



## Stroud District Local Plan Review Examination

**Inspectors:** Victoria Lucas LLB MCD MRTPI and  
Yvonne Wright BSc (Hons) DipTP MSc DMS MRTPI

**Programme Officer:** Charlotte Glancy

Email: [bankssolutionsuk@gmail.com](mailto:bankssolutionsuk@gmail.com)

Tel: 07519 628064

---

**For the attention of:**

Stroud District Council

National Highways

Gloucestershire County Council

South Gloucestershire Council

Sent by email

25 March 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

### **STROUD DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN REVIEW EXAMINATION**

#### **INSPECTORS' ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS RELATING TO MATTER 11 AND THE LATEST EVIDENCE PUBLISHED BY NATIONAL HIGHWAYS (JUNE 2025)**

1. Further to our letter of 18 February 2026, we now invite National Highways, Gloucestershire County Council, South Gloucestershire Council and Stroud District Council to respond to our additional questions relating to the Council's letter dated 11 July 2025, and the submission of three technical reports on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) published by National Highways.
2. We are only consulting with these organisations at this time, as the evidence relates specifically to those issues discussed during the focused hearing session on Matter 11: Strategic Transport, held on 23 March 2022. The purpose of our additional questions is

to aid our understanding of this new technical evidence and to provide clarity on the respective positions of each organisation as regards any implications for the Stroud District Local Plan Review (the Plan). Accordingly, we invite the above organisations to respond to our additional questions, set out their position on the updated evidence and confirm whether any additional highway improvements would be necessary to accommodate planned growth set out in the Plan (in relation to both the strategic and local road network)?

3. As stated in our previous letter, this consultation exercise will be via an exchange of written evidence. We feel that is the most appropriate way forward, at this stage, due to the technical nature of the evidence, and will be sufficient to enable us to understand the positions of the respective parties on the SRN issues.
4. We will therefore not be accepting representations from other organisations or participants at this time. Any such responses received will be returned by the Programme Officer. Depending on the responses received to our questions from the organisations set out in paragraph 1 above, we will of course keep this decision under review, along with whether there will be the need for further oral hearing sessions in the future.

#### **Preliminary Points**

5. In the interests of clarity, the National Highways reports that we refer to in our letter are: M5 Junction 12 Stroud District Local Plan Capacity Assessment June 2025; M5 Junction 13 Stroud District Local Plan Capacity Assessment June 2025; M5 Junction 14 Stroud District Local Plan Capacity Assessment June 2025. These reports are available to view on the Examination website under the Programme Officer Update published 13 August 2025.
6. The reports state that local highway network capacity issues have not been considered as part of the assessments and highlight that this needs to be brought to the attention of Gloucestershire County Council and the relevant District Councils. Nevertheless, throughout the reports the impact of traffic growth on the local highway network has been observed and flagged as a concern and congestion is described as 'significant'. For example, the J14 report highlights that whilst the interim scheme would satisfy National Highways' interests as regards J14 capacity, it would 'result in significant adverse impact on the A38 and B409 local highway network'. We need to ensure we fully understand such issues.
7. In our letter to Stroud District Council, dated 24 October 2023, we referred to the potential need for additional modelling and requested that comments should include impacts on both the SRN and local network and whether any further modelling or technical work needed to be undertaken. The issue of traffic impacts on the local road network is therefore an issue that we have previously referred to and have requested additional information where relevant.

## Our Questions on the Evidence Base

8. It is our understanding that the modelling originally undertaken to support the delivery of all the Plan's proposed growth was prepared on the basis that it would be necessary for large-scale junction mitigation schemes for M5 J12 and J14 to be implemented during the Plan period, as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). For instance, a grade-separated roundabout scheme at J12 of the M5 motorway would need to be implemented and operational by 2030.

Q1: Is our understanding correct?

9. Subject to specific modifications to the Plan and interim SRN measures, the National Highways' reports identify that large-scale improvements to J12 and J14 would no longer be required to be implemented during the Plan period. This would result in around 70% of the proposed housing growth being delivered rather than all the planned growth.

