



HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT & WASTE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

NORTH & EAST MELTON MOWBRAY DISTRIBUTOR ROAD (NE MMDR) UPDATE

22 January 2026

**Department of
Environment & Transport**



What is the NE MMDR?

- It is 7.1km long.
- It has six roundabouts, four bridges and numerous culverts.
- There is a river diversion in a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- It is single carriageway.
- It includes cycle and walking facilities.
- It has cost approximately £134m.

Purpose:

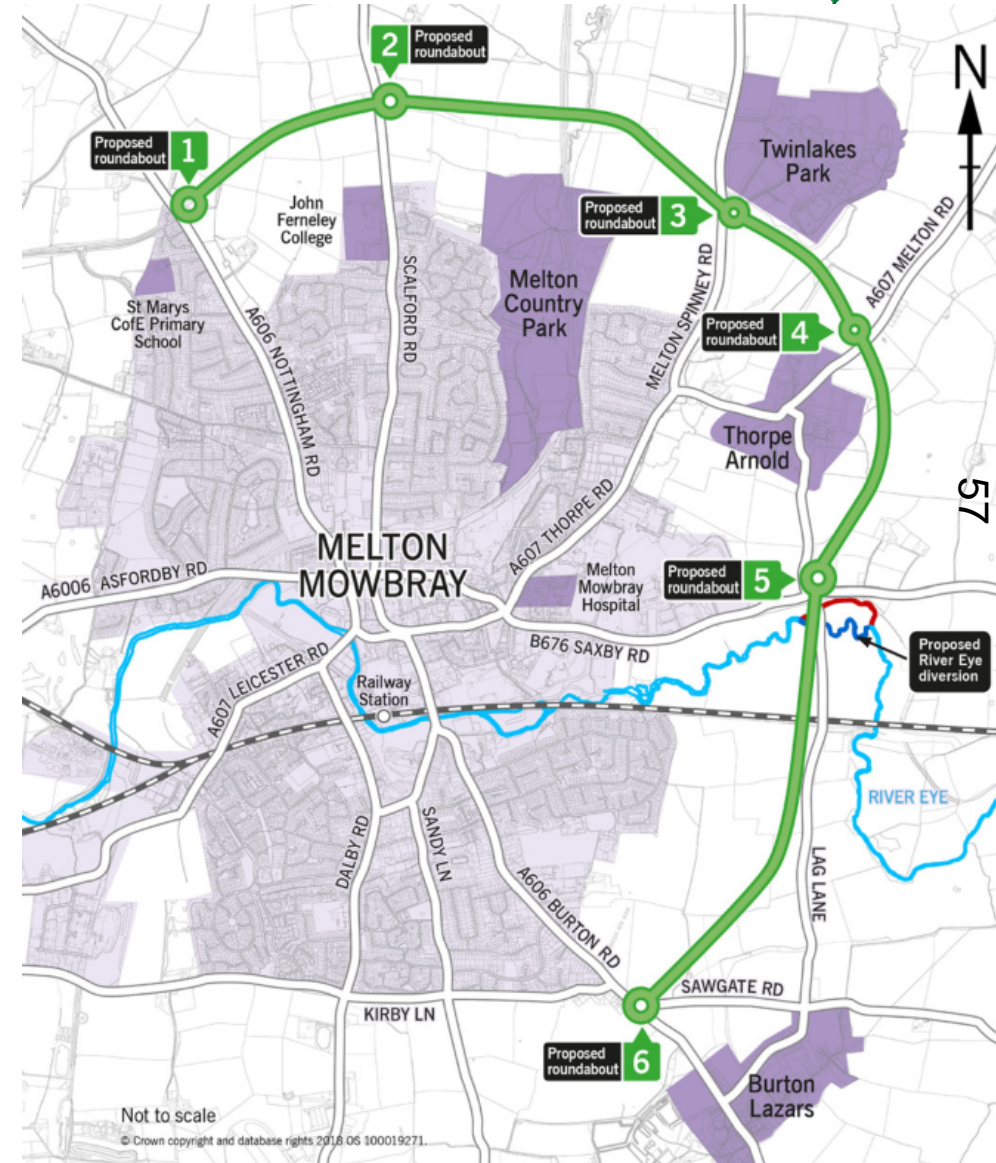
- ☐ To enable the delivery of 4,500 new homes and of new places to work in the town.
- ☐ To improve the environment in the town centre (e.g. removing through traffic and better air quality).
- ☐ To make it safer for people to walk and cycle in the town centre (less conflict with cars, for example).

Benefits of the NE MMDR

- ❑ To reduce congestion in Melton town centre.
- ❑ To improve journey time reliability.
- ❑ To reduce noise/improve air quality.
- ❑ To improve highway safety.
- ❑ To increase sustainable travel.

