



Independent Examination of the Hartlepool Local Plan – Inspectors Matters, Issues and Questions for Examination (August 2017)

Client: Cecil M Yuill Ltd

Proposal: Response to Matter 6 – Transport and Infrastructure

Date: September 2017

Ref: NE2428

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Document control

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Project:		
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Prepared by:	Checked by:	Approved By:

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Issue 1 – Whether the overall approach to transport is justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

Q1 - What is the likely effect of the proposed scale and distribution of development on existing transport infrastructure and traffic levels? How has this been assessed and is the transport evidence up-to-date?

- 1.1 The Council's Local Plan and Local Infrastructure Plan (HLP05/1) clearly identify the constraints associated with the current two principal access points into Hartlepool via the A179 to the north and the A689 to the south of the town. The Local Plan also identifies that the level of growth associated with the proposed developments within the town will add further traffic and congestion to the network, resulting in *"pressure at certain pinch points leading to further delays and unreliability...(Local Plan paragraph 83.9) "*.
- 1.2 The Council, working with Highways England, has identified the need for an additional grade-separated junction on the A19 at Elwick which will help to relieve pressures on the existing two routes to/from the A19 via the A179 and the A689, address current safety concerns on the A19 at Elwick, reduce traffic rat-running through Elwick village and deliver additional highway capacity which will help to deliver the Plan's sustainable housing growth strategy.
- 1.3 Cecil M Yuill Ltd is supportive of the proposed infrastructure improvements on the A19 at Elwick and has worked closely alongside the Council to identify the scale of impacts of proposed development within Hartlepool. Cecil M Yuill Ltd, through its development at Quarry Farm, will assist in the delivery of the long term safety and capacity improvements and has also identified short term mitigation works that can be delivered in the meantime to address safety concerns at the A19.
- 1.4 Whilst much of the Council's evidence base appears to be up-to-date, the Local Infrastructure Plan makes reference to a scheme to upgrade the A19/A179 junction to include the signalisation of the A19 northbound exit slip road onto A179 and other capacity improvements. These works are those associated with the consented Upper Warren development to the north of Hartlepool.
- 1.5 However, the Local Infrastructure Plan makes no reference to Highways England's current scheme for the full signalisation of the A19/A179 junction – works which are due to be delivered in 2018. The Highways England scheme will deliver safety and capacity benefits to the junction and these works have been designed to cater for the traffic associated with the proposed Quarry Farm allocation and other developments in Hartlepool.

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- 1.6 The Local Infrastructure Plan should also make reference to the potential for the grade-separated junction at Elwick to be delivered in phases, such that the early phases can include the closure of the central reservation gaps at Elwick and Dalton Piercy, addressing the significant safety concerns associated with current queuing traffic on the A19 mainline and the difficulties for traffic making right turning movements onto and off the A19 in these locations.
- 1.7 Cecil M Yuill Ltd has worked closely alongside Hartlepool Borough Council and Highways England to ensure that the proposed full signalisation of the A19/A179 junction will also cater for traffic that would be diverted to this junction as a result of the short-term safety mitigation works at the A19 junctions at Elwick and Dalton Piercy.
- 1.8 Cecil M Yuill Ltd, through its assessment work conducted in support of the Quarry Farm planning application, has also shown that the traffic associated with development at Quarry Farm can be accommodated within the local highway network and this assessment work has been accepted by the Council.

Q2 - Highways England [representation Pub 0130] advise that an evidence base to demonstrate that the Plan's approach to transport is soundly based exists but needs to be collated into a single resource. Is there a need to do this and has the transport evidence evolved since the Plan's submission in March 2017?

- 1.9 The Council's evidence base identifying the infrastructure requirements associated with the delivery of the proposed development sites within the Local Plan is set out in a number of documents, including the Local Infrastructure Plan, the Strategic Outline Business Case prepared for the Elwick grade-separated junction and bypass and other documents including Transport Assessments prepared in support of planning applications.
- 1.10 The Local Infrastructure Plan will be updated throughout the Plan period, to take account of the rate of delivery and to reflect potential changes in infrastructure delivery, sources of funding and other related strategies.
- 1.11 Cecil M Yuill Ltd therefore agrees with Highways England that it is important for the current evidence base to be consolidated within a single resource, such that it is clear and transparent for all parties to understand how the current package of infrastructure proposals relates to the current Local Plan development forecasts and to identify how and when this infrastructure is required.
- 1.12 The Council's responses to the Local Plan consultation identify that their work relating to the design of the proposed works for the grade-separated junction at Elwick and the associated

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Elwick bypass have evolved since the Plan was submitted in March 2017 and the design work is ongoing.

- 1.13 Cecil M Yuill Ltd is supportive of the Council's continued commitment to the design and delivery of these essential major infrastructure works.

Q3 - With reference to Table 2 of the LIP, what specific improvements to transport infrastructure or policy responses are proposed or will be required to support transport demands arising the Plan's overall strategy, including levels of growth?

