

National Highways and Uttlesford DC

12th June 2025

Agreed understanding of current position

There is a technical difference of opinion between the Council and National Highways. on the approach to the traffic modelling undertaken to assess the impacts of the Local Plan at M11 J8.

UDC are satisfied that the modelling approach is appropriate and proportionate and the modelling outputs demonstrate that the residual cumulative impacts across the entire plan area are not severe nor are there any unacceptable impacts on highway safety.

Furthermore, where any potential significant impacts from the Local Plan development have been identified on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, these impacts can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

National Highways considers that based upon the current modelling, it is difficult to make a judgement on the severity of the impacts of the Local Plan at M11 J8 and whether there are any safety issues.

The evidence provided by UDC based on LinSIG modelling (Responses to National Highways Queries dated 10th April 2025) indicated extensive queues across the northern over bridge, which would be significantly longer with the LP than in the Reference Case. This could result in the locking up of the western side of the junction and extensive queues within the service area, and on the northern off slip from the M11.

The Council's response to this concern was that, in reality, the excess demand would be held upstream of the junction through an operational strategy. In principle, this is an acceptable response. However, such an operational strategy then needs to be modelled so that the Highway Authorities can see the extent of the resulting queues on the approaches to the junction and confirm that there would not be a severe impact.

National Highways has long requested that a detailed assessment of M11 J8 be undertaken using the VISSIM microsimulation model developed by Essex CC of this junction. This would enable the interaction of queues that may block back and restrict traffic on other approaches to the junction to be properly assessed. NH considers this is essential to form a view on the impact of the LP on the safety and operation of the junction.

Agreed understanding of next steps

The Council and National Highways will work together on agreeing the methodology and approach for the next stage of modelling for M11 J8 based on use of the Essex CC VISSIM model.

The methodology for the approach to this modelling will also be agreed with ECC (as local highway authority) and in consultation with London Stansted Airport and Herts CC.

The modelling will consider the next stage of assessment required to address the short to medium term (up to 15 years) performance of the existing junction layout before a yet to be identified major improvement is developed. This should take into account any emerging parameters that may impact on the junction, including proposed growth at London Stansted Airport (which is now subject to a live planning application) and an Uttlesford Local Plan review.

The outputs from the VISSIM modelling will identify an operational strategy to ensure the continued safe operation of M11J8 in the short to medium term.

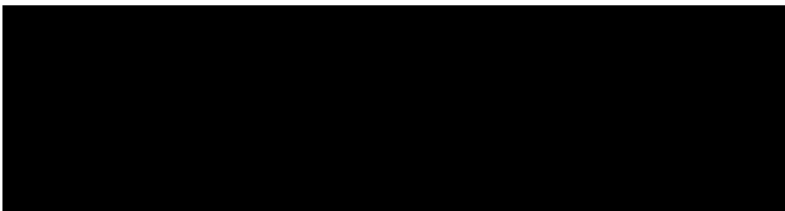
Matters of Soundness

National Highways have not raised any matters of soundness in relation to the Uttlesford Local Plan.

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This Statement of Common Ground Addendum is agreed and signed between the two parties:

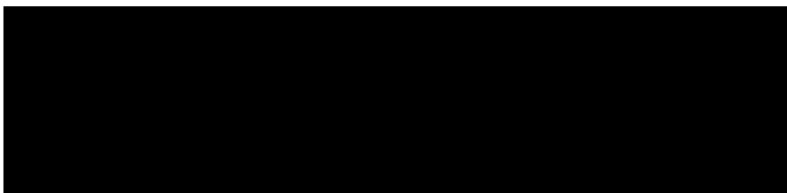
Uttlesford District Council:



Dean Hermitage

Strategic Director of Planning

National Highways:



Mark Norman

Spatial Planner

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