

Agenda item 8 – Response to Proposed Submission Draft (Regulation 19) Harborough Local Plan (2020-2041)

Comments by Dr Kevin Feltham to LCC Cabinet 18 March 2025

Residents, including myself as county councillor for the Gartree Division, were not given access to the proposed submission draft, and the dozens of accompanying documents, until agenda documents were released for the 20th February HDC Cabinet meeting. The 8-week public consultation started on 10th March.

I have read the agenda 8 report for the Cabinet meeting and fully agree with all comments and criticisms of the HDC draft Local Plan. I wish to comment on just two key Highways aspects of the Plan at this stage:

Firstly, the scale of housing feeding into the A6 corridor is not accompanied by a detailed increase in highways infrastructure to mitigate the effect of over 6,000 houses to 2041. A Strategic Transport Impact Assessment has been published alongside the draft Plan together with estimates of the Highways Mitigation Costs totalling £65,675,000.

Long running issues in the urban Kibworths section on the A6 have been (1) speeding in the 30mph section and (2) difficulty accessing the A6 from side roads. Traffic volumes on the single carriageway A6 through the Kibworths exceed 20,000 vehicles a day. Developer contributions from new housing estates in villages feeding the A6 have been identified for several years to improve the A6, although LCC Highways are yet to divulge solution options. My requests for average speed cameras have joined a long list for similar requests from across the county.

Clearly the proposals in the HDC draft Plan will greatly increase the problems along the A6 and yet the cost for a bypass for the Kibworths, to mitigate many of these issues, has not even been mentioned. What has been included are two traffic light proposals for two main access junctions onto the A6 – New Road (£3,000,000) and A6 – Church Road/Marsh Drive (£2,900,000). The last thing the Kibworths A6 junctions need is traffic lights! The road is very busy already so any delay to through traffic results in extremely long queues of several km coming in from the north along the Great Glen bypass, or to the south, past the Kibworth tip towards Market Harborough. A little bit of consultation with either Kibworth parish council or me, or even some direct observation, would have shown how disastrous these traffic light mitigation proposals are.

Secondly, one development of 475 houses is proposed for the Kibworths. The site is on a field to the south of the East Midlands Railway line with a single carriageway, traffic-light controlled bridge to link to the A6 at Wistow Road. This lane, called Warwick Road, takes traffic from the west end of Kibworth Beauchamp and also traffic from Fleckney. It currently allows some 6 or 7 vehicles through on each traffic light sequence. Absolutely nothing is included in the draft Plan to mitigate the enormous highways problems that this bridge, without mitigation such as widening costing many £millions, would create.

I use these two points to underline the lack of sufficient practical Highways mitigation proposals in the HDC draft Plan for the Kibworths. Clearly, the halo-effect further north along the A6 is also hugely relevant to traffic movements and been well covered by the Highways LTA report. The HDC draft Local Plan (2020-2041) cannot therefore be considered sound as it is currently proposed.

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