Inspector Question 88

In my question 52 I sought the Council's observations on representations commenting on the capability of key elements of the network, on the poor validation of the County's transport model and on the identification and quantification of effects which the road proposals are intended to deal with. In addition to those points, I would welcome the Council's observations on the points made in paragraphs 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 of the representations 997 and 2680 from John Disley of Oxfordshire County council concerning the soundness of certain provisions of the plan and on representation 1555 Mike Taylor of Chilmark Consulting Ltd on behalf of Barwood Land and Estates.

AVDC Response

Representation 1555

Representation 1555 contends that Policy T1 is not based on fully justified evidence as to why the various highway road links are needed and points to a lack of funding and delivery certainty which is said to be inconsistent with the NPPF.

Aylesbury is a focal point of BCC's road network. The town is connected to the wider highway network via the A41, A418 and A413 and only the A4157 currently provides an internal semi-circular road around the north of the town. Due to the radial highway network structure, high volumes of through traffic are an issue through the town centre. Private vehicles are the primary mode of transport within the study area and car ownership is high amongst residents.

Arterial routes to/from Aylesbury are congested during the morning and evening peak hours, particularly along the A41 and the southern links, based on results from the Countywide model. This will continue to worsen if the significant amount of growth expected in new developments around the town goes ahead without any mitigation measures to the transport network.

Modelling outputs from traffic modelling for Buckinghamshire shows there are high total traffic and HGV flows on all strategic routes into and through Aylesbury town in both AM and PM peaks. Most congestion issues occur in Aylesbury town centre, and strategic routes in and out of the town. Junction delays are clustered in and around Aylesbury, most often at priority junctions with large flows on main roads. There are currently three AQMAs within the study area, in zones where traffic flows are high or heavily used by HGVs. The key problem is the lack of suitable links between the radial routes to enable the use of alternative routes accessing Aylesbury. More information including the validity of the modelling process are to be found in response to The Inspector's Question 52.

The Aylesbury Transport Strategy is effectively the culmination of nearly 40 years of highway/transport planning for Aylesbury and the surrounding villages. A key component of the ATS are a number of new link roads proposed outside the town centre which would together form part of an external circular ring road and redirect through-traffic to peripheral routes rather than through the town centre. The link roads are not bypasses, but intended to divert traffic away from the town centre (whether through-traffic or cross-town traffic). Their implementation also provides an opportunity for a more pedestrian and cycle friendly town centre and space for bus priority and shared paths throughout the town to access the town centre – all in support of the Garden Town.

A key role of the link roads is also to link/connect new developments and create new links to existing built up areas. They will need to be desirable in terms of being more convenient than using the town centre routes (to encourage use), however they will also need to allow

for access and crossing (where necessary). All of this will be considered through the relevant design stages.

It is not accepted that the link road strategy cannot be funded or delivered within the time frame of the plan. Attached is a draft plan which summarises the overall link road strategy for Aylesbury.

The Link Roads are as follows:

Berryfields Western Link Road - A41 Bicester Road to A413 Buckingham Road –provided by developers opened 2014;

North Eastern Link road – A413 Buckingham Road – A418 north of Bierton (subject of HIF Forward Funding Bid awaiting Government announcement);

Eastern Link Road (North) & Stocklake Link (Rural) - A418 north of Bierton – developer funded link road currently under construction to be open 2021;

Stocklake Urban Link – Stocklake Link (Rural) – Town centre Local Growth Fund/developer funding opened 2015;

Eastern Link Road (South) continuation of above scheme crossing Aylesbury Arm of Canal to A41 Woodlands roundabout – developer funded link road associated with Woodlands major development area (D-AGT3)/planning application (16/01040/AOP) – awaiting completion of S106 Agreement (in addition Local Growth Fund contribution already secured support implementation of this section of road) programmed for completion 2012;

New Woodlands roundabout junction on A41 funding secured through HIF Marginal Viability Bid – complete 2021;

Southern Link Road - A41 Woodlands junction to A413 Wendover Road- developer funded Link road associated with Hampden Fields major development area (D-AGT4)/planning application (16/00424/AOP)– awaiting completion of S.106 Agreement and programmed for completion 2021;

South East Link Road – A413 Wendover Road to B4443 Lower Road- (D-AGT1) part developer funded, part Local Growth Fund contribution and bridge over Chiltern Railway funded via an Assurance from HS2;

Stoke Mandeville bypass – B4443 Lower Road to A4010 Risborough Road south of Stoke Mandeville –provide by an Assurance from HS2- programmed to open 2021;

South Western Link Road Stoke Mandeville Bypass to A418 Oxford Road –– (D-AGT2) developer funded scheme (AYLXX); and finally

Western Link Road - A418 Oxford Road - A41 Bicester Road - (subject of HIF Forward Funding Bid awaiting Government announcement).

