



National Highways

Bassetlaw Local Plan

Examination in Public

HEARING STATEMENT:

Matter 1a – Legal Compliance

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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 and near to the district of Bassetlaw includes the A1 trunk road which bisects the plan area, and the M1 motorway approximately 8km to the west of the plan area.

This hearing statement has been prepared by National Highways in response to the Matters, Issues and Questions which have been identified by the Inspectors in relation to **Matter 1a – Legal Compliance**. We will attend the hearing for this matter represented by Mrs Catherine Townend, Spatial Planner for the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and Rutland area. Our attendance will be to aide the discussion and provide any clarification to the Inspectors as required.

The questions identified focus on the issue ‘whether the Council has complied with relevant procedural and legal requirements’ and our responses are provided under the relevant questions.

2 Response to Questions

Matter 1a – Legal Compliance

Issue 1: Has the Council complied with the duty to co-operate and other relevant procedural and legal requirements in the preparation of the Local Plan.

1.1 In preparing the plan did the Councils engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with neighbouring authorities and other relevant organisations on cross-boundary issues, in respect of the Duty to Co-operate?

National Highways raises the concern that our questions and requests for further information in relation to the Bassetlaw Transport Study (BTS) were not addressed by Bassetlaw District Council (BDC) in a timely manner.

In particular, we requested access to the detailed modelling files underpinning the conclusions of the Bassetlaw Transport Study (BTS). It should be noted that review of the modelling is necessary for us to understand and agree with the assumptions being made.

We highlighted the requirement to review the modelling files in our response on the BTS dated 18th February 2022. We were subsequently consulted on an update to the BTS in May 2022. In response to that update on 6th June 2022, we again requested provision of the detailed modelling results to verify for the conclusions of the BTS. We made a further request for this outstanding information in an email to BDC of 8th July 2022 and recommended a meeting with BDC's transport consultants to discuss our concerns.

The above-mentioned meeting was held on 12th October 2022 between ourselves, BDC and their transport consultants, Tetra Tech. Following this meeting, we received the requested modelling files on 19th October 2022. However, the time required to review the above-mentioned modelling files means that, at the time of writing this representation, we are still in the process of undertaking this review.

As such, we are not able to substantiate the conclusions and recommendations of the Bassetlaw Transport Study. Our position on the transport impacts of the local plan developments would have been clearer by this time, if we had received the information when originally requested.

Our response to Matter 13 – Transport and Connectivity provides further information on our current position with regards the transport evidence base and the implications for Local Plan growth on our network.