

Leicestershire County Council (A511 Growth Corridor) (Side Roads) Order 2023

Leicestershire County Council (A511 Growth Corridor) Compulsory Purchase Order 2023

PINS Ref: NATTRAN/EM/HAO/299

Summary of LCC1: Proof of Evidence of Ann Carruthers

Promoter

dated 20 May 2024

1 Introduction

1.1 Qualifications and Experience

1.2 I, Ann Carruthers, am the Director of Environment and Transport for Leicestershire County Council (the **Council**). I am responsible for all highway, transport, environment and waste services for Leicestershire and have been in this role since 2017. I have worked in the highways and transport sector for approximately 30 years.

1.3 This summary proof of evidence (hereinafter referred to as this Summary) summarises my Proof of Evidence (my **Evidence**) which is made in support of the Leicestershire County Council (A511 Growth Corridor) (Side Roads) Order 2023 (the **SRO**) and the Leicestershire County Council (A511 Growth Corridor) Compulsory Purchase Order 2023 (the **CPO**) (together, the **Orders**) in connection with the Leicestershire County Council A511 Growth Corridor (also referred to in this Summary as the **Scheme**).

1.4 The facts and matters set out in this Summary are within my own knowledge. The facts set out below are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. Where reference is made to facts which are outside my knowledge, I set out the source of my information and I believe such information to be true.

1.5 I have been assisted by other professional advisors and officers of the Council with the preparation of this Summary, some of whom will also provide evidence to the inquiry.

1.6 Involvement with the Scheme

1.7 I became Senior Responsible Officer for the Scheme in April 2021. My role involves considering the day-to-day decision making on the Scheme, reporting to the Department's Programme Board and ensuring key project decisions are taken to the Council's Cabinet for approval. Please see Section 1.2 of my Evidence for further details on my involvement.

2 Scope of Evidence

2.1 Section 2 of my Evidence provides an overview of the contents of my Evidence.

3 Background, Evolution and Overview of the Scheme

3.1 The Scheme consists of highway improvements at nine locations along the A511 between Hoo Ash Roundabout and Field Head Roundabout (the **A511 Growth Corridor**). Further details of the Scheme can be found at Section 3.1 and Section 6 of my Evidence.

3.2 Section 3.2 of my Evidence provides the geographical context of the Scheme and why this results in the congestion currently experienced. For example, it connects two elements of the Strategic Road Network (**SRN**) (the A42 and the M1) acting as a key artery for commuter and freight movement.

3.3 The evolution of the Scheme started from 2008 where the Council and North West Leicestershire District Council (**NWLDC**) commissioned studies to understand the causes of the traffic problems in and around Coalville and Ashby and to identify measures required to enable the area's continued strategic growth.

3.4 My Evidence explains that 28 potential interventions were assessed in the Option Appraisal Report (**OAR**) against the Scheme objectives and criteria relating to feasibility, acceptability

and affordability. The assessment of these potential interventions was carried out following step 6 of Department for Transport's (DfT) Transport Analysis Guidance and demonstrated that those highway interventions along the A511 Growth Corridor, which now comprise the Scheme, were the highest-ranking performers due to their potential for providing a material benefit to road users as well as supporting the growth proposals in NWLDC's Local Plan.

- 3.5 My Evidence in section 3.38 sets out the current status of the Scheme, including the appointment of AECOM as planning consultants to discharge planning conditions and the procurement of a Contractor to support the project team through a period of Early Contractor Involvement.

4 **The Enabling Powers**

- 4.1 My Evidence sets out the statutory powers available to the Council to facilitate the acquisition of the land and requisite rights required to carry out the Scheme.

5 **Description of the Scheme and Need for the Scheme**

- 5.1 Section 5 of my Evidence provides a detailed description of the nine projects which make up the Scheme and the various improvements required.

- 5.2 The need for improvements is recognised at local level by Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership in its Strategic Economic Plan as one of five Growth Areas and necessary to address the current congestion on the A511. There is also a need for intervention from a safety and environmental perspective.

