

Rugby Local Plan Examination

Transport and Highways Statement of Common Ground as agreed between

Rugby Borough Council

and

Warwickshire County Council – Transport & Economy

and

Highways England

19th January 2018

1. Purpose of this Statement

1.1. The purpose of this statement is to inform the Inspector and other parties about the areas of agreement between Rugby Borough Council (RBC), Warwickshire County Council and Highways England in relation to transport and highways matters relating to the Rugby Local Plan Publication Draft.

1.2. It follows the Duty to Co-operate Statement of Compliance (Examination Document LP 05) which states in Paragraph 5.13 under the heading Highway Authority (Warwickshire County Council and Highways England):

“Extensive and ongoing cooperation with the Highway Authority has taken place throughout the preparation of the Local Plan. This has involved working together on strategic transport assessments to help inform the distribution of development and infrastructure requirements relating to the proposed development sites. Regular liaison meetings have taken place to ensure this work is effective. Engagement work with Highways England has focused on the M6 Junction 1, A46 and A45/M45.”

1.3. Warwickshire County Council made representations on the Publication Draft Local Plan in relation to housing, economic growth, transport and highways, education, waste management, public health, ecology, flood risk, minerals, archaeology and the County Council’s landowner interests. This Statement of Common Ground considers transport and highways matters only.

1.4. Highways England made representations on the Publication Draft Local Plan.

1.5. This Statement of Common Ground sets out the agreement between Rugby Borough Council, Warwickshire County Council and Highways England in relation to transport and highways matters.

2. Background

Warwickshire County Council

- 2.1. Warwickshire County Council made representations on the Publication Draft Local Plan in relation to transport and highways matters. WCC's representation stated:

“The County Council has worked with the Borough Council on the wider strategic transport capacity matters for the Options. The evidence base is contained in the Phase 1 and 2 documents dated December 2015. The documents contain the scenarios and the necessary mitigation measures.

We have been working with the Borough Council and developers have worked together to identify the transport infrastructure required to support growth through the Local Plan Strategic Transport Assessment Modelling Analysis and Overview, September 2016. The transport infrastructure required to support growth to 2031 includes strategic infrastructure at South West Rugby, through delivery of an all traffic route connecting the A426, A45/ M45 and A4071/ Coventry Road. This will be supported by improvements to Dunchurch crossroads. Mitigation required to support growth to the north of Rugby town, largely as a consequence of Coton Park East includes mitigation to various junctions along the A426. As each scheme is advanced in partnership with WCC Highways, Highways England and site promoters, the detail of the necessary mitigation, including costs and funding, will be progressed.

This will also include the smaller scale highway mitigation requirement and we can provide further specific comments regarding relevant risks to the timely delivery of highway infrastructure.

To support sustainable travel we are working to secure funding for a new Rugby Parkway Station in close proximity to the Sustainable Urban

Extension at the Radio Station site. The County Council has confirmed that they will work closely with the Borough Council on this.

In Appendix A attached to this letter I have included specific transport and highways feedback regarding named sites and on the proposed Southern West Rugby Spine road. In the case of the spine road, the complete scheme should be developer funded and the link to Potford Dam Roundabout is essential in highway safety terms for which a follow up technical note will be provided.”

Highways England

2.2. Highways England representation on the Publication Draft Local Plan stated:

“Highways England provided the following key comments on the Preferred Option Local Plan in February 2016:

- The option(s) presented were likely to have traffic and highways implications for the Strategic Road Network (SRN) at the M6 Junction 1 and A45 / M45 corridor, including Tollbar End.
- Delivery of the site to the South of Walsgrave Hill Farm would be reliant on:
 - an improved junction on the A46 at Walsgrave; and
 - an updated Strategic Transport Assessment which would need to consider the proposed Coventry City Council housing allocation at Walsgrave Hill Farm.
- We would expect Travel Plans to be the first line of mitigation for addressing impact on the SRN of large residential developments, as per DfT Circular 02/2013.
- To assess the impact of the proposed housing site allocations, we considered that the final Local Plan would need to be supported by further transport modelling which assesses the potential highways

implications of the proposed sites and any associated requirements for highways mitigation.

The Publication Draft has sought, in part, to address our previous comments. We note that the site previously proposed at Walsgrave Hill Farm is now not a proposed allocation.

The Publication Draft Consultation options continue to have traffic and highway implications for the SRN. In this instance the relevant sections of the SRN comprise:

- M6 Junction 1 - impacts from approximately 2,200 dwellings at Rugby Gateway, Coton Park East and Coton House; and
- M45/ A45 - impacts from approximately 5,000 dwellings and 35ha of employment land to the north of the corridor, and 1,500 dwellings to the south (Lodge Farm).

We note that the Strategic Transport Assessment (STA) provided with the Local Plan underpins the infrastructure improvements identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This sets out the following infrastructure relevant to the SRN:

1. M45/ A45 – Link A
2. Potential mitigation for the A45/ M45 corridor
3. Mitigation to M6 Junction 1

Whilst the STA provides more detail on potential schemes (such as full signalisation of M6 Junction 1 and signalisation of M45/ A45 roundabout) there are a number of uncertainties surrounding the funding and delivery. The work undertaken to date identifies the SRN mitigation required to support the Plan, however we would welcome a more detailed assessment to better define the impacts on the SRN and the infrastructure requirements for the strategic sites. As such we will continue to collaborate with Warwickshire County Council (WCC) in the development of further assessments.

