

NORTH HUNTINGDON & ST IVES CUMULATIVE IMPACTS GROUP

Strategic Transport Study (Review of the Transport Evidence Base)

The Strategic Transport Study remains one of the most important pieces of evidence supporting the emerging Local Plan. It provides the basis upon which HDC has assessed the transport effects of proposed growth and identified the mitigation considered necessary to accommodate development.

However, unlike several other evidence base documents, the Strategic Transport Study itself has not been updated since 2025. Whilst the June 2026 Infrastructure Delivery Study (IDS) builds upon this work, it continues to rely heavily upon transport modelling and assumptions prepared last year.

The transport evidence demonstrates that significant infrastructure will be required to support growth, but it remains less certain that the latest development proposals and strategic assumptions have been fully assessed.

Where the Evidence Base is Strong

The Strategic Transport Study provides a comprehensive assessment of existing transport conditions and compares a range of growth options before identifying a preferred hybrid strategy.

Unlike many transport assessments that simply model traffic, the study considers:

- existing congestion;
- accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;
- different growth scenarios;
- cumulative traffic impacts;
- possible mitigation measures.

This provides a robust strategic understanding of how growth could affect the wider transport network.

Importantly, the study recognises that the existing highway network is already under pressure before significant new development is added.

The evidence also demonstrates that not all development locations perform equally well. Phase 1 concluded that growth focused on better-connected locations generally performed more favourably than growth relying upon larger, less accessible strategic sites.

Perhaps most significantly, the June 2026 IDS now explicitly identifies the proposed **A141 and St Ives Transport Improvements Scheme as "critical to the delivery of the strategic sites in and around Huntingdon."** This establishes the need for a major A141 transport intervention but does not establish that the scheme currently being developed is a final, approved and funded solution.

This is an important acknowledgement because it confirms that major transport infrastructure is not simply desirable but fundamental to delivering the Local Plan.

The sensitivity testing undertaken during Phase 2 further strengthens this conclusion by demonstrating that removing the A141 scheme would significantly increase congestion, reduce public transport use, reduce park-and-ride usage and increase journey times across the district.

The evidence therefore consistently demonstrates that the proposed growth strategy depends heavily upon an effective A141 transport solution being delivered.

Where the Evidence Base Remains Weak

1. The transport modelling has not been updated

Although the IDS was updated in June 2026, the underlying Strategic Transport Study appears unchanged since September 2025. The current evidence library relies upon:

- Baseline Conditions Technical Note;
- Accessibility Technical Note;
- Phase 1 Technical Note;
- Phase 1 Appendix;
- Phase 1 Mitigation Log;
- Phase 2 Technical Note;
- Phase 2 Mitigation Log.

No updated Strategic Transport Technical Note has been published to demonstrate that the transport model reflects the latest Local Plan assumptions.

Consequently, the June 2026 IDS continues to rely heavily upon transport modelling and assumptions prepared during 2025.

2. The transport strategy depends upon infrastructure that has not yet been secured

The Strategic Transport Study assumes that the A141 and St Ives Improvements Scheme will be delivered. However, the evidence does not establish that this particular scheme, in its currently proposed form, is the final solution that will ultimately be approved, funded and constructed.

The June 2026 IDS states that the scheme is critical to delivering strategic growth. However, its current delivery status shows why a distinction needs to be made between identifying the need for an A141 solution and having a secured scheme capable of providing it. The IDS also confirms that:

- the Outline Business Case remains under review;
- the Full Business Case is still being prepared;
- construction is not expected until around 2030;
- completion is forecast around 2033;
- funding remains dependent upon several potential sources including Government, CPCA and developer contributions.

The transport modelling therefore demonstrates how the Local Plan might operate if the A141 scheme is delivered. It does not prove that this particular scheme will be approved, funded and delivered in that form or to that timetable.

3. The sensitivity testing highlights the Local Plan's dependence upon the A141

One of the strongest pieces of evidence within the transport study is the sensitivity testing. When the A141 scheme is removed from the model, the study predicts:

- higher congestion;
- longer journey times;
- reduced public transport use;

- significantly reduced park-and-ride usage;
- additional traffic using existing roads.

