

Transport Solutions for Lancaster and Morecambe
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Dear Transport Solutions for Lancaster and Morecambe

I was delighted to hear the very good news that the Government Office for the North West had decided to call-in the planning application for the Heysham to M6 Link Road due to your excellent campaign.

It is very good news that this dreadful scheme will be closely examined at public inquiry as it really stands out nationally as one of the schemes that will most increase carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. Currently Lancashire County Council admit in their bid for government funding that the scheme will increase CO₂ emissions by 23,514 tonnes in the opening year alone. We also know that this estimate is likely to be an underestimate. This increase in CO₂ is completely unacceptable in an era when we must do all that we can to tackle climate change. It is also unacceptable that Lancashire County Council thinks it can spend £137 million of taxpayers' money on *increasing* CO₂ emissions.

In the words of the Prime Minister, climate change is the "world's greatest environmental challenge" and Sir Nicholas Stern stresses the urgency in his important report in October 2006: "There is still time to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, if we take strong action now".

With the Fourth Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published on 2 February 2007, there is no doubt that man is dramatically altering our climate, and that the window to take action is closing fast. As Yvo de Boer, the Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, said: "The findings, which governments have agreed upon, leave no doubt as to the dangers mankind is facing and must be acted upon without delay".

There is also no doubt that councils play an important role in the battle to get emissions under control. At the Local Government Association conference "*Your council, your climate, your action*" on 28 November 2006¹ Climate Change Minister Ian Pearson said:

"In the future, local government's ability to rise to challenges will be critical against the greatest threat the human race faces – climate change. Certainly, averting catastrophic climate change will only be possible through a concerted international approach. But global action has to start at home. And what we do domestically is vital..."

¹ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/ministers/speeches/ian-pearson/ip061128-a.htm>

Local transport planning is another area where local authorities can have a significant impact on carbon emissions.

Also in a column in the Local Government Chronicle on 14 Dec Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Agriculture, David Miliband, said:

“Climate Change is a massive issue and is it sometimes difficult to see what we can do to make a difference. But everybody... has a part to play and this includes councils who spend billions every year on public services and goods. The most important thing councils can do is lead by example”.

We live in extraordinary times where our generation will be the last to be able to make the difference in the battle to keep levels of carbon dioxide at a safe level. We have a small window of opportunity to take all necessary action to prevent catastrophic climate change. The decisions we make now are of the utmost importance. There will be no future generation to curse us for our inaction if we fail to meet this challenge.

I congratulate Transport Solutions for Lancaster and Morecombe for their excellent campaign so far and Transport 2000 looks forward to continuing to support your inspiring and effective campaign.

Kind regards

Rebecca Lush FRSA

Roads and Climate Campaigner
Transport 2000