We are aware that WCC are currently updating their Rugby Wide Area traffic model (calibrated using 2016 data) and would like to see the Local Plan tested within this model to provide further assurances and detail on the schemes contained within the IDP.

We welcome identification of Highways England as a delivery partner for schemes 1 and 2 above and are committed to supporting Rugby Borough Council in the development and delivery of mitigation on the SRN. Whilst we appreciate that the M6 Junction 1 and any forthcoming 'local' link roads will be operated and maintained by the local highway authority we would like to continue our positive engagement to ensure we are kept abreast of developments given the potential impacts they could have on the SRN.

As set out in our response to the Preferred Options Local Plan, we believe that Travel Plans should be produced for large residential developments which have a material impact on the SRN as per national guidance – paragraphs 28 to 30 of DfT Circular 02/2013. We would expect Travel Plans to form the first line of mitigation for addressing development impacts on the SRN.”

Strategic Transport Assessment 2017

- 2.3. Following the Publication Draft of the Local Plan, Warwickshire County Council updated the Strategic Transport Assessment using the 2016 updated Rugby Wide Area Base Model and associated Forecast Models and revisited the study area by extending it to cover the villages of Barby and Kilsby to the south of the M45. At the same time parts of the northern and western extent of the study area were removed as they were considered to be part of the 'buffer' network. The updated STA was published in June 2017. The transport infrastructure required to support growth to 2031 includes strategic infrastructure at South West Rugby, through delivery of the proposed South West Link Road (SWLR). The

SWLR is an all traffic route which comprises three sections as follows: (1) Homestead Link connecting the A426 Rugby Road with the B4429 Coventry Road, (2) Cawston Lane realignment and (3) Potsford Dam Link connecting the A45/M45 with the A4071 to the west of Potsford Dam Roundabout. The STA has identified that the Homestead Link is required by 2026 and the Potsford Dam Link by 2031 to support development at South West Rugby and Lodge Farm in line with Rugby Borough Council's Housing Trajectory. The realignment of Cawston Lane is required by 2031, or earlier if the delivery of the development in the eastern part of the South West Rugby site is brought forward prior to 2031.

Warwickshire County Council Update

- 2.5. Proposals for a new rail facility at Rugby Parkway located to the south of the A428 Crick Road opposite the Rugby Radio Station site at Houlton are currently part-funded. The County Council hope to be in a position to resolve the outstanding funding elements by the end of March 2018. In combination, Rugby town and Parkway stations would accommodate the projected demand for rail in the area and support delivery of the Local Plan.
- 2.6. In September 2017, the County Council submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for Housing and Infrastructure Funding (HIF) to support Local Plan development at South West Rugby. If the EOI is accepted, the HCA would assist the County Council to develop a full business case to enable the Homestead Farm Link to be forward funded which would accelerate housing delivery in South West Rugby.
- 2.7. The County Council's response to Northamptonshire County Council/ Daventry District Council - WCC has responded to various questions raised by Northamptonshire County Council on the Strategic Transport Assessment (STA). There are two outstanding matters: possible land availability constraints in relation to the proposed Daventry Road/ The Ridgeway widening scheme; and certainty of funding for proposed

improvements at the A5/ A428 junction. Both of these improvements are located in Northamptonshire.

2.8. It is considered that the Daventry Road/ The Ridgeway scheme to provide a right turn facility at this location could potentially be replaced by proposals to signalise the junction within the current layout (or with minimal changes) which would achieve the same operational benefits as the STA scheme without the need for third party land. It is anticipated that the promoters of Lodge Farm would be responsible for delivering the mitigation in this area in its entirety and therefore any costs associated with possible utility diversions would need to be addressed by them through the planning application associated with the site.

2.9. It is considered that the A5/A428 junction scheme to signalise the A428 eastbound approach and widen the western exit to allow movement east to west through the junction would be funded by the promoters of Lodge Farm and the scheme has been included in the Rugby IDP.

2.10. The County Council's response to Stagecoach - Stagecoach is the principal bus operator in Rugby and has raised concerns that the level of growth Local Plan is likely to significantly exacerbate traffic congestion at a number of key pinch points on the local highway network, which is likely to further compromise journey time reliability. Warwickshire County Council is seeking to address these concerns by undertaking a comprehensive review of the current LTP Rugby Transport Strategy in partnership with Stagecoach and other key stakeholders. It is anticipated that the review will consider the potential role of Park and Ride and parking policy in managing travel demand to help reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.

