

News release

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Plans for Hereford bypass moves up a gear

Hereford could get the funds to build an outer distributor road with a new river crossing in four years time – signalling an end to the city’s current level of traffic congestion.

Councillor Roger Phillips, leader of Herefordshire Council, has confirmed that West Midlands local government leaders have backed a £60-million bid for priority status for the bypass.

The government will consider the initiative, which could see the money being made available by 2013, allowing time for planning applications and inquiries to run their course. The direction of the new road is yet to be determined but could be completed by 2018.

The entire project could cost around £130 million and the rest of the money is expected to come from developers who will be building up to 8,000 new homes in Hereford, as part of the government-backed West Midlands Spatial Strategy, as the housing market recovers up to 2026. An outer distributor road would reduce congestion in the city centre by allowing traffic to reach many parts of the city without passing through Hereford city and over the present bridge.

Hereford’s place in the overall transport plan – prepared jointly by regional development agency Advantage West Midlands (AWM) and the West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA) – as a “settlement of significant development” shifts the case for a new river crossing, as part of what is being called an outer distributor road, into another gear.

“The case for Hereford’s new road and river crossing is a strong one and a priority for residents of the city”, said Roger Phillips. “The fact that we have won strong support at regional level is a great cause for optimism”.

The news follows government funding of £2 million for Herefordshire to continue its progress in meeting the growth required for the county. The money will go towards the cost of developing park and ride services and to prepare studies on the proposed outer distributor road, as well as finalise the new local development framework for Herefordshire. The council is committed to ensuring new growth is sustainable and supports and protects the historic core and environment of Hereford.

Ends

For information please contact the communications unit on 01432 260006