

Ms Carmel Edwards  
Programme Officer  
C/o Queen's Buildings,  
Potter Street,  
Worksop  
S80 2AH  
Via – [programmeofficer@carmeledwards.com](mailto:programmeofficer@carmeledwards.com)

**Catherine Townend**  
**Spatial Planner**  
Highways England  
Floor 9, The Cube,  
199 Wharfside Street  
Birmingham  
B1 1RN

[www.nationalhighways.co.uk](http://www.nationalhighways.co.uk)

20 January 2023

Dear Ms Edwards,

**Bassetlaw Local Plan Examination in Public (EiP) - National Highways Current Position (Matter 13)**

As requested by the Inspector(s), this letter summarises our current position with respect of the transport evidence base underpinning the Bassetlaw Local Plan. As per our previous response to Bassetlaw District Council and our hearing statements submitted to you on 3 November 2022, our principal interest is the impact of local plan growth on the A1 trunk road which constitutes part of the Strategic Road Network.

It is our understanding that Bassetlaw District Council ('the Council'), supported by transport consultants Tetra Tech, consider that a robust assessment of the transport impacts of the plan have been undertaken. Whilst this may be the case, we have maintained throughout our engagement with the Council, that certain data underpinning the transport assessment, in particular the traffic modelling work, needed to be provided to National Highways for verification.

This was still the position at the start of the Examination in Public on 29 November 2022 when three new documents were tabled. Only two of those documents were of potential relevance to National Highways, those being:

- BDC-22 - Bassetlaw Local Plan Transport Study Addendum - SRN Technical Note, November 2022, 29.11.2022
- BDC-23 - Bassetlaw Local Plan Transport Study Addendum - A57 Link Capacity Review, November 2022, 29.11.2022

It should be noted that we only received the first document (the 'SRN Technical Note') the day before the EiP commenced (23 November 2022) and had not previously received the second document ('A57 Link Capacity Review'). As such, time was needed to review both documents to understand if all outstanding matters had been addressed.

Following a high-level review of both documents, it became apparent that the second document ('A57 Link Capacity Review') did not have a bearing on the SRN and was prepared to address comments from the Local Highway Authority (Nottinghamshire County Council).

A more detailed review of the SRN Technical Note was undertaken, along with the verification of traffic flow data (underpinning the SRN Technical Note), submitted to us on 2 December 2022. This review generated some additional queries which were communicated to the Council and Tetra Tech in our email of 29 December 2022.

The below provides a summary and explanation of the additional information requested, and the current status of such:

### **1. Update to the ARCADY model parameters**

ARCADY is an industry approved traffic modelling software tool used to simulate traffic flows at non-signalised roundabouts. For the Bassetlaw Transport Study, ARCADY has been used to simulate the effects of traffic flows arising from local plan allocations at the A1 Apleyhead western roundabout. We are content with the use of this modelling tool for this junction but raised a concern about the application of certain geometries for the Apleyhead roundabout, which could misrepresent the capacity of the junction. We asked for these geometries to be amended and the model to be re-run.

Update: Information to address this point was provided to us in an email from Tetra Tech on 11 January 2023 and subsequently discussed at a meeting with the Council and Tetra Tech on 19 January 2023. In this meeting, the updated ARCADY model files were requested, and were subsequently provided to us on 20 January 2023. Our Transport Consultants AECOM now need to commence a review of the updated modelling work and associated supporting documents to verify the changes and review the results. We need to allow two weeks for this to be completed.

### **2. Clarify the proposed mitigation scheme and its deliverability**

Our review of the SRN Technical Note found that the mitigation scheme proposed for the A1 Apleyhead junction had been reduced in scale compared to the indicative scheme

identified in the Bassetlaw Transport Study. We sought explanation for why the scheme had changed as none was provided.

Current position: Following a meeting with the Council and Tectra Tech on 19 January 2023, it is now understood that the mitigation requirement for the A1 Appleyhead junction has been scaled back following the removal of the Bassetlaw Garden Village from the Local Plan.

It is further understood that no mitigation affecting the A1 overbridge (between the A1 Appleyhead eastern and western roundabouts) is being proposed. As such, potential concerns relating to the overbridge structure (a National Highways asset) which might affect deliverability, will not be of concern. This is assuming that the proposed mitigation is sufficient, following our modelling review as described above.

### **3. Clarify 'covid adjustment factor' applied to 2021 survey data**

We noted from our review of the SRN Technical Note that a 'Covid adjustment factor' had been applied to the baseline (existing) 2021 traffic flows used in the assessments. No explanation was provided to indicate what that adjustment factor was. We requested this explanation to understand how the adjustment factor would affect baseline traffic flows which were subsequently used in the previously mentioned ARCADY model.

Update: This information has been provided to us in an email from Tectra Tech of 11 January 2023 and was subsequently discussed at a meeting with the Council and Tectra Tech on 19 January 2023. We have commenced review of the methodology adopted to determine these adjustment factors. If deemed acceptable, we will need to verify that these factors have been applied to the updated ARCADY modelling work (described earlier) in accordance with the methodology.

### **4. Amend committed development employment (B1, B2 & B8) trip rates**

Our review of the SRN Technical Note highlighted that the traffic generation rates ('trip rates') used for the committed employment sites appeared to be significantly lower than the rates approved in November for the Local Plan sites. We asked for those trip rates to be amended or clarified.

Update: Following our meeting with the Council and Tectra Tech on 19 January 2023, we now understand that that the lower trip rates used within the previous ARCADY modelling had been applied in error. However, Tetra Tech have advised that these have

now been corrected and the latest ARCADY modelling updated accordingly. The modelling and associated supporting documents will need to be reviewed (as described above) to verify that the updated trip rates are acceptable, and that this change has been correctly applied to the updated ARCADY models.

### **Retford Transport Assessment Addendum**

In addition to the above items, we were made aware earlier this month that a Retford Transport Assessment (TA) Addendum had been submitted to Nottinghamshire County Council. It was understood that this document may change some of the assumptions about the impact on the A1, and as such, we requested to be consulted on this document.

I can confirm that we were issued with a copy of the above document via email on 11 January 2023. This email also included an explanation that the Retford TA Addendum relates to the local highway network and presents the findings from some sensitivity testing at three junctions within Retford town centre. It was stated that the sensitivity testing examines likely outcomes if some of the robust assumptions applied in the Retford TA are relaxed and has no bearing on the SRN or the findings of the SRN Technical Note.

We believe that the above is likely to be the case, however, we would like to undertake a high-level review of this document before we can accept the above assumption. This will be carried out in parallel with the modelling review as mentioned above.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

In summary, whilst we appear to have received all the outstanding items as indicated in our email to the Council of 29 December 2022, we are still undertaking a review of some of those items. A review of the modelling work is expected to take approximately two weeks. Upon that review, there may be additional items of clarification, on that we cannot be sure at this time.

However, based on the information received and the discussions had with the Council and Tectra Tech on 19 January 2023, we consider it quite likely that we will reach a position of finding the transport evidence base with respect of the SRN to be robust, and the proposed mitigation to be suitable.

In addition, I shall be pleased to attend the Transport Hearing on 24 January 2024 to discuss our position further if required. I will be accompanied by my Transport Consultants AECOM (Mr Daniel Law), to assist me in answering any technical questions.

In the meantime, if I can provide anything further ahead of the Transport Hearing, please do not hesitate to contact me on the details provided.

Yours sincerely

*Catherine Townsend*

Catherine Townend  
Spatial Planner  
OD Midlands  
Email: [catherine.townend@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:catherine.townend@nationalhighways.co.uk)