The Aylesbury Transport Strategy has highlighted that the transport network in Aylesbury will change considerably over the plan period. Aylesbury is almost unique as there are plans to provide additional roads which can play a considerable part in helping deliver and leverage a range of transport improvements around and across the town. The existing road network is congested and if new links were not proposed, the town would stagnate and prevent future economic growth given the development planned.

The mitigation modelling results have identified that the outer link road network does have a positive impact around Aylesbury. This strategy has confirmed that the transport improvements identified, and confirmed by stakeholders, should all be investigated further.

While the scale of improvements will differ by sector across Aylesbury, there are opportunities to enhance and improve the highway, public transport, cycling and walking networks across Aylesbury and the surrounding area. Best practice and similar success stories from other transport strategies will be used to further define and shape the transport improvements proposed. Links to future technology and ensuring Aylesbury Garden Town has a transport network fit for the next decades are paramount considerations.

The Link roads are justified to support the continued development of the Aylesbury Garden Town and as outlined above are realistic both in terms of their deliverability & funding (accord with paras 154, 173 & 177 NPPF).

Oxford County Council Representations (OCC) (representations 997 and 2680)

The concerns raised by OCC concerning Policy T1 and, at that stage (Nov 2017), that VALP did not take into account cross border growth and infrastructure needs have been subject to an on going programme of work leading to Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) being agreed and signed up to in February 2018.

The MoUs are with Cherwell District Council - “Position regarding current and future working arrangements on strategic cross border planning issues between Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) and Cherwell District (CDC)” February 2018 (CD.DTC.005); and “Duty to Cooperate Memorandum of Understanding between South Oxfordshire District Council, Wycombe District Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Buckinghamshire County Council (“the Councils) February 2018 (CD.DTC 012). It should be noted that these latest MoUs supersede the two previous 2013 MoUs with Cherwell & both County Councils about sharing transport modelling evidence.

Contrary to the thrust of the OCC response, all relevant Councils have been aware of cross border transport/education issues and the need to work together for a number of years.

OCC Point 15/ 16 CD.DTC 005 confirms in the Area of Agreement section that there are no significant strategic cross border planning issues between the two Councils. CD.DTC 012 in paragraph 18 commits all parties to work together to ensure that the potential issues identified here are covered (should that be necessary).

OCC Point 17/19 – The issues raised about Thame are specifically referenced in CD.DTC 012 – first item after paragraph 18.

OCC Point 18 – agreed (and supported by BCC) and covered by existing policies in VALP promoting Active Travel options (Policy T4).

OCC Point 20 - Bucks County Council confirms, “BCC have a good working relationship with education colleagues in OCC and regularly discuss issues such as cross border flows and catchment areas (a meeting was held a couple of weeks ago). Had the new settlement of 4,500 homes in Haddenham been included within the VALP then we would have looked for a joint solution with OCC due to the large numbers of children from Haddenham that travel to Lord Williams’s School. However the relatively small scale growth proposed in Haddenham and our secondary expansion proposals around Aylesbury town are unlikely to impact significantly on existing cross border pupil flows. Although as OCC state we will continue to monitor pupil and population trends close to the border with Oxfordshire and work with OCC to develop any proposals necessary to ensure we meet our respective statutory sufficiency duties”.

AVDC continues to be involved /working together with all partners on VALP issues and on National projects including East West Rail & the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.

