

Martin Paine
Senior Planning Officer
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

Jenny Volp
Asset Manager - Area 8

Woodlands
Manton Lane
Bedford MK41 7LW

Direct Line: 01234 796590
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email - martin.paine@eastherts.gov.uk

Dear Martin

I am writing following the meeting you kindly invited me to last month regarding the East Hertfordshire Local Plan and the current thinking on the preferred options for Housing Allocations.

At that meeting we discussed the potential impact of the emerging District Plan on the Strategic Road Network with particular reference to the options North of Harlow and East of Welwyn Garden City.

We discussed concerns about the capacity of both the A1(M) at junction 4 and the M11 at Junction 8 to cope with the potential developments. However I should refer you to the new Circular (DfT 02/2013) which sets out the Highways Agency's responsibilities, and provides guidance to both local authorities and developers. It should be noted from the Circular that the Highways Agency's prime consideration will be the continued safe operation of its network.

With regard to the capacity of both these junctions and their ability to cope with your proposals, I would expect a robust transport assessment to be carried out which highlights the impact and sets out any potential mitigation that may be required. I would welcome the opportunity be involved and support you in developing this.

The Circular specifically states that 'the Assessment should investigate the cumulative and individual impacts of the Local Plan proposals upon the ability of the road links and junctions affected to accommodate the forecast traffic flows in terms of capacity and safety. Such assessments should be carried out in line with current Department for Transport guidance or on a basis otherwise agreed with the Highways Agency'.

I should also point out that the Hertfordshire Authorities are coming together to discuss their concerns about the A1(M) through a Consortium. Whilst the terms of reference for the Consortium are to be formally agreed, its aim is to improve capacity of the A1(M) in order to support the Hertfordshire economy and growth. The Highways Agency is a member of the consortium and has already been supportive in helping to gather robust data on current traffic flows.

Similarly there is a working group, consisting of East Herts., Harlow, Uttlesford, Hertfordshire and Essex County Council officers looking at the impact of proposed development upon the M11 and its junctions. However, I appreciate that the modelling work is not progressing as rapidly as we all would have hoped.

I appreciate that you are already aware of the Route Based Strategies that are currently being drafted by the Highways Agency and took part in the recent workshop that we held to gain views from stakeholders on the Strategic Road Network. These strategies will be used to recognise the issues faced by our Network and will ultimately provide us with a robust evidence base to develop schemes and improvements which will benefit our customers. Your continued input into this is very welcome.

Please feel free to contact me if you have queries. I have welcomed the opportunity to discuss your proposals and would like to work with you on developing a robust assessment so that we can fully understand the impact that they may have.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Volp
ADT - Area 8
Email: jenny.volp@highways.gsi.gov.uk