2.11. The County Council's response to Mode for Stand Against Lodge Farm Village - Mode Transport Planning (Mode TP) were appointed by 'Stand Against Lodge Farm Village' (SALFV) to provide a critique of the highways evidence base that has been submitted in support of the emerging Rugby Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031. However, Mode TP's Technical

Note which provides this critique appears to focus on the STA (September 2016) (Examination Document LP 19) which has since been superseded by the revised STA (June 2017) (Examination Document LP 20). The revised STA (LP 20) has addressed several of the points raised by the Technical Note and the relevant references are provided below:

- Scope of Modelling (LP 20 - Section 3 - Assessment)
- Model Coverage (LP 20 - Study Area - paragraph 2.5)
- Traffic Assignment (LP 20 - paragraph 3.23)
- South West Rugby Spine Road (cost estimates provided in the IDP and trigger points identified in LP 20 - Table 20 and Appendix B)
- Dunchurch Crossroads – the STA showed that the network could operate in 2021 with the proposed improvements at Dunchurch Crossroads but without the Homestead Link in place, assuming no development at Lodge Farm. We would not however support development at Lodge Farm coming forward in lieu of other sites in the South West as the Lodge Farm site promoter does not control the necessary land required for the Homestead Farm Link. The STA showed that the link is required by 2026 assuming 265 dwellings at Lodge Farm, but it would be for the promoters, through additional technical work, to demonstrate the implications of the delivery up to 265 prior to the link being in place to establish if the impact is likely to be acceptable in Dunchurch.
- Other Mitigation (LP 20 - Table 39)
- Impacts on Northamptonshire (see paragraphs 2.7 – 2.9 above)
- Impacts on the Strategic Road Network (LP 20 - Table 39 and Figure 46)
- Cycle Access, Public Transport Access and School Travel (emerging strategy has been considered by the site promoter in their representations)
- Highway Safety - The purpose of the STA is to identify 'critical dependencies' which are referred to in guidance issued by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) relating to Development Plan Documents. These dependencies are the strategic level transport infrastructure required to mitigate the impacts of the proposed

allocation options under consideration. The STA provides this information for all strategic transport mitigation schemes which have been identified. If a particular site option is brought forward to planning application stage, site promoters are required to provide a more detailed analysis of their likely transport impacts in the form of a Transport Assessment (TA). The TA considers strategic and localised transport impacts, including impacts on local villages and highway safety, and sets out proposals for mitigating these where appropriate.

Highways England Update

2.12. On 9 January 2018 Highways England (HE) wrote to Rugby Borough Council setting out their comments on the Strategic Transport Modelling (June 2017) (LP20) and the implications for the Local Plan. This letter is attached to this Statement of Common Ground as Appendix 1.

2.13. HE state in their letter that: “The STA is found to be based on sound modelling practices which are suitable for assessing the residual impacts of Local Plan development traffic being loaded onto the highway network.”

2.14. HE’s letter continues: “We note that the key transport issues are recognised within the STA. The need for additional capacity provided by a future South West Link Road (SWLR) is noted and, in principle, is supported. Improved links between major development sites are welcomed by Highways England due to the need to provide ongoing management of the SRN network in this area. In addition, the alignment options for the SWLR should be discussed with Highways England going forward to ensure SRN impacts are managed. We also note the development of a number of SWLR options undertaken within the STA sensitivity tests.”

2.15. HE state: “the work undertaken to date identifies the SRN mitigation required to support the Plan. However, we would welcome a more detailed assessment to better define the impacts on the SRN and the specific infrastructure requirements for the strategic sites. As such, we intend to

continue to collaborate with RBC and WCC in the development of any future assessments.”

2.16. In relation to sustainable modes HE state that: “Although the STA currently lacks the detail necessary to be able to provide specific comments in terms of locations and impact on the SRN, we support in principle the development of a Sustainable Transport Strategy being prepared by WCC.”

2.17. HE’s letter concludes: “We welcome identification of Highways England as a delivery partner for mitigation schemes identified in the STA and discussed above. We are committed to supporting RBC in the development and delivery of mitigation on the SRN. On this basis, we consider that the above matters are addressed in most part and we would like to continue our positive engagement to ensure we are kept abreast of developments given the potential impacts they could have on the SRN.”

2.18. Highways England Update on the A46 Coventry Junctions Upgrade (Road Investment Strategy) – HE have confirmed that they are taking a phased approach to upgrade the A46. To do this they expect to progress with the Binley junction first as it currently suffers from heavy congestion, followed by the Walsgrave junction. HE expect to be in a position to make a preferred route announcement and hold a public information exhibition in early 2018, which will provide an update on the design for the Binley junction.

3. Agreed Matters

3.1. There is complete agreement between Rugby Borough Council, the County Council and Highways England.

3.2. All three authorities recognise the importance of continuing co-operation and collaboration to ensure the effective delivery of the Local Plan and supporting infrastructure and services which are essential for successful communities.

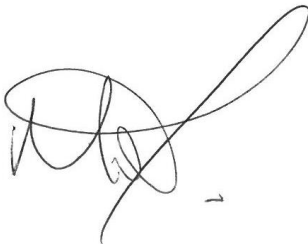
AGREEMENT

Signed by



.....Vicky Chapman on behalf of Rugby Borough Council

Dated



.....Mark Ryder..... on behalf of Warwickshire County Council

Dated



..... Adrian Johnson on behalf of Highways England

Dated

