



The
countryside
charity

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Crispin Truman OBE

From: Crispin Truman.

To: James Jamieson, Leader, Central Bedfordshire Council, Hilary Chipping, Chief Exec, SEMLEP and Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP, Secretary of State for Transport.

Date: 19 June 2020

Dear All,

**Protect the Bedfordshire Chilterns, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
Think again about the proposed A6 - M1 Link Road!**

The coronavirus crisis has reminded us of the critical importance of green open spaces to our physical and mental well-being. The need to protect our countryside, improve air quality and make every effort to improve biodiversity is now more evident than ever before.

I am therefore dismayed to learn of your continued support for the decision to build the A6-M1 Link Road across one of our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - the Bedfordshire Chilterns. Furthermore, the complete length of the road and accompanying infrastructure will be entirely within the Green Belt and beside two Ancient Woodlands. These are vital parts of our "Natural Health Service" - the green lungs for our urban areas. All will be adversely impacted by the A6 - M1 Link Road. The spending is also bad value for scarce public money, as the new road will get jammed up just as quickly as it is built.

This destruction of our beautiful countryside is out of step with current thinking. We need to be rebuilding our countryside, not destroying it and diverting money to areas that improve people's lives, rather than pollute them.

I urge you as one of the decision makers in the process to think again before taking this irreversible step which will cause immense environmental damage and biodiversity loss. We are on the verge of a green recovery and organisations such as yours should be investing in actions that reduce the impact of the climate crisis.

Continued



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The efforts of local people and organisations, including CPRE Bedfordshire, to stop this road have been dismissed. This is despite Government appointed Inspectors raising serious concerns regarding the need for the new road during the examination of Central Bedfordshire's new Local Plan 2035.

A 'call in' request to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to review these plans was declined, stating that the issue was a local matter. This is most certainly not the case - the Chilterns AONB is of national significance and our countryside is a matter for all of us, and conversely the new road cannot be built without central Government funding.

Please reconsider your support for this proposed new Link Road and take action to prevent its construction before it's too late.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Crisp Truman', is written over a light blue grid background.

Crispin Truman OBE
Chief Executive