



National Highways

Erewash Core Strategy Review

Examination in Public

HEARING STATEMENT:

Matter 9 – Transport & Infrastructure

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1 Introduction

National Highways, formerly Highways England, 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 SRN whilst acting as a delivery partner to national economic growth.

The SRN is a critical national asset and as such National Highways works to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity. The SRN within Erewash includes the M1 motorway which routes through the eastern section of the borough, and the A52 trunk road which routes through the southern part of the borough. In addition, National Highways is responsible for the A5111, A6, A38 and A50 trunk roads which sit just outside the Erewash Borough Council boundary.

This hearing statement has been prepared by National Highways in response to the Matters, Issues and Questions which have been identified by the Inspector in relation to **Matter 9 – Transport & Infrastructure**.

The questions identified focus on the issue of ‘whether the approach to transport and infrastructure is justified, effective and consistent with national policy’. Our responses are provided under the relevant questions.

2 Response to Questions

Response to questions 1, 2, 4 & 8

National Highways has welcomed the opportunity to provide feedback and offer advice for understanding the potential transport implications for the core strategy growth both within and outside the borough.

Our most recent formal representation to the Core Strategy was our May 2022 response to the Regulation 19 Draft Erewash Core Strategy. In this response, we advised Erewash Borough Council that we expected there to be significant cumulative impacts from the proposed allocations which may affect the operation of the SRN. We went on to recommend further engagement with ourselves and the local highway authorities (Derby City, Derbyshire County, and Nottinghamshire County Councils) to agree the methodology for the transport evidence base.

Following the above-mentioned letter, we were first invited to engage with the transport evidence base for the Core Strategy in October 2022 and attended a meeting with the Council, and their transport consultants SYSTRA on 6 October 2022.

This meeting included a presentation of traffic modelling outputs using the East Midlands Gateway Model (EMGM) which had been undertaken to identify the transport impacts of the Core Strategy growth on the surrounding highway network.

It can be noted that National Highways has previously accepted the EMGM for use in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire for understanding the strategic transport impacts of local plan growth and individual development sites. As such, for the purpose of assessing the Erewash Core Strategy impacts, National Highways considered the EMGM to be fit for purpose.

Following the presentation of the ‘with local plan growth’ modelling scenario, National Highways noted that the modelling did not indicate any SRN junction to become over capacity although we noted this would not be evident if the junction was already at capacity prior to the core strategy growth. As such, we asked to see queue length and journey time (delay) data to understand what was happening in more detail, and this was received by National Highways on 24 October 2022.

The above-mentioned data indicated that the SRN junctions were indeed not materially affected by the Core Strategy growth and the main impacts were on the local highway authority network(s). Notwithstanding this, we noted a reduction in traffic flows on the A52 trunk road between Derby and Nottingham that appeared to be re-routing onto the local road network, in particular, via Ladywood Road or Derby Road. As such, we needed to understand the views of the local highway authority and what mitigation would be implemented on the local highway network, as this could have a consequence for the SRN.

In light of the above, our email of 28 February 2023 to the Council contained a request to review the Phase 3 (highways) mitigation modelling results. We also suggested a further meeting to include the local highway authorities to understand their views of the Core Strategy impacts and whether they would be seeking any additional mitigation on their networks.

The Phase 3 mitigation modelling results were subsequently received via the Council on 2 March 2023. Following our review, we noted the main impacts to be constrained to the local highway network when highway mitigation was introduced. However, there were two locations in particular where the congestion on the local highway network was particularly closely to an SRN junction. If any additional highways mitigation was therefore sought by the local highway authority, this could have a resultant impact on the SRN.

As such, we sought the views of Derby City Council highway authority with respect of congestion on the Acorn Way approach to the A5111, and from Derbyshire County Council with respect of congestion on the Bostock Lane approach to M1 junction 25.

With respect of the Bostock's Lane approach to M1 junction 25 (Derbyshire County Council's network), we now understand that the County Council are prepared to accept the additional queuing on their network and are not currently seeking additional mitigation at this location. As such, we have no further comments to make about this location.

With respect of the Acorn Way approach to A5111 (Derby City Council's network), we understand (via Derby City Council) that as part of the Examination process, additional work has been submitted by Erewash Borough Council in relation to transport modelling. Part of this revised transport modelling proposes an improvement scheme at the Acorn Way/Raynesway junction. It should be noted that National Highways has not seen any additional transport modelling and as such we have not been able to consider how this additional mitigation scheme impacts the adjacent SRN. National Highways would wish to review the outcome of this piece of work to understand the impact on the SRN.

Notwithstanding this, we understand that Derby City Council have concerns relating to the deliverability of the scheme in engineering terms. We therefore consider it important for agreement to be reached with Derby City Council before we can offer our definitive position on the transport matters related to Core Strategy.