

NCC/TB/2

THE HIGHWAYS ACT 1980

AND

THE ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT 1981

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (A614/A6097 JUNCTIONS IMPROVEMENT SCHEME)
(SIDE ROADS) ORDER 2022

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (A614/A6097 JUNCTIONS IMPROVEMENT SCHEME)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2022

SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE

OF

THOMAS BOYLAN, BA (hons)

OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

ON BEHALF OF THE ACQUIRING AUTHORITY

SEPTEMBER 2023

1. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 1.1. My name is Thomas Boylan. I hold an Upper Second-Class Honours in Economics (BA Hons) and a Professional Certificate in Highway and Traffic Engineering from Nottingham Trent University.

- 1.2. I am a Principal Officer in Transport Planning for the Transport Programme Delivery, Investment and Growth Team at Nottinghamshire Council ("**NCC**"). I first started working for NCC in 2004 predominantly in transport planning and major project (highways) matters. I have nearly 20 years' experience in the area of transport planning and have been involved in highway projects such as the Hucknall Town Centre Improvement Scheme, Mansfield Ashfield Regeneration Route, Mansfield Public Transport Interchange, A612 Gedling Transport Improvement Scheme and Worksop Bus Station.

2. INVOLVEMENT WITH THE SCHEME

- 2.1. My first involvement to the proposals to upgrade Ollerton roundabout was in 2007 when I was involved in the public consultation events for the Ollerton roundabout improvement project. My next involvement in the A614/A6097 Major Road Network ("**MRN**") scheme was in 2018 during the options development phase whilst working for Via East Midlands ("**ViaEM**"). ViaEM provides highway services including design, maintenance, environmental management and construction in partnership with NCC and was established in 2016. The company is now wholly owned by NCC. I have worked continuously on this scheme since 2018.

- 2.2. I together with my council colleagues and members of the ViaEM project team have been responsible for the delivery of the Scheme through the Business Case and statutory planning processes.

3. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 3.1. This Proof of Evidence focuses on matters relating to the need for a scheme, economic appraisal and suitability of the Scheme under consideration, for which NCC is seeking to acquire the Order Land compulsorily. My Evidence includes detail on the need for the Scheme, anticipated benefits to be generated by the Scheme and background on the option selection process.

4. NEED FOR THE SCHEME

- 4.1. Traffic congestion at key intersections along the A614/A6097 is a longstanding issue and whilst traffic volumes did fall in 2020 because of Covid 19, the vehicular numbers recorded in 2022 along the A614/A6097 corridor has nearly returned to 2019 levels. The existing problems and traffic delays experienced by motorists on the corridor are set to worsen considerably with planned and forecast traffic growth [**Core Document “CD” 14.2**].
- 4.2. Journey time delays are at their greatest in the traditional busy AM and PM peak hours of travel. The junctions at Ollerton, Lowdham and Kirk Hill do not have sufficient capacity to cater for existing traffic demands and as a result queue lengths and delays at these three major intersections can be severe.
- 4.3. The Scheme is also expected to improve connectivity and a resiliently connected road network can encourage productivity and provide a reliable road network which in turn reduces costs to businesses.

- 4.4. A lack of network resilience is also a problem if the local highway is unable to cope with disruptive events, such as a surge in demand because of incidents elsewhere on the highway network, particularly where traffic diverts from the Strategic Road Network (“SRN”) due to a major incident. The more common the event, the more important it is for the network to be able to recover quickly in order to restore an acceptable level of service. The A614/A6097 MRN corridor is a very important part of the highway network within Nottinghamshire. It sits between the A1 to the east and M1 to the west, providing an alternative north-south route through the County. Part of the route also acts as the designated emergency route for any incident or closure of the nearby A1. Whilst full closures of the A46 and A1 are typically infrequent events, they can be in place for up to 12 hours, significantly worsening congestion along the A614/A6097 MRN corridor.
- 4.5. This temporary increase in traffic volumes places an enormous strain on a corridor which is already over-capacity at a number of junction locations during ‘normal’ traffic conditions. The additional volume of trips diverted onto the network results in greater travel delays and increases levels of driver frustration. The inability of the MRN to cope with the diverted traffic is also likely to result in motorists using unsuitable alternative routes such as Station Road, Old Ollerton.
- 4.6. According to the Office for National Statistics (“ONS”), Newark and Sherwood has approximately 122,000 residents making up around 15% of Nottinghamshire’s population [CD14.2.2]. The district’s population has grown by 16% since the year 2000, making it the fastest growing district in Nottinghamshire, which has by comparison grown 11.1% over the same time period. Growth across the district is expected to continue to increase and the latest ONS population statistics forecast an average 7.6% increase in the resident population across the local authorities along

the A614/A6097 MRN corridor over the next 10 years, much faster than the 4.4% expected nationally.

4.7. There are a large number of development sites which have planning permission that are close to the A614/A6097 MRN and the Thoresby Colliery and Teal Close developments have planning constraints which are dependent on specific highway improvements to Ollerton Roundabout and Lowdham Roundabout before they can be fully developed.

4.8. The Newark and Sherwood District Council Core Strategy [CD13.10.1] states that highway infrastructure improvements to a number of junctions along the corridor are required in order to facilitate planned growth within the district to the end of the 2033 plan period. Without scheme intervention all five junctions will be over capacity by 2037.

5. SCHEME DEVELOPMENT

5.1. Nottinghamshire County Council has considered a broad range of options in line with Department for Transport (“**DfT**”) best practice to help reduce congestion and support economic development on the A614/A6097 corridor. During workshops held in 2017 and 2018, a number of interventions were considered that, if delivered, would achieve the aims of the Scheme.

5.2. Schemes were grouped together and then assessed with the Early Assessment and Sifting Tool (“**EAST**”). EAST is a decision support tool that has been developed by the DfT to quickly summarise and present evidence on options in a clear and consistent format. It provides decision makers with relevant, high-level information to help them form an early view of how options perform and compare.

5.3. Following the initial EAST assessment, the package options were assigned a simplistic RAG score (Red, Amber and Green) against categories such as whether it would meet objectives, fit with local, regional and national strategies, likely impact on the environment, financial affordability, acceptability to key stakeholders and economic viability. The next stage in the process involved the drawing up of a potential list of options (longlist) at each junction and preliminary design work was undertaken which then informed junction modelling and appraisal.

6. BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME

6.1. The DfT's Transport User Benefit Appraisal ("TUBA") software was used to assess the anticipated economic benefits associated with the Scheme. The Scheme is expected to generate a Present Value of Benefits ("PVB") worth £39.560 million over a 60-year appraisal period against a Present Value of Costs ("PVC") of £16.399 million. The majority of benefits are related to journey time savings for commuters and businesses but there are also some minor benefits anticipated that relate to Greenhouse Gases, Air Quality and Noise. The Benefit Cost Ratio ("BCR") for the Core scenario is 2.41, so £2.41 worth of benefits for every £1 invested in the project. The BCR value of 2.41 is classed as a Scheme that represents a high value for money rating.

7. ALTERNATIVES TO THE SCHEME

7.1. A variety of different junction layouts were considered at each of the five locations during the option appraisal phase and the options selected are considered to be the most appropriate and cost effective solution in meeting the Scheme objectives as outlined in the Outline Business Case ("OBC") submission.

8. SUMMARY

- 8.1. In conclusion, I respectfully request that the Secretary of State approves the Nottinghamshire County Council (A614/A6097 Junction Improvement Scheme) Compulsory Purchase and Side Road Orders 2022.

Date: 4 September 2023