

**Transport and Highways Statement of Common Ground as agreed between**  
**North Warwickshire Borough Council**  
**and**  
**Warwickshire County Council – Transport & Economy**  
**and**  
**Highways England**

**September 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 North Warwickshire Borough Council, Warwickshire County Council and Highways England in relation to transport and highways matters relating to the North Warwickshire Submission Local Plan 2018.
- 1.2 It follows the Regulation 19 stage representations made by Highways England to the North Warwickshire Submission Local Plan 2018.
- 1.3 The Duty to Co-operate Statement (Examination Document CD0/05) states in Paragraph 5.14 under the heading **Highways England (formerly Highways Agency)**:

*“Highways England considers the Local Plan to be evidenced and developed.”*

- 1.4 Highways England made further representations on the Publication Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18 stage).
- 1.5 Warwickshire County Council also made representations on the North Warwickshire Submission Local Plan 2018 (NWLP), in relation to housing, economic growth, transport and highways, education, public health, ecology, flood risk, minerals, archaeology and the County Council’s landowner interests.
- 1.6 This Statement of Common Ground considers transport and highways matters only.
- 1.7 This Statement of Common Ground sets out the agreement between North Warwickshire 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 as the Local Highway Authority has actively worked with the Borough Council during all stages of the production of the Local Plan particularly Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 stages.
- 2.2 For the Draft Submission Stage, the County Council responded that the Plan is supported, and noted they were working closely with Highways England in the development of the Strategic Transport Assessment (STA), infrastructure provision and the identification of potential mitigation solutions on the A5 corridor.

*“The initial work undertaken by the County Council identified significant impacts and mitigation requirements which may be deemed unviable for delivery through the Local Plan process. The County is, therefore, working closely with Highways England on the development of options which are considered in scale with the development proposals but do not present a barrier to long term aspirations for capacity improvements on the strategic A5 corridor.”*

- 2.3 Warwickshire County Council has submitted a Housing Infrastructure Fund (HiF) expression of interest for the A5 Transport Corridor in North Warwickshire and this is one of 44 proposals to progress to the next stage (Business Plan stage) of the £5 billion Housing Infrastructure Fund. Technical support is being provided from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government to help develop a full business case for the scheme funding.

### Highways England

- 2.4 Highways England, as the Highway Authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in England, has also engaged proactively with North Warwickshire Borough Council on the Draft Local Plan, and in its representations has indicated that the proposed residential and employment allocations would have an impact on the SRN, specifically the A5 trunk road and M42 Junction 10. It was further noted that these impacts were likely to be subject to a cumulative effect in conjunction with wider growth associated with neighbouring boroughs, including Tamworth and Nuneaton & Bedworth.
- 2.5 Highways England recognised the importance to the Local Plan evidence base of the work being undertaken by Warwickshire County Council to develop a STA for North Warwickshire Borough Council and commented on the scope of the STA transport assessment work necessary to assess the traffic implications of the planned growth in the area.
- 2.6 The STA was subsequently completed by Warwickshire County Council in August 2017 and forms part of the submitted evidence base underpinning

the Plan. Highways England have confirmed the STA is broadly acceptable and are pleased to see it informs the North Warwickshire Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) dated March 2018 that sets out the infrastructure requirements identified as being necessary to deliver the Plan.

#### A5 Corridor and M42 Junction 10

- 2.7 The STA and IDP have set out a number of individual schemes along the A5 which will be necessary to accommodate the forecast levels of development traffic arising from planned growth. Highways England agree that a piecemeal approach to improvement of individual junctions or sections of the A5 will not meet the wider aspirations expressed by parties including Warwickshire County Council and Midlands Connect for a comprehensive upgrade of the A5. The Warwickshire County Council HiF Bid will, if successful, enable a significant upgrade of the route within North Warwickshire and is fully supported by Highways England.
- 2.8 Highways England has no current proposals to improve the A5 in North Warwickshire and recognise that the progress of the A5 HiF Bid may have implications for the timing and delivery of individual schemes identified within the IDP. There are aspirations for a more significant, longer term improvement to the wider A5 corridor and it is anticipated that the future of such a longer term proposal will be considered as part of future Road Investment Strategies. Highways England are satisfied that the delivery of such a proposal is not a critical component necessary to deliver the Plan.

