

Greater Nottingham - Broxtowe BC, Gedling BC and Nottingham City Council – Aligned Core Strategies (ACS) Examination Inspector’s Matters, Issues and Questions

Matter 6: Transport (Policies 14, 15)

Main issues: (i) Whether the ACS has identified all the infrastructure improvements necessary for delivery of the spatial strategy with mitigation measures for any potential adverse impacts; (ii) Whether the policies will promote more sustainable transport, reducing the need to travel and offering more modal choice; (iii) Whether the transport policies are deliverable having regard for funding and stakeholder support.

Questions:

1. Are Policies 14 and 15 of the ACS consistent with section 4: Promoting Sustainable Development in the National Planning Policy Framework? If not, where exactly is there inconsistency?
2. The late availability of the modelling output from the transport study, after public consultation on the publication version of the ACS, is arguably inconsistent with an approach to planning whereby evidence is assembled before alternative schemes are examined and then the optimum strategy is put forward. However, in this case, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan May 2013 (version 3) [CD/KEY/01] reports on the results of the transport modelling and concludes that, as long as Smarter Choice and Public Transport measures are implemented, there should be no ‘showstoppers’ for the core strategies. CD/KEY/01 supports the priorities for transport infrastructure in Policy 15 of the ACS. Is there any substantive evidence to counter this, and demonstrate that the ACS’s spatial strategy is not justified on transport grounds?
3. The Highways Agency pointed out at publication stage that the strategic road network in and around Nottingham is already under pressure. There could be a need for junction improvements on the M1 and A52 as a consequence of growth. Proposed modifications to the ACS, notably to add paragraph 3.18.4a (not 3.8.4a) have been made but have the Highways Agency’s general concerns for the strategic network been met in full?
4. Have the Highways Agency’s concerns about impact on the strategic road network from development at the Boots site, Eastwood and Kimberley and Top Wighay Farm, been addressed?
5. Has the spatial strategy for growth had sufficient regard for making the most efficient use of the existing transport infrastructure? Has accessibility by sustainable means and minimising congestion and pollution been considered sufficiently in defining the sites and locations in Policy 2 for growth?
6. Is Policy 15 accurate in describing the schemes in its section 3 as “essential to the delivery of the Core Strategy”? Nottinghamshire County Council suggests that these were modelled as part of a “no Core Strategy” scenario?
7. In view of paragraph 3.14.14 of the ACS, should more detail about the packages of measures needed for sustainable delivery be included in Appendix B of the ACS? In particular:

- Appendix B for Gedling gives only generalised information about 'transport assessment and further highway requirements to be developed' for Bestwood village, Ravenshead and Calverton. Should more detail be provided, given their distance from the built up area of Nottingham and relationship to Hucknall? For Top Wighay Farm, a potential link bus to Hucknall NET station is referenced. Is this likely to be delivered?
 - For Awsworth, Brinsley, Eastwood and Kimberley, in Broxtowe, reference is made in Appendix B to high frequency bus services to Nottingham, but highway improvements are not discounted. Should more detail be given for these sites and Field Farm, to confirm that there should be no transport constraints which could prevent or delay delivery?
 - Gedling Colliery/Chase Farm is identified for future housing development in Policy 2, and the evidence indicates that its development depends upon the construction of a Gedling Access Road. As the site abuts the built up area of the city, is this essential for the site's development? No new dwellings are expected at the site during the plan period, so should it be mentioned at all in Policy 2?
8. Should Policy 7 of the ACS, on the Eastside Regeneration Zone, make reference to relocating the bus station?
 9. Having regard for the cumulative impact of large-scale development on developers and need to ensure that viability is addressed in plan-making, is there any substantive evidence that costs associated with Policies 14 and 15 of the ACS could inhibit the delivery of development? The costs of strategic transport schemes regarded as essential to delivery are given in Table 7.8 of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, followed by costs information on public transport improvements.
 10. The ACS refers to the proposed HS2 station at Toton. Having regard for the information in the Transport Background Paper Addendum [CD/BACK/06], is this topic covered adequately in the ACS?

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