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Date

26 March 2012

Email

Dear Simon

## **Winchester District Local Plan – Botley Bypass**

In the light of the draft Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan and the imminent progression of the Winchester Local Plan a review of our policy position on Botley Bypass has been carried out and a formal report was considered by the Executive Member for Environment and Transport at his Decision Day on 6th March. I am therefore writing to you and to Bernie Topham to formally advise our position as Highway Authority on the safeguarding of Botley Bypass and to suggest some specific changes to the Local Plans so that we are able to support their soundness at the next stage. The main implications are for Eastleigh Borough Council but I wanted to ensure you were also aware of the key issues involved.

As you will know the draft Eastleigh Local Plan states that Botley Bypass is a conditional requirement of development. As highlighted in our consultation response to Eastleigh it is recognised that in the prevailing context of the future development within the South East Plan, a bypass at Botley was identified in LTP3 (approved in 2011) as a proposed strategic route suitable for safeguarding over the life of the LTP (20+ year strategy period). Transport for South Hampshire Joint Committee considered research on traffic impacts from the planned development in Southern Hampshire previously and concluded that there was no technical justification for requiring the construction of Botley By-pass based on the level of development proposed. The County Council has not been provided with any additional transport assessment work which specifically justifies Botley Bypass. Therefore the specific link between development and the Bypass is not proven and we have advised Eastleigh that this link should be removed from their plan, as it is fundamentally unsound in the absence of supporting transport assessment evidence.

*Director of Economy, Transport and Environment  
Stuart Jarvis BSc DipTP FCIHT MRTPI*

As you will know the Winchester Local Plan places much less emphasis on the provision of the Botley By-pass and the issues raised in our Pre Submission consultation response to you are solely about the intention to continue with a 'safeguarding' policy. A review of advice in PPS12 reveals that the inclusion of specific safeguarding proposals for infrastructure in Local Plans is unlikely to be considered sound unless there is justification and certainty over delivery. One relevant section of PPS12 states, *'there is no point in proceeding with options for the core strategy which cannot be delivered as a result of failure to obtain the agreement of key delivery agencies.... such as the Highway Authority'*. As explained above it is our view that there is no transport related justification for the bypass and hence no likelihood of a bypass being required, funded or delivered within the Local Plan period. On this basis we advise that specific references to Botley Bypass and the safeguarding of land to support such a scheme should be removed. This is already covered in our Pre Submission consultation response but I wanted to ensure that you are fully aware.

We do acknowledge the recent designation of an Air Quality Management Area for Botley High Street, and we have taken this into account in reviewing our position. Whilst we accept that a By-pass would significantly contribute to addressing this matter, it is our view that at a cost of £30M plus, it is not a reasonable or proportionate response to the matter. There is very limited developer funding available to support developing formal proposals for the By-Pass, and as stated above, we do not consider that further funding could reasonably be secured from the future development identified in the emerging Local Plans. We have advised the Borough Council of this.

However, formal abandonment of a scheme to bypass Botley village is premature at this stage, though we consider that such a scheme could only be delivered in the longer term future, well beyond the emerging Local Plan periods. It is our suggestion that any scheme to bypass Botley Village should be regarded as a longer term policy aspiration and again we have highlighted this as part of our response to your recent Pre Submission consultation.

I hope this above is helpful I am happy to ensure that relevant County Council staff are available to work through any issues this raises with your team to resolve matters before the local plan document is submitted for Examination.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Jarvis  
Director of Economy, Transport and Environment