Impacts:

- ❑ Facilitating the local plan of approximately 4,500 dwellings.
- ❑ The growth potential – access to jobs/retail.
- ❑ The employment opportunities for approximately 6,000 jobs.
- ❑ The enhanced town centre vitality / support regeneration.
- ❑ The improved health outcomes.



Implications without the NE MMDR

❑ Housing delivery issues:

- Scattered growth across rural areas (school placement and transport issues).
- A shortage of planned housing that would impact neighbouring authorities and Leicester City.
- A local plan review would likely have been triggered, requiring new transport and education strategies.

❑ Worsening congestion in the town centre.

❑ Unmet local aspirations for town improvements.

❑ A Lack of opportunities for business development/relocation.



The Journey So Far

- The development of the NE MMDR has been a long and complex process, and it is the largest capital highways scheme that has ever been undertaken by Leicestershire County Council.
- The timeline for designing, funding and securing the land for the scheme spans some 10 years, as outlined by the key milestones below. Prior to this, various feasibility work was also undertaken.

2015 / 2016 Options assessment/outline proposal.

October 2017 Public consultation on the recommended route.

December 2017 Outline Business Case submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT).

October 2018 Planning application.

July 2020 Leicestershire County Council made the NE MMDR Compulsory Purchase Order and Side Roads Order.

October 2020 Compulsory Purchase Order and Side Roads Order served (land acquisition and highway amendments).

September 2021 Public inquiry.

April 2022 Orders confirmed by the Secretary of State for Transport.

December 2022 Full Business Case submitted to the DfT.

January 2023 Leicestershire County Council took possession of all the land for the scheme.

February/March 2023 Funding confirmed by the DfT. The advance works start on site.

May 2023 Main works start on site.

- ❑ Managing a project of this scale is challenging therefore various assurance processes have been in place throughout the project, including:

Internal

- ❑ The Project Board.
- ❑ The Gateway Review Process, in accordance with the HM Treasury Guidance.
- ❑ Regular reporting to the Council's Scrutiny Committee and to the Cabinet, including key decisions and milestones.

External

- ❑ The DfT Outline Business Case and Full Business Case.
- ❑ Three independent external reviews (cost and risk).
- ❑ The Local Plan and Compulsory Purchase Order Examinations.

NE MMDR Construction Phase

- ❑ Construction started in May 2023 and it is due to be completed in Spring 2026.
- ❑ A large proportion of the work has involved earthworks, drainage and carriageway construction.



NE MMDR Construction Phase

- ❑ The work is now at the advanced stage, with the majority of structures completed including bridges at the railway, River Eye, Scalford Brook and Thorpe Brook. All six new roundabouts have now been completed, and they are open to traffic.
- ❑ The River Eye SSSI relocation went extremely well, and we have received positive feedback from Natural England. The new river channel and flood compensation areas performed well in recent storms
- ❑ The new railway bridge similarly was a large piece of engineering and has been completed with positive feedback from Network Rail.
- ❑ Timelapse videos showing the lifting of the large steel beams for the railway bridge and Scalford Brook bridge are available at the link below and demonstrate the scale of some of the engineering involved in the scheme

[MMDR beam lift on new railway bridge](#)

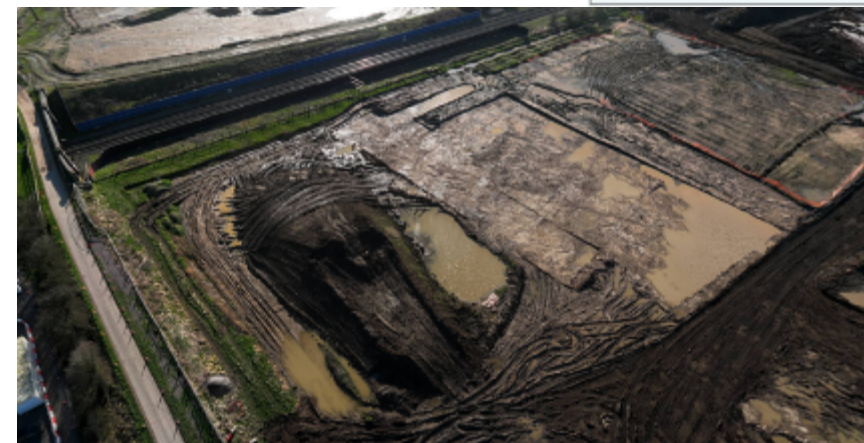
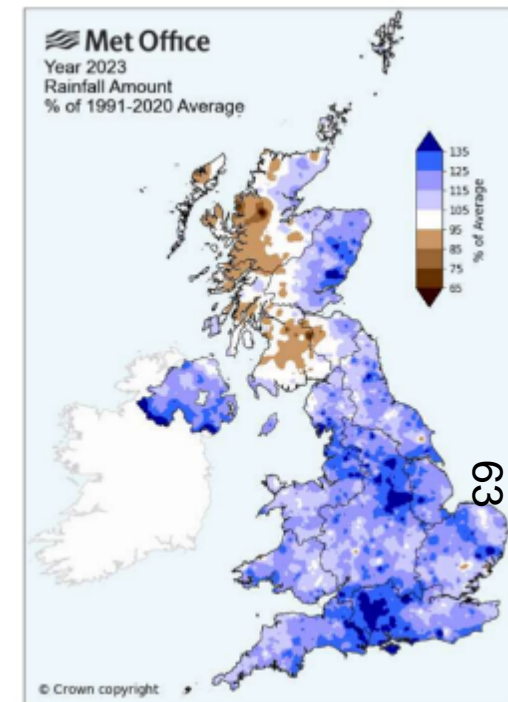
[MMDR beam lift at Scalford Brook](#)



