

‘There must be another option to an expressway through the Harborough district’ says MP

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Neil O'Brien MP.

There must be an alternative to a huge expressway cutting right through the Harborough district.

That is the view of Harborough MP Neil O'Brien, after he spoke out against the plans at a recent meeting.

The proposed A46 Expressway would run through the Harborough district north of Great Glen and Newton Harcourt.

Although the plans are at a very early stage, the Vision for Growth says 40,000 new houses containing around 100,000 people could be built along the new A46, which would loop round the east and south of Leicester, before joining the M1 at a new junction 20A.

Around 18,000 of these new homes for around 45,000 new residents could be built in the Harborough district under these proposals.

But Mr O'Brien said this is far from a done deal.

“I want to see alternative options to the expressway worked up,” he told the Mail.

“There has never been any discussion of alternatives which might be better.

“The process has not been transparent. People were supposedly consulted but without even being allowed to know where this huge road would go.”

He thinks that planners need to look towards the city before they go ‘dumping’ yet more homes in the Harborough district.

Mr O’Brien said: “The city has scope to meet far more of its own housing need rather than dumping it into the south-eastern side of the county.

“The transport study slipped out part way through this process shows the southern part of Leicester will grind to a halt without action to improve the routes in and out of the city.

“But the expressway doesn’t address this problem and in fact make matters worse, by loading so much of the housing development onto just one side of the city in an unbalanced way.

“The council have never explained how much this would cost or where the money would come from.

“I think there may well be better options - particularly involving better public transport.

“A denser city with more walking and cycling would cut congestion, pollution and improve health.”