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<b>Title</b>	Position Statement - East Staffordshire Local Plan EiP
<b>Job Number</b>	IPD-11-220
<b>Date</b>	10th April 2015
<b>To</b>	<b>East Staffordshire EiP</b> Barratt Developments plc / BDW Trading Limited
<b>Topic</b>	12. Infrastructure Provision a). Highways and Transportation.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Infrastructure Planning and Design Ltd (IPaD) has prepared this Position Statement for the Examination in Public of the Local Plan EiP Session on Infrastructure in respect of the Brookhay project further to the original representation LP.336.

## **REPRESENTATION**

The Plan makes several references to needing to support its strategic growth plans by appropriately delivering strategic infrastructure improvements.

However, there are only four significant highways infrastructure improvements contained within the Plan are as follows:

1. Branston Locks – Developer funded ‘link road’ between Shobnall Road B5017, and the A38 Branston Interchange Junction.
2. Branston South - Developer funded ‘link road’ between Burton Road B5018, and the A38 via a new ‘left-in / left-out junction to the south of Branston Interchange Junction.
3. Walton on Trent Bypass - Developer funded 3<sup>rd</sup> River Trent crossing between Station Road B5016, and Main Street north of the village linking to South Derbyshire District.
4. St Peter’s Bridge Improvements in Burton upon Trent – Funded through various developer s.106 contributions to the Burton Transport Strategy.

Of these, only one could be properly described as a strategic link, and that is the new £10m River Trent crossing at Walton on Trent, which will create the much needed third east-west river crossing between Staffordshire and Derbyshire.

The Branston Locks ‘link road’, as shown in the Branston Locks masterplan, would appear to be an internal distributor classification road at best, with its circuitous route through various parts of the development.

The ‘link road’ through the Branston South development is similar.

Finally, whilst the improvement of St Peter’s Bridge in Burton is an important congestion relief measure, it is not strategic infrastructure to support defined sustainable regeneration.

The major strategic routes in East Staffordshire are the A38 and the A50. Of these the most crucial is the A38, as the A50 is relatively new with relatively good design standards for its junctions, and no direct property accesses.

The A38 is a Trunk Road that began its life as a Roman Road (Rykneild Street) and over the centuries and more so in recent decades, has had piecemeal improvements. It has very poor design standards, many direct property accesses, and there are constant calls from a wide range of key stakeholders for major upgrades and safety improvements.

Highways England (HE) (formerly the Highways Agency) are looking very closely at the section of the A38 Trunk Road between the M6 Toll Road to the south and the A50 junction to the north, and have been working up a number of traditional plus 'smart' technology based improvements for several years to address the problems presented by the current road.

Government priorities and lack of funding has so far prevented many of the planned improvements taking place. A speed reduction measure was recently implemented on a very small section immediately south of Burton upon Trent, but there remains considerable lobbying by police, fire, political and other key stakeholders to extend the arrangement. Brookhay could deliver this and many more improvements.

There is also a commitment by HE to implement a highway safety led improvement on the Clay Mills (northern) Burton junction on the A38, but this is essentially the only significant publicly funded improvement in the Plan.

Despite its well documented issues, the A38 corridor is recognised in many quarters as The East Staffordshire Growth Corridor, and should have very clear Policies in the Local Plan to ensure it fulfils this function in a strategic manner in order to underpin LEP Strategies.

The Submission Local Plan Policies are not all that clear, and could be described as inappropriate to Plan-making with no actual schemes/measures identified, as can be seen from the extract below.

East Staffordshire's Policies on what it should be doing are set out in document C15, East Staffordshire Infrastructure Audit and Delivery Plan, Table 10 - page 38, where the following Economic Prosperity and Community Priorities are set out:

- **Accommodate strategic greenfield housing and employment sites on the A38(T) and Burton upon Trent's local road network.**
- Manage peak hour traffic levels in Burton upon Trent and carbon emissions.
- **Enhance public transport interchanges and connectivity to strategic services and facilities in Burton upon Trent.**
- Accommodate sustainable development on local roads in Uttoxeter and at junctions with the A50(T).
- **Maintain the condition and safety of the highway network.**
- **Improve public transport connectivity and quality of life for local communities.**
- Manage traffic levels within Air Quality Management Areas in Burton upon Trent.
- **Raise awareness of environmental issues and encourage people to lead more sustainable lifestyles, helping to reduce carbon emissions.**

The measures being described as 'strategic links' in items 1, 2 & 4 above cannot be properly described as such, and do not deliver anything more than some short-term 'sticking plaster' on two problem nodes of the A38; namely Branston Interchange Junction and Barton Turns Junction.

If East Staffordshire were to be truly serious about the Policies in the bullet list above; in particular the ones highlighted in bold, then taking the step of allocating a infrastructure led development project that would deliver truly strategic improvements; whilst answering many of the other key needs and Policies related to the Growth Corridor aspirations should be the way forward.

For example, the in accordance with the first bullet above, supporting the Brookhay strategic mixed use scheme of housing, commercial, employment, sport and leisure project would deliver the following highways/transport components:

*Bullet 3 enhancements:*

- Provide a new rail service between Derby, Burton and Lichfield, connecting with the Birmingham Cross City Line
- Provide a new Parkway Station where the Main Line and Cross City Line intersect
- The Park & Ride station would have up to 1,000 spaces and provide considerable benefit to the A38 corridor by removing commuter traffic
- A new station would be provided on the Birmingham Cross City Line in the centre of Brookhay Villages, putting all 7,500 proposed dwellings within easy reach of the station
- Substantially upgraded bus services on the A38 corridor, linking the development and existing communities with both new rail stations
- Considerable increase in travel choices would be provided from the outset of the development resulting in sustainable lifestyle choices
- Improving modal share for public transport on an unprecedented level on the A38 corridor north of Birmingham

*Bullet 5 enhancements:*

- The extensive junction improvements, traffic management and speed reduction measures proposed for the A38 corridor over a 20km section from Weeford to Burton would not only maintain the condition and safety, it would considerably improve it

*Bullet 6 enhancements:*

- Improvement in public transport connectivity and quality of life for local communities would be achieved by:
  - Provision of two new rail stations
  - Introduction of new a rail service between Derby, Burton and Lichfield, connecting with the Birmingham Cross City Line
  - Introduction of additional rail service between Burton and Birmingham New Street on the main line
  - Linking upgraded bus services with new & existing local communities to the new and existing rail stations
  - Reducing commuting times and fatigue
  - Creation of world-class sports facilities
  - Extensive greenspace, country walks and outdoor leisure facilities
  - Considerable increase in bio-diversity due to around 400 hectares of open and green spaces

*Bullet 8 enhancements:*

- Raise awareness of environmental issues and encourage people to lead more sustainable lifestyles by:

- Giving new home owners much more sustainable travel choices from first occupation
- Adding much needed additional public transport facilities for the benefit of existing communities enabling more sustainable movement
- The new residential development would provide a step-change in healthy and sustainable lifestyle choice and availability in the area
- A completely holistic mixed use development with homes, work and leisure all combined in a new community
- The improved leisure, travel and work opportunities delivered by this new community would bring about similar improvements for existing communities in the locality

The above ably demonstrates in context that Brookhay would single-handedly deliver more benefits aligned to East Staffordshire's stated Policies than other proposals and indeed all the allocations in the current Plan combined.

This all clearly highlights the current Plan's mis-alignment of its proposals within an appropriate policy context, and at the same time promotes the strategic delivery credentials of the Brookhay project.