NE MMDR Construction Phase

□ Several major challenges on site are contributing to the scheme costs and the programme timeline, including:

- Exceptional weather events – such as Storm Babet (October 2023), the wettest three-day period ever recorded in the Midlands.
- Flooding – the construction of a new bridge over the River Eye.
- Managing the Statutory Undertakers.
- The ground conditions.
- Piling – 25m long piles, installed using the largest piling rig in Europe.
- Archaeology – both trenching and mass strip, map and record over approximately 25 hectares.



NE MMDR Construction Phase

❑ Innovation: Foamix Base Surfacing.

Forecast Benefits:

- The reuse of 7,305 tonnes of coal tar planings to avoid landfill.
- The onsite batching saving over 50,000 Heavy Goods Vehicle miles.
- Cost savings of £400,000.
- 2,300t of CO₂ saving.

❑ The full progress video for the scheme (June 2023 to September 2025) is available at:

[mmdr_progress_from_jun_23_to_sep_25\(2160p\).mp4](#)



Road Naming

- ❑ The road naming is being carried out in collaboration with Melton Borough Council, who is the Street Naming Authority.
- ❑ A shortlist of names has been developed and it is currently being checked for suitability by the Street Naming Authority.
- ❑ The public will have the opportunity to vote for their preferred name via online poll at <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/have-your-say> in early 2026.
- ❑ The consultation is to be publicised via a press release and on social media.
- ❑ The result is to be announced following the final confirmation with the Street Naming Authority and the relevant Building Control officers.

Budget and Finance

- ❑ Full Business Case cost (December 2022) was £115,250,776. This included:
 - £49,472,000 from the DfT.
 - £51,778,776 of local funding (from Leicestershire County Council's budget and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership).
 - £14,000,000 of private funding (from the Developer).
- ❑ In light of the capital programme risks, a contingency was also allocated as part of the Cabinet approval process that took scheme budget to £127.2m.
- ❑ Significant budgetary pressures (such as flooding, utilities, archaeology) have contributed to increased costs.
- ❑ The current forecast cost is £134.6m.

Lessons Learned

- ❑ The NE MMDR scheme has been the largest capital construction scheme undertaken by Leicestershire County Council. As such, there have been a number of challenges and valuable learnings.
- ❑ The Council will be undertaking a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation process in accordance with the DfT's requirements. This includes monitoring the scheme at its completion, both one-year post-opening and five years post-opening. This will include not only the scheme's impacts, but an evaluation of the programme, the costs, the delivery, and the risk and stakeholder management. Further details can be found at: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-04/NEMMDR-monitoring-evaluation-scope.pdf>
- ❑ The Council has undertaken lessons learned exercises throughout the delivery of the project. There will also be a comprehensive lessons learned exercise on completion, and the Council will seek to apply these to the wider capital programme. The Council will separately report on this at a later date.

Next Steps

- ❑ The Environment & Transport Department's project team will liaise with the Council's Comms team for the detailed arrangements and invitations to the opening event, which is expected to take place around Easter.
- ❑ The Local Members will continue to be kept informed throughout the completion process.

Further Questions

- Questions can be sent to: Mmdr@leics.gov.uk
- The key contacts:
 - Ann Carruthers, Director of Environment and Transport Department, Ann.Carruthers@leics.gov.uk
 - Janna Walker, Assistant Director, Development and Growth, Environment and Transport Department, Janna.Walker@leics.gov.uk
 - Gino Salvatore, Galliford Try, Gino.Salvatore@gallifordtry.co.uk



Roundabout 1 and Compound





Mainline 1 and Roundabout 2



Scalford Brook & Thorpe Brook

Video on the MMDR beam lift:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCRtZlwFcn4>

Roundabout 4



Roundabout 3



River Eye

Roundabout 5



Rail Bridge



A606 Burton Road (Rdbt 6)

