

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 3 MARCH 2022 MAJOR ROAD NETWORK - IDENTIFICATION OF THE NEXT PRIORITY CORRIDOR

The report to Scrutiny states that the Rees Jeffrey's Road Fund study of Major Roads Network routes should be defined as those local authority 'A' roads which:

- a) have an annual average daily traffic flow (AADF) of more than 20,000 vehicles;
- b) carry 5% HGVs traffic (if the AADF is lower than 20,000 vehicles);
- c) link current or future economic centres and key transport hubs.

Sadly, the study misses any analysis of air pollution which I would have thought to be a major issue.

Quoting from the report paragraph 25, The types of schemes (as a single scheme or a package of measures) eligible to bid for MRN funding included:

- a) **Bypasses or new road alignments** which alleviate congestion on the MRN and make through journeys quicker, safer, and more reliable.
- e) **Major junction improvements** such as a grade separation that would improve the safety, performance, or flow of an MRN road.
- f) **Technology such as variable message signs**, traffic management and the use of smart technology and data to raise the performance of the MRN.

Although I was pleased to see that the A6 is included in the county's MRN I am disappointed to find that the A6s has been classified as very low priority for any improvements and as inter-urban.

The A6s 30mph two way carriageway passes through the Kibworths (the fourth largest community in the Harborough District), not around them, but right through them. There is a dual carriageway A6s north to Oadby, and Market Harborough to the south has a two-way carriageway bypass.

Yet I have parents begging for more safety improvements for when they walk their children to and from school when 6 axle HGVs are whizzing by just inches from them on the narrow pavement, and Friends of the Earth, just a few years ago, listed the A6 through the Kibworths as the fourth worst nitrogen dioxide polluted major route in the East Midlands. The A6s is a major route for HGVs, cutting the corner and fuel costs, from A14 at Rothwell to the M1 since an overnight Lorry Park was built at the Rothwell junction on A14.

- The A6s AADF pre-pandemic were around 24,000 vehicles a day and are currently increasing back towards that number at around 19,000.
- Over 5,000 vehicles a week exceed the 30mph speed limit.
- Medium and Heavy Goods Vehicle numbers have recently been measured at over 1,000 a day so certainly well over 5% of the current AADF.
- Market Harborough business parks are steadily increasing with another north of the town given planning permission last week to grow this economic centre further.

Bypasses have been promised and surveyed for the A6s around the Kibworths for years, but successive governments have baulked at releasing the £30m or so needed. Instead, strategic planners suggest the community should accept over 3,000 houses to fund it, yet this was rejected for the current Harborough Local Plan. The A6s should be a MRN priority corridor.

In conclusion, I'd like the Committee ask for the A6s to be re-assessed using updated AADF measurements and considering air pollution.

Kevin Feltham (Gartree Division)

This page is intentionally left blank