter of 1000, distributed freely, and is consulted on a range of issues by local government and other organisations.

Yours sincerely

REBECCA ROSEFF
Secretary, Rail for Herefordshire