#### M42/M6 Junctions & A446

- 2.9 While the majority of growth contained within the NWLP is focused in (or near to) the A5 corridor, growth external to North Warwickshire Borough Council also has implications for the transport networks (including the SRN) within the Borough. New travel patterns and challenges may arise as a result of the proposed route of HS2 Phase 2 and with the planned HS2 Phase 1 Birmingham Interchange station located to the east of Birmingham International Airport. These pressures are predominantly focused around the M42, M6 and A446 routes including M42 Junction 9 and M6 Junction 4 within the borough being particularly affected. Primary mitigation for the direct local transport impacts of HS2 is provided for in the Act which permits its construction.
- 2.10 Highways England note that there is potential for changing travel patterns and cross boundary implications of associated development near the interchange station to impact on North Warwickshire. While this growth largely pertains to committed or emerging developments within Birmingham and Solihull, it is necessary that the NWLP to consider these emerging cumulative implications in so far as they are foreseeable at this time. Highways England notes that the Submission NWLP acknowledges the pressure from growth outside the Borough, including addressing an element of unmet development need in the wider region, through the

Plan's employment and housing allocations, and that the STA has sought to take these additional pressures into account in a practical and realistic manner, particularly in relation to the A5 corridor and M42 Junction 10.

### **3. Conclusions**

- 3.1 Extensive investigations of highway infrastructure need in the A5 corridor have been undertaken by Highways England and Warwickshire County Council over the recent past with the latter considering the detailed impact of proposed development in the North Warwickshire area on both the local highway network and the A5. The need for and delivery of highway infrastructure to support growth has been carefully assessed and relevant funding mechanisms are being pursued. On the basis of the evidence produced, Highways England and Warwickshire County Council view the Plan as satisfactorily evidenced based and developed with respect to transport.
- 3.2 A number of significant infrastructure schemes on the SRN arise from the NWLP, most notably in the A5 Corridor. Highways England is satisfied that the work done to date to identify A5 infrastructure needs is appropriate to the plan making process as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, and that the schemes currently identified in the IDP are broadly appropriate to support the delivery of planned growth arising in North Warwickshire.
- 3.3 Highways England note that there are no present commitments to provide public funding to the improvement schemes proposed for the A5 but there are prospective funding sources, including HiF and the Road Investment Strategy. Any potential future funding from Highways England would be subject to confirmation of schemes within a future Road Investment Strategy, where such schemes would need to be considered alongside other regional and national priorities. Highways England recognises that HiF has been introduced by the government specifically to enable the provision of infrastructure that will support the delivery of housing and welcomes the progress of the Warwickshire County Council HiF proposals to the second stage of the delivery process, and the support that this gives to the delivery prospects of the proposed A5 improvement schemes.
- 3.4 There are a number of wider issues, including cross boundary growth arising from Birmingham and Solihull, together with HS2 that are likely to impact on parts of North Warwickshire's transport networks and which may have consequences for the overall prioritisation of funding and delivery of infrastructure within the borough. The IDP is therefore likely to require future updating to reflect the cumulative implications of these wider issues as their implications and infrastructure needs become clearer. Highways England and Warwickshire County Council note that the IDP is a working document and that it will be updated when additional evidence is available.

- 3.5 Highways England are committed to continued engagement with North Warwickshire Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council to help inform the ongoing development and delivery of the highway infrastructure needed to support the North Warwickshire Local Plan.

#### **4. Agreed Matters**

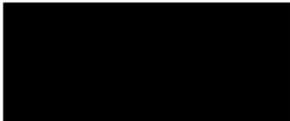
- 4.1 North Warwickshire Borough Council, Warwickshire County Council and Highways England agree that the requirements for the Duty to Cooperate process and for consultation with respect to the North Warwickshire Local Plan have been met in terms of transport and highways matters.
- 4.2 There is agreement between North Warwickshire Borough Council, Warwickshire County Council and Highways England on the need for highway improvements to enable delivery of the Plan, including on the A5 Trunk Road. It is further agreed that the STA as reflected in the draft IDP provides the most up to date evidence in this regard.
- 4.3 All parties welcome identification of Highways England as a potential delivery partner and key stakeholder for the development of the A5 HiF schemes.
- 4.4 Highways England and Warwickshire County Council are committed to supporting North Warwickshire Borough Council in the development and delivery of mitigation on the SRN. In this regard, 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.

#### **5. Matters Outstanding**

- 5.1 Highways England are currently reviewing a piece of traffic analysis work that further clarifies the implications of the two neighbouring Borough Plans and associated growth. It intends to confirm the infrastructure required on the A5 corridor and provides additional detail beyond the agreed conclusions from the STA [August 2017]. This draft report is “VM VM175144 A5 Growth Corridor Study: 2031 Forecasting & Optioneering Report August 2018”.
- 5.2 The additional modelling is welcomed by Highways England and focuses solely on the wider A5 corridor and takes into consideration wider growth in the region.
- 5.3 Highways England are also currently reviewing a Briefing Note, titled “Infrastructure Requirements and the North Warwickshire Local Plan August 2018”.
- 5.4 The review of this additional evidence and briefing paper is to be concluded prior to the Examination in Public Commencing.

**AGREEMENT**

Signed by



on behalf of North Warwickshire Borough

Dated .....8/18.



on behalf of Warwickshire County

Council Dated ...30/08/18..



Eri Wong  
Asset Manager, Coventry & Warwickshire  
on behalf of Highways England  
Dated 30 August 2018