

Exam 116 Comments – Neville Sleigh

The PJA's document highlights a fundamental issue with the proposed Mitton/Hardwick Bank developments:

1. The 1,000 homes are located in the Midlands region, positioned at the extreme edge of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) area. However, they would have a substantial impact on Junction 9 of the M5 motorway - an area situated at the far edge of North Gloucestershire in the South West region.
2. As confirmed by both Wychavon District Council (WDC) and the developer during the SWDPR hearings held at Worcester Guildhall, these 1,000 homes have no direct connection to the Tewkesbury Town project, which itself plans to deliver approximately 10,000 new homes, located significantly closer to Junction 9.
3. If these 1,000 SWDPR homes require an additional 74 metre extension to the M5 slip road, then the far larger developments within Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) would logically necessitate considerably greater extension to the slip road - this even before addressing the longstanding congestion issues along the A46.
4. Post-hearing submissions from RPS suggest that further development activity within TBC may eliminate the need for the proposed £10 million link bridge in Phase 2. This implies RPS acknowledges the significance of adjacent developments in TBC that will impact the viability and integration of their own proposals. However, there is no clear articulation of how these developments are meant to interface - something that should have been addressed at the earliest planning stages in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
5. Given that the M5 is a piece of national infrastructure, it is difficult to justify a slip road upgrade in isolation. Therefore, the proposed 1,000 homes at Mitton/Hardwick Bank appear to be undeliverable in the short, medium, and even long term. As such, they should not be included in the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR).

Regards

Neville Sleigh