



Our ref: A0482

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Dear Julie,

HEARING STATEMENT - SHROPSHIRE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION – MATTER 8

National Highways welcomes the opportunity to submit hearing statements on the Inspectors' matters, issues and questions (MIQs) in relation to Stage 1 of the examination of the Shropshire Local Plan.

National Highways has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). It is our role to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the strategic road network whilst acting as a delivery partner to national economic growth.

Within Shropshire, the SRN comprises of the M54 motorway, the A5, A49, A458 and A483 trunk roads. The section of our network most relevant in the current consultation includes the M54, A5, A49 and A483.

National Highways have had continued discussions with Shropshire Council in the making of the Local Plan and have provided responses at each stage of consultation in accordance with relevant policies and guidance.

We have set out below our comments on the Stage 1 MIQs with regard to the relevant questions on Matter 8 - Infrastructure and delivery, monitoring and viability (policies SP1, SP2, SP14).

We consider that the questions regarding monitoring/implementation and viability are not for National Highways to comment on, as they do not specifically relate to the Strategic Road Network.

Infrastructure

Question 1: What strategic infrastructure is necessary for the Local Plan (including saved sites) to be implemented? What is the likely cost? How will it be brought forward and funded?

Question 2: What are the likely impacts of the proposed scale and distribution of development on the various aspects of infrastructure? How have these been assessed?

National Highways Response:

The North West Relief Road (NWRR) has been identified as a key infrastructural project in the area which is expected to reduce the mainline traffic on the A5 bypass in Shrewsbury. This proposal has been assessed by Shropshire Council through continuous engagement with National Highways. The planning application submitted in support of the NWRR scheme is currently under consideration by the Shropshire Council.

In addition to NWRR, following the Regulation 19 consultation, a transport evidence base was prepared by Shropshire Council to understand the development impacts of the proposed site allocations in the vicinity of Shrewsbury. Based on our review, we noted that the A5 bypass in the area (A5 Woodcote roundabout to A5 Preston Boats roundabout) has existing capacity issues. This will be further worsened by the addition of the potential site allocations. Whilst the NWRR would provide some relief to the A5 bypass, additional mitigation measures will need to be identified to ensure the safe operation of the SRN in the area.

National Highways is currently undertaking a transport study for the A5 bypass between Churncote roundabout and Preston Boats roundabout. The outcome of this study will help identify the network needs in the area up to the end of the Draft Local Plan period. Following the completion of this study, further discussions will be undertaken with the Council regarding potential funding opportunities and delivery mechanism for potential improvement schemes.

Improvement schemes will be supplemented by demand management measures to reduce the motorised traffic, and focus on the active travel and public transportation.

Outside Shrewsbury region, the site-specific impacts from the relevant allocations will be identified through the respective Transport Assessments (TAs) to be submitted during the formal planning process. These have been detailed within the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) prepared by National Highways and Shropshire Council.

Question 3: Are the infrastructure requirements clearly set out in a policy/policies in the Local Plan? If not, should they be?

National Highways Response:

The proposed main modification MaM022 to draft Policy DP28 'Communications and Transport' provides an appropriate policy mechanism to be able to secure site specific consultation at appropriate stages of the planning process, and to the broad remit of Transport Assessments (TAs). Based on findings of the TAs, relevant onsite and offsite mitigation works can be identified during the planning stage and suitably conditioned to the delivery of the development.

Question 5: Are there known sources of funding for development expected to be delivered in the first 5-7 years of the Local Plan? Are these all in the Council's latest Infrastructure Delivery Plan?

National Highways Response:

NWRR has received funding from Department for Transport subject to the submission of a full business case.

Shropshire Council has made a submission to National Highways for consideration in the Road Investment Strategy for 2025 - 2030 (RIS3) and this has been included in our Route Strategy evidence. However there is no presumption that schemes will be funded by RIS.

Following completion of National Highways' transport study in Shrewsbury, we will work together with the Shropshire Council to identify the funding opportunities (developer contributions along with identification of any wider funding sources) required to support the potential mitigation schemes. The potential mitigation schemes will be included within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Question 7: How will the provision of infrastructure be related in terms of timing/phasing to development proposals / areas?

National Highways Response:

Delivery mechanism of potential improvement schemes identified through National Highways' transport study will be discussed and agreed with Shropshire Council to ensure the safe operation of the SRN in the area.

Other mitigation works identified during the planning process of respective developments will be suitably conditioned to ensure the appropriate delivery of development.

Question 9: Are there effective mechanisms in place between the Council, other neighbouring authorities, and infrastructure providers to co-ordinate the planning and provision of infrastructure?

Question 10: How will other agencies and organisations be involved? What level of commitment/agreement is there?

National Highways Response:

National Highways will work together with Shropshire Council to identify and deliver the improvement works required on the SRN to mitigate the development impacts from the proposed site allocations. National Highways has signed a SoCG with the Council which details the working arrangement.

I trust that the above is helpful and please contact me if you have any queries in the interim. We will be pleased to attend the Hearing Session as required.

Yours Sincerely,

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