

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION  
ED 85 MATTER 6 - Note to the Inspector**

**Hitchin Southern Bypass**

1. The Inspector has requested that North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) provide further information to the Examination with regard to a query raised in Matter 6 about the need for a Southern Bypass for Hitchin in the plan period. This note has been prepared in consultation with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority who are content with its accuracy.

The need for a Hitchin Southern Bypass

2. The A602, which runs between Stevenage and Hitchin, meets with the A505 at the Paynes Park gyratory junction in Hitchin. The A505 then runs west to the Pirton Road junction with the B656, and both the A505 and B656 then run further west, connecting with Luton and points west and north.
3. A proposed land allocation south west of Hitchin formed part of the Council's land allocations consultation on the Housing Options Growth Levels and Location 2011-2031 in February 2013. The proposal was for some 6,000 to 7,400 new homes in conjunction with a proposed Hitchin southern bypass running between the A505 and the A602. This proposal was further assessed following the above consultation and as part of the 2013 SHLAA (March 2013) and was not taken forward in the Local Plan as the promoter did not have control of enough of the land to deliver the full scheme.
4. As the south west of Hitchin allocation was not included, a Hitchin Southern Bypass was not modelled in the WHaSH or COMET modelling undertaken for the submission of the Local Plan in 2016. Instead a number of identified junction improvements were modelled along the existing A505 / A602 corridor. These include from T14, Table 4.3 p.16:
  - HM8 – Pirton Road/A505/Upper Tilehouse St/Wratten Rd junction
  - HM10 - Upper Tilehouse St/A602/Paynes Park junction and
  - HM15- A602/B656/Gosmore Road/St. John's Road (Hitchin Hill)
5. The first two of these junctions were identified as pinchpoints in the WHaSH do-minimum scenario (reference case with committed development growth only). The third junction (Hitchin Hill) was identified as being a pinch point in the WHaSH model with the additional Local Plan development growth. The improvements proposed are summarised in Table 5.1 of T14, p.21. These mitigation schemes were tested within the WHaSH model to ensure that they provide suitable mitigation and alleviated the issues created by the Local Plan proposed development, and the results in Table 4.2, pp.11-12, of the report comparing the scheme (Do Something) scenario with the (Do Minimum)scenario indicate that this is the case for these three junctions. The evidence therefore shows that junction improvements, rather than a new bypass, are sufficient to address the issues arising from Local Plan development during the plan period.
6. It should be noted that the Transport Strategy (ED 14) in para 5.47, p.64 recommends that the Council, In conjunction with Hertfordshire County Council, consider in the long-term various options for relief links in the south west of the town.