

1. Does the identification of detailed schemes for highways improvements provide the necessary certainty?

- 1.1 The proposed schemes for highways improvements are neither detailed nor certain. The nature and scope of these schemes is not adequately in evidence. Moreover, and in any event, the deliverability and effectiveness of these schemes are strongly questionable.
- 1.2 In the context of strategic level examination, in the absence of a reasonably detailed and objectively ascertainable plans for proposed highways mitigations, with attendant reasonable cost estimates, there is no evidence of, or objective means of the Council demonstrating (or, indeed, the Inspector understanding) that any such highways mitigations will either prove deliverable or effective.
- 1.3 It follows that it has not been adequately demonstrated that what amount to serious traffic problems and impacts in East Grinstead may adequately be resolved.
- 1.4 With regard to the A22/A264 corridor improvements, the identification of detailed schemes to address congestion have remained largely unchanged for the last decade. As set out in our response to matter 6.1, the maximum quantum of development that these schemes were intended to enable and serve, has long since been exceeded. The mitigation originally provided by virtue of these improvements has therefore already been exhausted. Cumulative and residual traffic impacts remain, are increasing, and have not been shown to be accounted for within the proposed schemes of highway improvements under the plan.
- 1.5 As predicted back in 2012, the affected junctions are now operating over capacity and traffic is diverting to alternative routes to avoid the queues. The phased triggers have thus already been surpassed.
- 1.6 There is also no effective monitoring system in place whereby MSDC can actively track progress against established targets, thresholds or triggers. Previous Travel Plan commitments have not been actively monitored, carried through or enforced.
- 1.7 WSCC, as highway authority, has expressed a willingness to monitor development travel plans for a period of 5 years, by which a developer actively engages with the authority. However, this would require MSDC to have a monitoring system in place, enforced by the local planning authority.