

# **Bassetlaw District Council Response to Inspectors Matters, Issues and Questions**

## **Matter 13 – Transport & Connectivity**

**4 November 2022**

(Issue 13)

Please note: Where the Council is proposing changes to policies or reasoned justification in the submitted plan these are detailed in the responses as follows:

- Additional and new text proposed underlined
- ~~Deleted text~~ proposed strike through

## **(Policies ST54-55)**

### **Issue 13 – Does the Plan set out a positively prepared strategy and policies for transport and connectivity which is justified, effective and consistent with national policy?**

- 13.1 a) Is there robust evidence to demonstrate that the likely significant impacts on the road network arising from the development proposed in the Plan have been adequately assessed. Is there robust evidence that these can be effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree and that, if required, such mitigation can be delivered?

#### **BDC Response:**

In accordance with paragraph 104 of the NPPF, the preparation of the Plan has been underpinned by relevant and up-to-date transport evidence. Transport issues have been considered from the earliest stages of the plan-making process to ensure that the Plan promotes a sustainable pattern of development in line with Policy ST1.

The cumulative transport impacts of all development proposed in the Plan has been assessed by the Bassetlaw Transport Study (BTS), July 2022 [TI-017]. This strategic transport study identifies the cumulative multi-modal transport implications of future housing and employment development within the district and advises on the future need for strategic transport infrastructure requirements. In addition to the BTS [TI-017], the Retford Transport Assessment (RTA), July 2022 [TI-018] has been prepared to specially look at the transport issues within Retford.

Section 11 of the BTS [TI-017] examines the transport impacts on the local highway network that will be impacted by allocations proposed across the District. The assessment has identified that several local junctions in and around Worksop and Retford will require improvement before the end of the Plan period to mitigate traffic impacts due to Local Plan development. The package of mitigation schemes have been identified and assessed to a level of detail commensurate with the Plan. Mitigation has been identified and assessed to meet the 'nil detriment' test where improvements return junction performance with Local Plan development to no worse than it would have been without Local Plan development at the end of the Plan period (2038).

All transport mitigation schemes have been costed and a methodology for proportioning costs across allocations has been identified. These improvements are considered deliverable as they have been viability tested through the Bassetlaw Whole Plan & Community Infrastructure Levy Viability Assessment, May 2022 [PUB-028].

Table 28 of the BTS [TI-017] identifies that the A57 southwest of Worksop between its junctions with the B6034 and the A1 at Apleyhead (circa 6km section) is forecast to reach and exceed its theoretical link capacity towards the end of the Plan period if all

the robust traffic assumptions applied in the BTS [TI-017] materialise. Further assessment work is therefore planned to examine the operation of this section of the A57 in more detail and to identify an appropriate mitigation strategy, if required. The A57 forms an important link between the M1 motorway in Rotherham and the A1 Trunk Road in Bassetlaw and carries longer distance strategic traffic as well as local trips. Through traffic from adjacent authorities therefore contributes towards the total traffic demand on the A57 within Bassetlaw.

To examine the A57 further, the Council has established an 'A57 Improvement Plan Project Group' with relevant partners to undertake collaborative work on the scope and feasibility of a wider Improvement Plan for the A57 between the M1 in Rotherham and the A1 in Bassetlaw to help accommodate planned growth, both within and outside Bassetlaw district. At present, the Group comprises the Council, Rotherham MBC, National Highways and Nottinghamshire County Council. Objectives and a high level work programme have been discussed through Duty to Cooperate Compliance Statement, July 2022 [DTC-006] and are being agreed within individual statements of common ground that will be added to the Examination Library before the hearings.

In accordance with paragraph 111 of the NPPF, the Council consider that the residual cumulative impacts on the road network in Bassetlaw would not be severe.

b) Are the modifications suggested by the Council to the Policy ST54 and the supporting text necessary for soundness?

**BDC Response:**

The justification for modification M1.112 is in response to representations received from Doncaster Council; for modifications M1.113, M1.114 and M1.115 are in response to representations received from NJL Consulting, the National Trust, Nottinghamshire County Council and Barton Willmore (Stantec), following consultation of the publication version of the local plan, for clarification purposes, and are not necessary for soundness.

The justification for modifications M1.116, M1.117 and M1.118 are proposed as a factual change to delete reference to the Bassetlaw Garden Village as a consequence of part of the site being withdrawn by one landowner in March 2022, to be internally consistent with Policy ST1 and the remainder of the local plan.

13.2 a) Are the requirements for major developments in ST55(2) justified?