Aylesbury Link Roads

January 4, 2018

Berryfields Western link
- **Speed limit:** 50 mph (30 mph through residential)
- **Length:** 2.9km
- **Width:** Single
- **Status:** Delivered
- **Completion:** 31/09/2014 — 1

North East Link Road
- **Speed limit:** 40 mph
- **Length:** Unknown
- **Width:** Undefined
- **Status:** Future Link
- **Completion:** To be confirmed — 2

Eastern Link Road (North)
- **Speed limit:** 40 mph
- **Length:** 2.1km
- **Width:** Single
- **Status:** In Design
- **Completion:** 2021 Q1 — 3

Stocklake Link Road (Rural)
- **Speed limit:** 40 mph (30 mph through residential)
- **Length:** 1.98km
- **Width:** Single
- **Status:** In Construction
- **Completion:** 2021 Q1 — 4

Eastern Link Road (South)
- **Speed limit:** 40 mph
- **Length:** 1.9km
- **Width:** Single
- **Status:** In Design
- **Completion:** 2021 Q2 — 6

Stocklake Link Road (Urban)
- **Speed limit:** 30 mph
- **Length:** 0.8km
- **Width:** Single
- **Status:** Delivered
- **Completion:** December 2015 — 5

Southern Link Road
- **Speed limit:** 40 mph
- **Length:** 2.5km
- **Width:** Dual
- **Status:** In Design
- **Completion:** 2021 Q4 — 7

South East Aylesbury Link Road
- **Speed limit:** 40 mph
- **Length:** 1.1km
- **Width:** Dual
- **Status:** In Design
- **Completion:** 2020 Q3 — 8

Stoke Mandeville Bypass
- **Speed limit:** 40 mph
- **Length:** 1.3km
- **Width:** Single
- **Status:** HS2 Delivery
- **Completion:** 2021 (tbc) — 9

A413/A418 Link
- **Speed limit:** 40 mph (30 mph through residential)
- **Length:** Unknown
- **Width:** Undefined
- **Status:** Future Link
- **Completion:** To be confirmed — 10

Western Link Road
- **Speed limit:** 40 mph
- **Length:** Unknown
- **Width:** Undefined
- **Status:** Future Link
- **Completion:** To be confirmed — 11

Berryfields · Aylesbury · Stone · Aston Clinton · Weston Turville · Stoke Mandeville

Residential area
Future Development
HS2 route
Existing Road Network
Delivered
In Development
Future Link

Link	Speed limit	Length	Width	Status	Construction Start-End	Delivery mechanism	Other info
Berryfields Western Link Road	50mph (40mph through residential from roundabout)	2.9km	Single (no passive provision)	Delivered	Delivered 31/09/2014	Developer funded and constructed	Not yet adopted
North East Link Road	40mph		Undefined	Aspirational	To be confirmed	Unknown	Currently no allocation in VALP, no land available and no funding available
Stocklake Link Road (Urban)	30 mph	0.8km	Single (no land for dualling)	Delivered	Delivered Jan-Dec 2015	LGF/LTB and BCC led	
Stocklake Link Road (Rural)	40mph (30 mph in built up areas)	1.98km	Single (No process for dualling but a 23m corridor secured)	In construction	2021 Q1	Developer led (Barretts)	
Eastern Link Road (North)	40 mph	2.1km	Single (with passive provision for dualling)	In design	January 2016 – January 2021	Developer led (Barretts)	Required to work together with Woodlands to tie in designs
Eastern Link Road (South)	40 mph	1.9km	Single (with passive provision for dual but not providing a dual structure over canal or dual embankment)	In design	April 2019 – April 2021	LGF funded. BCC led.	Woodlands.
Southern Link Road	40 mph	2.5km	Dual	In design	2021	Developer led and to be delivered by developer	Hampton Fields
South East Aylesbury Link Road	40 mph	1.1 km	Dual	In design	July 2019 – July 2020	LGF/HS2 funded. BCC is scheme promoter	
Stoke Mandeville Bypass	40mph	1.3km	Single (no passive provision)	In design	2020 (TBC)	HS2 led and funded	
A413/A418 Link (South West Aylesbury Link Road)	40 mph (maybe 30mph in sections where close to residential)	Unknown	Unknown	In VALP	To be confirmed	Provision of the link road is part of the requirements for the development of SW Aylesbury in the VALP	Pre-application discussions started. Planning application expected early 2018. Highways DM asking for early delivery of single carriageway with passive provision for dual carriageway
Western Link Road	40mph	Unknown	Unknown	Aspirational	To be confirmed	Unknown	Significant environmental and land ownership barriers. No allocation in VALP.