- 5.3 To address the issues identified, and taking into account national and local policy, seven objectives have been developed:

5.3.1 Make journeys on the A511 faster and more reliable;

5.3.2 Provide safer road network resilient to road collisions;

5.3.3 Improve reliability and capacity for freight along the A511 MRN Growth Corridor and so support the efficient operation of logistics and mineral extraction needs of the area;

5.3.4 Support NWLDC's objectives of facilitating economic and housing growth by delivering improved transport infrastructure;

5.3.5 Improve connectivity for all road users;

5.3.6 Support the SRN by providing a reliable and resilient link to the M1 and A42;

5.3.7 Improve air quality and traffic noise impact along the corridor;

- 5.4 The Scheme meets these objectives as detailed in Sections 5.14 of my Evidence.

6 **Planning Position**

- 6.1 The planning position of the Scheme, in summary:

- 6.1.1 the majority of the Scheme will be carried out in accordance with permitted development rights granted to Highway Authorities.; and
- 6.1.2 the Bardon Link Road will be carried out pursuant to the s73 Bardon Link Road Planning Permission.
- 6.2 My Evidence provides an overview of the national and local planning policy relevant to the Scheme and explains how the Scheme is consistent with this policy and benefits from planning permission. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan in particular recognises the A511 Growth Corridor as an important scheme which will address long-standing congestion issues.
- 7 Purpose of the Orders**
- 7.1 The CPO is required to acquire all land and rights necessary to facilitate the Scheme. The SRO is necessary to enable construction and operation of the Scheme by dealing with all necessary access points, rights of way and highways interacting with the Scheme.
- 8 Need and Justification for the CPO and SRO**
- 8.1 The use of CPO powers is the only realistic option available to the Council to meet the programme required by its grant funding and ensure it is able to satisfy its statutory function.
- 8.2 I also consider the tests set out in the CPO guidance. The Council considers that the requisite tests are satisfied and that there is a compelling case in the public interest for the confirmation of the CPO (please see Section 8 of my Evidence).
- 8.3 The SRO will, subject to confirmation, empower the Council to stop up existing side roads and private means of access affected by the Scheme, improve existing side roads and divert a public right of way. Details of the proposals in the SRO are specified in Section 9 of my Evidence.
- 9 The Order Land and Land Ownership**
- 9.1 Section 10 of my Evidence builds on Section 5 providing additional information as to the location and description of the Order Land. Section 9 also provides an overview of the rights required and explains why these are necessary to facilitate the delivery of the Scheme.
- 9.2 The Council has appointed Bruton Knowles to engage with all affected landowners (please see Section 10 of my Evidence). A detailed analysis of the land ownership and landowner engagement is contained in the Proof of Evidence of Nigel Billingsley.
- 9.3 Paragraphs 10.10 to 10.13 detail proposed modifications to the CPO in respect of CPO plots 005, 006, 040 and 041.
- 10 Scheme Funding**
- 10.1 The Council has secured funding for the Scheme (please see Section 10 of my Evidence). In summary, the latest cost plan completed in December 2023 estimated the delivery cost to be £63.5m. The DfT are providing a £41.712m grant towards the Scheme from the Major Road Network fund. The remainder of the funding required is available through developer contributions collected through the Interim Coalville Transport Strategy.

- 10.2 The Council is content that the necessary funds for land acquisition and subsequent construction of the Scheme will be available and as such does not foresee any impediments to delivering the Scheme.

11 **Human Rights and Equalities Impacts**

- 11.1 The Council has had regard to its public sector equality duty to human rights in respect of the CPO and SRO, as well as a justification of the Scheme in relation to human rights legislation, in that any interference with rights is outweighed by the significant benefits of the Scheme. My Evidence sets out the due regard had by the Council to equalities issues at all stages of the Scheme's development. Mitigation measures to limit the impacts on people with particular characteristics have been and will be implemented as set out in the Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment.

12 **Response to Objectors**

- 12.1 My Evidence sets out my responses to the seven objections which remain outstanding. My responses are provided on behalf of the Council and should be read against the responses provided by Nigel Billingsley, Ben McGrath and Mark Dazeley who have also addressed some of the objections.

13 **Conclusion**

- 13.1 I am satisfied as to the justification of the SRO and CPO and do not foresee any impediments to delivering the Scheme.