**BDC Response:**

The Council considers that the requirements set out within Part 2 of Policy ST55 are justified and are in direct response to the criteria outlined within paragraph 106 of the NPPF which promote sustainable travel options within new development, and, the requirement within paragraph 105 of the NPPF which states that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes through the provision of Travel Plans. Furthermore, national policy states that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in a Local Plan. Policy ST55 (2) addresses this point.

Therefore, it is considered that Policy ST55 Part 2 is intrinsically linked to the approach taken in the Local Plan vision and objectives, and the spatial strategy and distribution of growth in Policy ST1 which seeks to direct growth to the most sustainable and accessible locations to help retain local services, and encourage more local journeys to be made by sustainable transport. The allocation of land within or adjoining larger settlements also enables development to make a positive, proportionate and effective contribution to enhancing public transport infrastructure and provide alternative sustainable travel options, thereby seeking to reduce car use in the future particularly for local journeys.

b) Does the Policy provide effective framework to achieve sustainable transport and active travel?

**BDC Response:**

The Council considers the framework identified within Policy ST55 to be clear in its aim for major development proposals to seek to minimise additional travel by car and encourage forms of active and public transport where practicable. This approach provides sufficient flexibility to developers to respond to local context and enables travel demand to be managed appropriately through tools such as a site-specific Travel Plan. This is in accordance with the Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 [EX-015] and the Government's wider ambition to make cycling and walking the natural choice for all shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey by 2040.

As such, it is considered that in conjunction with the spatial strategy in Policy ST1 and other relevant policies within the Plan, ST55 will deliver an effective framework to enable major new development to maximise the use of sustainable travel options such as public transport, walking and cycling and seek to reduce car use over the Plan period.

c) Are the modifications suggested by the Council to the Policy and the supporting text necessary for soundness?

**BDC Response:**

The justification for modification M1.121 is proposed as a factual change to delete reference to the Bassetlaw Garden Village as a consequence of part of the site being withdrawn by one landowner in March 2022, to be internally consistent with Policy ST1 and the remainder of the local plan.

The justification for modification M1.122 is proposed in response to representations received from Nottinghamshire County Council following consultation of the publication version of the local plan, for clarification purposes and to strengthen consistency with national planning policy. Therefore, it is considered these changes are justified in order to produce an effective local plan and the modifications are necessary to enhance soundness.

13.3 Are the Policies justified and consistent with national policy? Are the requirements of the Policies clear, and would they be effective?

**BDC Response:**

The Council considers the approach taken by Policies ST54 and ST55 is consistent with paragraph 104 of the NPPF which requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making.

Paragraph 105 of the NPPF states that Local Plans should set a framework for focusing growth on locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a choice of transport modes. The provision of enhanced transport infrastructure forms an integral part of the Local Plan vision, strategic objectives 12 and 13, and the delivery of the spatial strategy and the distribution of growth proposed by Policy ST1. Additionally, it is considered that the Plan, particularly the site-specific policies seek to ensure that the scale of proposed growth does not lead to a severe impact on the wider road network.

The approach taken is considered to be further justified in that the strategic impacts to transport infrastructure have been robustly assessed through a comprehensive and regularly updated transport evidence base as identified above. This, at a more local level, has informed the necessary transport infrastructure provision in relation to the location and scale of development and the mitigation measures within site-specific policies (as evidenced by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2022 [BG-041]).

The Council considers the requirements to Policies ST54 and ST55 to be clear, by providing a framework for development to contribute towards enhancements to existing highway infrastructure (both strategically and at a local level), to reduce the need to travel by car and to promote a choice of sustainable travel modes.

Policy ST54 is considered effective as it provides a clear framework at Part 2 within which proposals should demonstrate what impact(s), individual and cumulative, they have on the existing transport network and is also clear that mitigation may be required, and the basis upon which this will be assessed. This is considered to provide an effective framework within which the Local Highways Authority can operate and seek to manage growth in the district.

The framework within Part 2 of Policy ST55 provides an effective framework, in that it enables site-specific proposals to further consider sustainable transport impacts and opportunities through a Travel Plan and encourages active travel connections where it is practicable to do so.

13.4 Are there any omissions from the Policies? Are they appropriately flexible?

**BDC Response:**

The Council considers there are no further omissions to Policy ST54 and ST55.

The Council considers the provisions of Policy ST54 and Policy ST55 are sufficiently flexible to assess impact(s) on transport infrastructure at a local level from all types and scale of development.

Both policies require site-specific transport assessments proportionate to the type and nature of the proposal. As such, it is considered that this provides appropriate scope for further flexibility on case-by case basis, subject to the findings of transport assessments and travel plans at the time of application.