

Economic Development

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04 September 2015

Dear Lindsay,

CARLISLE DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN (2015-2030) – TRANSPORT IMPLICATIONS

Thank you for your ongoing engagement on the above and your most recent comments clarifying your position on a number of outstanding issues from our previous discussions. I have shared and discussed these latest comments with colleagues at Cumbria County Council and having done so I now write to set out a suggested way ahead with regards to what are considered to constitute the residual key issues.

Further modelling of Junction 43 and 44 of the M6

In terms of context the transport improvements study, Parsons Brinckerhoff used a cut-off RFC of 0.95 when considering junctions for further assessment. This threshold was considered appropriate in the circumstances given the purpose of the study to provide evidence that the transport impact of local plan development has been quantified, and to show that potential improvements are feasible and deliverable. It is also considered important to acknowledge that the list of improvements in the study is not definitive and further work on improvements required to support development, including those to the strategic road network, will still be needed as specific and detailed proposals are brought forward.

Modelling undertaken to date identifies that the maximum RFC of junction 43 of the M6 is 0.85, in both the morning and evening peak in 2030, on the A69(E) and A69(W) entry arms respectively.

It is considered pertinent to note that these capacity issues are in the 2030 scenario and as such the issues directly related to development at South Carlisle (a broad location for strategic growth from 2025 onwards). Due to the inherent uncertainty related to the

specifics of what (and where) development in this broad location would look like, it is considered most logical to consider this junction in more detail when masterplanning for South Carlisle is at a more advanced stage. Whilst assumptions were made for the purposes of the modelling undertaken, these assumptions were high level (reflecting the fact that Carlisle South remains at concept stage) and at this tentative stage are likely to overestimate the traffic generation of this development area.

The City Council are committed to ensuring that Highways England will be engaged at the appropriate stages as the masterplan for Carlisle South develops. Aided by ATLAS – the Homes and Communities Agency’s major project support team – a programme for work to govern the masterplanning process is emerging and we should be in a position to share this with you shortly. This would appear an appropriate time to brief you with a view to making opportunities for future input clear and to discuss the best strategy with regards to your engagement going forward.

Modelling undertaken to date identifies that the maximum RFC of junction 44 of the M6 is 0.94, in the morning peak in 2025 (and 0.95 in 2030) on the CNDR entry. The capacity issues highlighted at Junction 44 occur at the CNDR (A689 west) approach arm. This is not on the circulatory carriageway, and queuing here would not in the City Council’s opinion impact on the strategic road network. The junction was also signalised relatively recently in advance of the opening of the CNDR to increase its capacity. Consequently it is not considered that any further modelling or the identification of additional mitigation is required or would be of value at J44 at this time.

Sustainable Transport Measures

The Transport Improvements study details the evidence in support of the sustainable transport measures in reducing traffic demand. The evidence is mostly literature-based but concludes that a five per cent reduction in traffic demand is reasonable. The measures would not have any impact on long-distance trips on the strategic road network, but they may have an impact on some short-distance trips, and especially those that use the motorway junctions e.g. trips from Carlisle using the M6 to access Kingmoor Park. In any case, the RFC figures quoted above and the analysis provided in the improvements study do not include these potential effects of sustainable transport measures.

Way Forward

Based on the above more detailed interpretation of the modelling undertaking it is not considered necessary or of obvious value to undertake additional modelling with a view to identifying improvement interventions at Junctions 43 and 44 of the M6 at this time. Clearly the need to keep this position under review throughout the life course of the Local Plan is acknowledged and the City Council, in concert with Cumbria County Council, are committed to working together with Highways England to do so. Should reviews in due

course reveal that solutions to problems affecting the strategic road network are necessary, both Council's would be committed to working with Highways England to identify solutions and consequently in securing funding for and the implementation of any necessary improvement measures.

Whilst the City Council would welcome your views on the suggested way forward and a discussion on the scope and nature of review measures (including how these can be put into effect), ultimately given the stage of preparation of the Local Plan any significant outstanding concerns at this stage would have to be formally raised through the process of the examination.

I look forward to hearing from you and further ongoing positive dialogue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Garry Legg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'G' and 'L'.

G Legg

Investment & Policy Manager

Economic Development

cc. Paul Landreth, Cumbria County Council
Bruce Allan, JMP