- 1.14 Table 2 of the LIP identifies proposed works to the A19 / A179 Sheraton Interchange, to the north-west of Hartlepool, to be delivered by the development at Upper Warren. The Council notes that this project **"... will have only a low impact on the deliverability of Local Plan policies"** (Source: LIP Table 2).
- 1.15 However, as outlined above, the proposals for this junction have now evolved to include full signalisation of the junction, with these larger works being funded by Highways England. This larger improvement scheme will deliver additional capacity to the junction, enabling the gap closures on the A19 at Elwick and Dalton Piercy to be delivered as a first phase of the grade-separated junction scheme.
- 1.16 Cecil M Yuill Ltd therefore considers that the proposals at the A19 / A179 will deliver valuable safety and capacity benefits to the network, enabling the development to be released at Quarry Farm and an initial phase of development at High Tunstall.
- 1.17 Table 2 of the LIP also sets out details of the proposed grade-separated junction and bypass at Elwick, noting this scheme as being critical to the delivery of the Local Plan. Cecil M Yuill Ltd is supportive of this major infrastructure scheme and of the significant safety and capacity benefits that this will deliver across the town, with the creation of a third principal access into the town from the A19 representing a 'step change' in the capacity of the Hartlepool road network.
- 1.18 Table 2 of the LIP also refers to *"High Tunstall / Quarry Farm links and improvements"*. The extensive transport assessment work undertaken to support the Quarry Farm proposals have demonstrated that the delivery of an access into the site from Reedston Road, the delivery of a package of short term mitigation measures including the gap closures on the A19 at Elwick Dalton Piercy and a proportionate contribution towards the grade-separated junction and bypass are the only highway works required to mitigate the impacts of the traffic associated with Quarry Farm.

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- 1.19 However, Table 2 of the LIP also refers to a requirement for an improvement scheme at the Elwick Road / Park Road / Wooler Road junction and notes that *"development at High Tunstall / Quarry Farm will have a significant detrimental effect on the operation of this junction. The developer will need to provide an impact assessment and submit a scheme that will mitigate for traffic generated by the development"*.
- 1.20 The current planning application for development at Quarry Farm is supported by extensive transport assessment and modelling work. This work has demonstrated that the traffic generated by the proposed Quarry Farm development (and that associated with a first phase of development at High Tunstall) can be accommodated within the Elwick Road / Park Road / Wooler Road junction, once the improvement works associated with the consented Tunstall Farm development have been implemented. This assessment work has clearly shown that there are no further requirements for improvements to accommodate the Quarry Farm development traffic.
- 1.21 Similarly, Table 2 of the LIP refers to the need for improvements to the Hart Lane / Duke Street / Jesmond Road and Hart Lane / Serpentine Road junctions and notes in each case that developments at High Tunstall / Quarry Farm and new development on the western edge of the urban area (HSG5, HSG5a) will need to *"provide an impact assessment and submit details to mitigate impact at this junction"*.
- 1.22 i-Transport LLP, on behalf of Cecil M Yuill Ltd, has conducted an extensive appraisal of the impacts of the development traffic generated by Quarry Farm upon the Hart Lane corridor into Hartlepool. This appraisal demonstrated that the development traffic would have negligible or minor impacts at the junctions along the Hart Lane corridor, concluding that none of the impacts could be considered severe within the context of the NPPF.
- 1.23 The Council and their appointed consultants have reviewed this appraisal and concluded that *"other than what is proposed by the developer there is no further requirement, in planning / highway terms for additional highway mitigation works to the local highway network"*. (Source: HBC response to Cecil M Yuill Ltd 29.5.17).
- 1.24 Cecil M Yuill Ltd therefore considers that reference to HSG5a / Quarry Farm should be removed from the appropriate Local Scheme references within Table 2 of the LIP.

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Q4 - Are there specific trigger points for their implementation (including any timing/phasing of the development proposals in the Plan)? How will the identified transport infrastructure in Policies LS1/INF2 be brought forward and funded?

1.25 Cecil M Yuill Ltd has worked closely alongside the Council to determine the scale of infrastructure required to support the Quarry Farm proposals. This work has identified a package of short term mitigation measures, including the closure of the central reservation gaps on the A19 at Elwick and Dalton Piercy, which would enable development at Quarry Farm to come forward in advance of the major works proposed in the form of the grade-separated junction and bypass at Elwick. Notwithstanding this, Quarry Farm would make a proportionate contribution towards the cost of delivery of the grade-separated junction and bypass scheme.

1.26 It is noted that the timescales for construction of the grade-separated junction and the bypass are estimated to start in Summer 2018 with completion in Summer 2020 (Source: Local Infrastructure Plan Table 2). Cecil M Yuill Ltd welcomes the early delivery of this important element of infrastructure for the town.

Q5 - As part of transitioning to a low carbon future, does the Plan sufficiently recognise the potential of new transport technologies (i.e. electric vehicles) as well as established non-car modes such as walking and cycling?

1.27 The Tees Valley Statement of Transport Ambition makes clear reference to the need to reduce carbon emissions, including the promotion of new transport technologies and it is considered that this ambition is clearly translated into the Council's policies within the Local Plan, including within Policy INF1 which makes reference to the need for the provision of more electric vehicle charging points and low emission buses.

1.28 Policy INF2 also describes a balanced package of sustainable transport measures which maximise the sustainable accessibility of new developments and existing communities within Hartlepool.

Issue 3 – Funding for Infrastructure

Q10 - Is there further evidence from the emerging Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan work (referenced at para 5.3 of LIP) on potential funding for strategic infrastructure relevant to Hartlepool and the Local Plan's growth proposals?

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- 1.29 It is understood that the current position with regard to the funding of the proposed grade-separated junction and bypass at Elwick is as set out within the Council's report to the Finance and Policy Committee of 24 July 2017.
- 1.30 This set out reference to a range of potential funding options, including developer funding, Local Growth Fund LGF funding (through the Tees Valley Combined Authority), National Productivity Investment Fund, HCA funding, Housing Infrastructure Funding and / or prudential borrowing.
- 1.31 With reference to the LGF, the Committee report notes *"... when the funding was announced for the Tees Valley it was only successful in attracting approximately £25m across the Tees Valley and as such it was considered highly unlikely that the LGF pot would be able to fully fund the infrastructure works at Elwick."*