Q2: In your view, if the motorway junction improvements are not delivered in advance of the planned growth, has the impact on the local highway network been adequately assessed?

Q3: Would the exclusion of site allocations from the Plan (G1, G2 and PS30) be justified to delay the requirement for the J12 improvements to beyond 2040 (the end of the Plan period)? Would this give rise to any unforeseen impacts or consequences that we need to be made aware of specifically in relation to transport? (We are aware that there may be other non-transport related consequences that would need to be considered separately to this consultation).

Q4: If these SRN mitigation schemes are not necessary to bring forward around 70% of the planned housing growth, does this change the assumptions underpinning the wider traffic modelling, specifically in relation to the local highway network?

Q5: In your view, does the modelling need to be revised and/or further evidence produced so that the impacts of planned growth on the local highway network (without the large-scale junction schemes and including the potential removal of three key site allocations) can be fully understood, to inform our considerations as to whether the Plan is sound? If so, what would be required and what would be the anticipated timeline for completing any such work.

Q6: How could any local highway network impacts identified be resolved via the planning system? For example, any impacts arising from delaying J12 improvements to beyond 2040 and implementing the Charfield scheme at J14?

10. The J12 report identifies significant congestion at the Cross Keys roundabout located to the west of J12.

Q7: What improvements are planned at the Cross Keys roundabout, when are they proposed to be implemented and how would they impact on the operation of

J12 and the local highway network? Has this been considered in the traffic modelling?

11. We understand that J13 can accommodate the planned growth identified within the submitted Plan, in line with the mitigation identified in the IDP.

Q8: Is our understanding correct and do you agree with this statement?

12. The J14 report refers to National Highways accepting an interim scheme for improving the junction, in connection with the Charfield planning application. This would allow for planned growth to be accommodated at J14 without the need for a grade separated junction.

Q9: Do you agree that the interim Charfield scheme at J14 will allow for planned growth to be accommodated at J14 without the need for a grade separated junction?

Q10: Are there any other effects arising from the implementation of the Charfield scheme that we should be made aware of, such as any impacts arising on the local road network that could be severe in your view? If so, how could these be dealt with through the planning system?

13. Our overarching questions are:

Q11: It would help us if you can summarise and confirm your positions in relation to J12 and J14 and the junction improvements that are necessary to bring forward the planned growth, and specify timelines for implementation?

Q12: Are there any specific schemes or programmes that you consider are necessary and should be included in the IDP?

Q13: In your view have transport impacts (such as congestion) on the local highway network been adequately assessed and understood taking the new SRN evidence into account? Is there a need for further modelling or any other assessment/study? If so, please explain what would be required and the anticipated timeline for completing any such work.

Q14: Could any local highway network impacts identified be resolved via the planning system and if so, how? For example, any impacts arising from delaying J12 improvements to beyond 2040 and implementing the Charfield scheme rather than a grade separated junction at J14?

Q15: Are there any additional local issues or impacts to both the strategic and local road networks that have arisen because of the updated evidence base that need to be addressed?

Q16: In your view are there any additional evidence base studies or transport modelling that should be undertaken to inform this Examination? If yes, then please explain what and why it is necessary.

14. We note that National Highways have requested additional transport evidence in relation to a recent planning application submitted to Stroud District Council on the Sharpness site allocation (PS36), including additional traffic modelling.

Q17: What is the nature of this additional transport evidence requested? What additional traffic modelling will be carried out? In your view, is this issue relevant to the Examination and the soundness of the Plan? Are there any other evidence base studies or transport modelling that need to be undertaken?

### **Responses**

15. We would like responses to our questions from the organisations set out in paragraph 1 above by 17:00 on Tuesday 5 May 2026. If you require clarification of any of the above points, please contact us via the Programme Officer.

Yours faithfully

Victoria Lucas and Yvonne Wright

Inspectors appointed to examine the Stroud District Local Plan Review