

Sarah Legge  
Melton Borough Council  
via email

Date: 19 September 2023  
My Ref: JW/MMDR  
Contact: Janna Walker  
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Dear Sarah

**Re: Melton Local Plan and MMDRS**

Following recent discussions regarding the funding challenges related to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) and Melton Mowbray Distributor Road South (MMDRS), I write to confirm that, as Local Highway Authority support for the Local Plan Strategy including Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood (MSSN) is not dependent on HIF funding, it is an opportunity to accelerate delivery.

As LHA Leicestershire County Council (LCC) supported Melton Borough Council (MBC) on the development of the Melton Local Plan (the Plan) and the development of a transport evidence to aid the successful delivery of the objectives set out within the Plan. It understands and supports the transport strategy including the need for a Melton Mowbray Distributor Road in order to deliver the planned growth in Melton to 2036. It worked closely with Melton Borough Council on developing a robust evidence base that identified the transport issues in the town and the impact of those issues on Melton's ability to accommodate future growth. In recognition of this, LCC and MBC developed the Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy, which includes the MMDR both the Northern Eastern (NE) section and the Southern (S) section as key components.

It is important to note that at the time when the Plan was being considered at Examination in Public (EiP), no public funding of any kind had been secured towards delivery of an MMDR (NE, or S). The County Council's position as the Local Highway Authority (LHA) was, as set out in the report to its Cabinet of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2015, predicated on the recognition that a scheme of this scale would likely take the lifetime of the Plan to deliver (i.e. to 2036). It would accept a proportionate and reasonable deterioration in traffic conditions in Melton Mowbray as a result of developments being permitted prior to full completion of an MMDR, on the condition that such developments are contributing to the delivery of the MMDR and wider strategy.

The LHA gave evidence to that effect at the EiP, including expressing the view that it was reasonable to suppose that the scheme was deliverable within the Plan period. In coming to the view that the Plan was sound fundamentally, the Inspector concurred with the LHA's position.

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It is further important to note that at the time of the Plan's adoption, HIF, unlike the Large Local Majors Funding used to support delivery of the MMDR NE (only secured post EiP), had not been made available and was not a key consideration in Leicestershire County Council's ongoing support for the local plan. However, when the opportunity arose, LCC applied for the forward funding element of HIF as a potential delivery mechanism for the MMDRS. Leicestershire County Council resolved to accept the HIF award at a meeting of the Cabinet on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2019 and noted that the funding was sought on the basis that the primary focus of this scheme was to **facilitate/accelerate** the full potential of the planned development and additional development potential on the south side of Melton Mowbray, comprising the Melton South Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood, and this would bring forward the **early delivery of the southern section** of the MMDR.

LCC remains committed to maximising opportunities for appropriate external funding into Leicestershire and as such will take all possible steps to retain HIF investment in MMDRS, providing funding conditions are reasonable, within the financial constraints currently affecting the Council as a whole. However, HIF should be viewed as a vehicle to accelerate delivery for part of the MMTS, not as the strategy itself. If, for any reason, LCC and MBC are unable to take forward the HIF opportunity, LCC is committed to seeking alternative delivery mechanisms for the MSSN and MMDRS in line with the local plan policies SS4 and IN1 and the IMMTS. In accordance with the position set out in its September 2015 Cabinet Report and the position set out at the Plan's EiP, LCC still remains of the view that there is a reasonable prospect of delivery within the Plan's timeframe to 2036.

Kind regards

Janna



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