

Rt Hon John Healey MP
Minister for Planning
Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU

26 October 2009

Dear Minister,

Re: Norwich Northern Distributor Road and Postwick Hub

We are writing to you in regard to the Postwick Hub, a highway expansion scheme for which the Greater Norfolk Development Partnership has applied for funding through your Department's Community Infrastructure Funding pot.

On 27 March 2009, your department allocated funding of £21 million towards the Postwick Hub. However this funding was made conditional on the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NNDR) being awarded programme entry by the Department for Transport. We understand that Norfolk County Council (NCC) is now seeking to persuade your department to remove this condition and provide funding immediately. We are writing to ask you to decline any request to do so.

The Hub is an intrinsic part of the NNDR. The Director of Regional and Local Transport Delivery at the DfT, John Dowie, noted in a letter to NCC that without the NNDR, the Hub would be "significantly over-engineered and it is doubtful it would offer value for money".

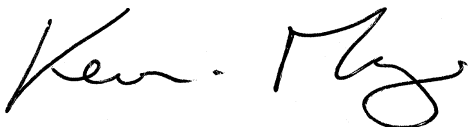
We have yet to see any indication that the council gave more than a cursory glance towards meeting the proposed housing growth via improved sustainable transport provision, before ruling out any non-road option. The Department for Transport has repeatedly asked to see NCC's work on alternatives to the road scheme. I attach a letter from DfT to NCC in which officials explain their reasons for needing further work on the business case.

In any case, the DfT is expected to make a decision on funding the NDR by the end of the year, so there is no case for reversing your earlier decision to make funding for the Postwick Hub dependent on programme entry for the NNDR. We are therefore writing to ask that you decline any requests to separate the Hub's funding from the NNDR receiving programme entry or to influence the DfT to treat the NNDR's business case as a special case and not be subject to the usual appraisal.

Our organisations would very much like to meet with you and your officials to discuss these schemes further, how they relate to our broader concerns about the Joint Core Strategy for Norwich and the extent to which a Rackheath eco-town and other new housing growth in the north east sector would be better served by improved sustainable transport provision than by the proposed distributor road.



Stephen Joseph, Executive Director
Campaign for Better Transport



Kevin Mayne, Director
CTC, the national cyclists' organisation



Andy Atkins, Executive Director
Friends of the Earth



Malcolm Shepherd, Chief Executive
Sustrans



Neil Sinden, Policy Director
Campaign to Protect Rural England