

Open Floor Hearing 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Post Hearing Note of Statement Given

Relevant Representation: RR-072

Interested Party Reference number: 20049655

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Speaking as a Chartered Town Planner, local resident, local business owner and planning agent for local developers, businesses and residents.

I support the proposed scheme put forward by National Highways. Wanted to speak in support because generally only those objecting to proposals tend to participate.

The route has many challenges, whether the A46 bypass was built in the correct place initially is a matter which is no longer for debate. The current dualling proposal can only realistically be on the current alignment. The scheme is constrained by effectively being like ‘threading eye of a needle’, due to the constraints posed by the River Trent, the East Coast Mainline, the A1 as well as existing development. The bypass is somewhat unusual by being only 600m from the Castle, bypasses tend not to be so close to the historic cores of settlements.

I want the Examining Authority to consider that the A46 doesn’t operate in isolation, taking into account the following points:

- The existing bypass has two incompatible roles - operating as a through route and having a local role in getting access from villages into Newark;
- It also has a strategic role in being a River Trent crossing;
- The fundamental problem with the current bypass is the at-grade alignment of the A46 Newark Bypass means that local and through traffic has to mix at every junction. This

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conflict creates unpredictability in journey times - from my location in Sutton on Trent it should take around 12 minutes to reach Newark from our business; however, on many occasions this can take us anywhere between 50 minutes to an hour. This unpredictability has economic consequences for local businesses and residents. Indeed it has become so difficult to get to/from Newark at times that we no longer use Newark as the principal destination for our business or leisure activities but instead travel to other towns, which despite being further away can be reached more quickly.

In terms of the design put forward I have the following main comments:

- Of fundamental importance is the grade separation at Cattle Market Roundabout - this junction links two main roads providing access from a large swathe of Newark's hinterland into the town. Due to the constant traffic flow on the A46 it can be very difficult and at times impossible to get from the A616 or the A617 onto the roundabout. As an example the other Friday (4<sup>th</sup> October 2024) at 5pm the A617 eastbound backed up all the way past Averham to the traffic lights with the former A612 junction to Southwell (Main Road). The A616 very regularly backs up to Muskham Lakes; when the A617 is closed due to flooding (which occurs regularly), that traffic is diverted to the A616; when this occurs the A616 commonly backs up past Little Carlton.
- I have reservations about the effectiveness of the at grade proposals at the Farndon roundabout and the Winthorpe roundabout, but hopefully the signalisation will address this.

I want to ask the Examining Authority to consider A46 inter-linkages as follows:

- Newark Castle Level Crossing is just 390m from the Cattle Market roundabout. Since it was automated it unfortunately regularly breaks down, meaning that it remains closed. It last failed on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2024. It is subject to usage of 84 Trains per day (source ABC Railway Guide), this means at 3 mins closed per train, that the crossing will be closed for 4hrs 12mins or 17.5% of a 24-hour period. In the last week I have measured closure times of 3.07 mins for a single passenger train heading towards Lincoln and 4.14 mins for a double pass for a passenger train heading towards Lincoln and an oil train heading towards Nottingham)
- Newark Southern Relief Road - new roundabout approx. 730m south of Farndon Roundabout (I note that this was at the consultation stage shown in DCO limits boundary but that it no longer appears to be in Order limit). How this roundabout will operate has a direct impact on the operation of Farndon roundabout.
- The Newark Lorry Park entrance is only 115m from the Cattle Market Roundabout.
- A key inter-linkage is with the A1 and A17 at the Winthorpe and Friendly Farmer roundabouts. In particular the traffic on the A46 southbound at the Friendly Farmer

roundabout means that the southbound A1 slip road has significant queues that build up. The A1 effectively has third prioritisation onto the Friendly Farmer roundabout because the A46 takes first priority, followed by the A17 taking second priority. The A1 southbound slip road queuing extends back onto the A1 southbound regularly often resulting in 20/30 min queues on the A1 southbound. For example on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 1.15pm the queue on the A1 southbound was 25mins, purely due to the slip road queuing to get onto the A46 Friendly Farmer roundabout. Northbound queuing on the A1 slip road onto Brownhills roundabout also occurs but this tends to be more predictable and related to peak-time.

- We are aware that some of our business clients are reluctant to locate on Newark Industrial Estate because of access difficulties. The junction of Brunel Drive with Lincoln Road is only 120m from Brownhills Roundabout and for much of the day the queuing from the roundabout along Lincoln Road extends beyond the traffic lights with Brunel Drive, making it very difficult and at times impossible to actually exit the industrial estate.
- The Newark & Notts Showground hosts a number of major events and relies on the Friendly Farmer and Winthorpe roundabout to distribute its traffic to access points.
- The Friendly Farmer roundabout is adjacent to the Currys Distribution Centre which currently has 140,000m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace. This area is likely to grow with additional B8 floorspace, there is an additional 37,000m<sup>2</sup> warehouse permitted under 22/02427/RMAM that was indicated to be for Currys. The LPA has also undertaken an EIA Screening Opinion under 24/SCO/00004 that was sought for a 47ha additional site for B8 storage and distribution. Economically the A46/A1/A17 is a key location.
- The Newark Urban Area is going to be subject to significant growth. There are 3 strategic sites at Newark - NAP 2A (Land South of Newark for 3,150 dwellings & 50Ha employment; NAP 2B (Land East of Newark for 1,000 dwellings); and NAP 2C (Land around Fernwood for 3,200 dwellings & 15Ha employment).