Rather than demonstrating resilience, the testing shows how heavily the wider transport strategy depends upon the transport benefits assumed from the modelled A141 package. The sensitivity testing therefore establishes the importance of achieving those transport outcomes, but it does not establish that the currently proposed scheme is the only, final or secured means of achieving them.

The evidence therefore strengthens the argument that an effective A141 transport solution is **fundamental** to the Local Plan rather than optional mitigation.

4. Some major development proposals may not be fully represented

The transport evidence predates several significant developments that have since progressed. Since completion of the transport modelling:

- Sapley Park has emerged as a potential strategic reserve allocation;
- outline planning permission has been granted for Newlands Logistics Park;
- Project Fairfax at RAF Wyton has continued to develop;
- Brampton Cross continues to be promoted by developers through stakeholder engagement.

It is therefore unclear whether the transport modelling fully reflects the latest cumulative growth assumptions now being promoted across the district.

5. Questions remain regarding Huntingdon Racecourse and Brampton Cross

The transport study includes employment assumptions associated with Huntingdon Racecourse together with an important park-and-ride facility.

However, there is no active commercial development proposal of equivalent scale being promoted at the Racecourse that is known to the Cumulative Impacts Group.

Conversely, Brampton Cross remains an active commercial proposal progressing through developer engagement but is not included as an allocation within the Local Plan.

It is therefore unclear whether the transport modelling fully represents the cumulative effects of the Brampton Cross proposal or whether the Racecourse allocation has been used as a proxy for employment growth west of Huntingdon.

This remains an important question requiring clarification.

6. Brampton Hut interchange remains a significant uncertainty

The evidence acknowledges that Brampton Hut interchange already experiences congestion and will continue to play a key role in accommodating future growth.

However, the IDS largely refers to future monitoring and possible signal optimisation rather than identifying a fully developed capacity improvement scheme.

There remains no clear evidence demonstrating:

- a funded improvement scheme;
- agreed delivery programme;
- confirmed construction timetable; or

- development triggers linked to implementation.

7. The transport evidence remains strategic rather than detailed

The Strategic Transport Study is intended to compare growth strategies across the district. It is not a detailed assessment of every junction or development proposal.

Accordingly, it does not demonstrate:

- that Brampton Hut has sufficient future capacity;
- that local roads will avoid displacement traffic;
- that access to Hinchingbrooke Hospital will remain resilient;
- that mitigation will be delivered before development is occupied.

Further detailed transport assessment will still be required as planning applications come forward.

Conclusion

The Strategic Transport Study provides a comprehensive strategic assessment of transport across Huntingdonshire and demonstrates that substantial new infrastructure will be required to accommodate the scale of growth within the emerging Local Plan.

The evidence consistently identifies the need for a major A141 and St Ives transport intervention as fundamental to the success of the transport strategy. The sensitivity testing demonstrates that, without the transport benefits assumed from the modelled scheme, congestion increases, public transport performance deteriorates and delays become significantly worse across the network. What the evidence does not yet demonstrate is that the particular scheme currently being developed is the final, approved, funded and deliverable solution capable of providing those benefits.

However, whilst the transport evidence clearly identifies the infrastructure required, it remains considerably less certain that the infrastructure will be delivered in time to support development.

Furthermore, because the transport modelling itself has not been updated since September 2025, it remains unclear whether the latest Local Plan proposals (including Sapley Park, the approved Newlands development, Project Fairfax and the continued progression of Brampton Cross) have been fully assessed as part of the cumulative transport strategy.

The evidence base therefore provides a strong strategic understanding of transport requirements, including the need for a major A141 intervention, but remains weaker in demonstrating that the latest cumulative growth proposals have been tested against an up-to-date transport model, that the final form of the necessary A141 solution has been identified and secured, and that the infrastructure upon which the Local Plan depends will be delivered in time.

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