



**WORTHING LOCAL PLAN 2020- 2036**

**Worthing Borough Council / Highways  
England**

**Signed Statement of Common Ground**

**SUBMISSION**

**October 2021**



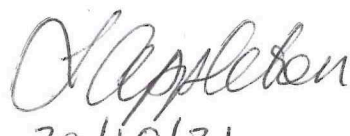


**WORTHING BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**

**Worthing Borough Council / Highways England / West Sussex County  
Council Statement of Common Ground**

**Worthing Local Plan**

**Signatories:**

Highways England	WSCC	WBC
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 24/8/2021	 12/10/21	[Insert signature]  20/10/21

**Dated:** XX/XX/XXXX 20<sup>TH</sup> October 2021

**Statement**

**1. Introduction and Scope**

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by Worthing Borough (WBC) together with West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and Highways England (HE). The Statement has been prepared to support the emerging Worthing Local Plan which will be submitted for Examination in spring 2021.
- 1.2 The purpose of this SoCG is to set out the basis on which WBC, WSCC and HE have actively and positively agreed to work together to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Duty to Co-operate.
- 1.3 Under section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (amended by section 110 of the Localism Act 2011) and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 it is a requirement under the Duty to Cooperate for local planning authorities, county councils and other named bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in the preparation of



development plan documents and other local development documents. This is a test that local authorities need to satisfy at the Local Plan examination stage and is an additional requirement to the test of soundness.

## **2. Responsibilities of the parties**

- Worthing Borough Council (WBC) - to produce a Local Plan that delivers sustainable development and provides for housing and economic growth. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires WBC to consider transport issues throughout the preparation of a Local Plan so that the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;
- West Sussex County Council (WSCC) – is the local highway authority covering all other public highways in the borough.
- Highways England (HE) – is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the strategic road network (SRN). HE works to ensure that the SRN operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity.

### **3.0 Key Matters**

3.1 The NPPF defines the topics considered to be strategic matters (para 20). The only strategic matters relevant to this SoCG:

- the cross-boundary matters associated with the movement of vehicular traffic on the SRN, and
- the impacts of development proposed and/or resulting from any adoption of the Local Plan on the Strategic Road Network within the borough.

3.2 DfT Circular 2/13 and the NPPF are clear that any development, including housing delivery, must be tempered by the requirement to ensure that it can be accommodated without unacceptable impacts on the safety, reliability and operation of the SRN. Therefore, as necessary and appropriate, any development must be accompanied by suitable mitigation in the right places at the right time, that is to the required standards and is deliverable in terms of land availability, constructability and funding.

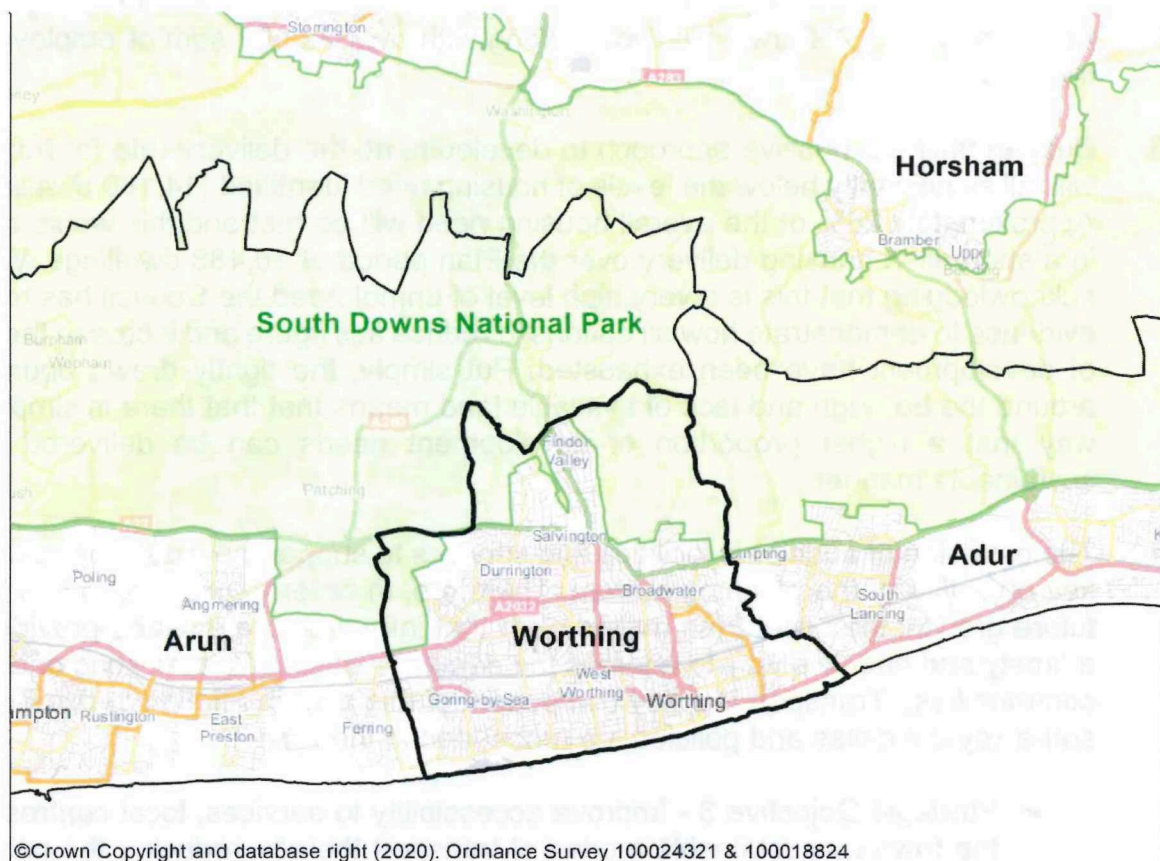
3.3 In relation to plan making, DfT Circular 02/2013 states that:

- (Para 15) HE will work with the local authority to understand the transport implications of development options. This will include assessing the cumulative and individual impacts of the Local Plan proposals upon the ability of the road links and junctions affected to accommodate the forecast traffic flows in terms of capacity and safety.
- (Para 17) HE will work with local authorities and developers to identify opportunities to introduce travel plan and demand management measures through the Local Plan.

- (Para 18) Capacity enhancements and infrastructure required to deliver strategic growth should be identified at the Local Plan stage, which provides the best opportunity to consider development aspirations alongside the associated strategic infrastructure needs.
- (Para 19) Where a potential capacity need is identified, this will be considered and weighed alongside environmental and deliverability considerations.

## 4.0 Worthing Context

- 4.1 Worthing is situated on the south coast of England within the County of West Sussex. The Borough comprises the urban area of Worthing and is bounded by Arun District to the west and Adur District to the east. The South Downs National Park (SDNP) Authority is situated to the north of Worthing Borough.



- 4.2 The A27 is part of the SRN and passes through the north of the Borough on an east – west alignment. It is a predominantly dual carriageway route which reduces to single carriageway in places, including through parts of the Worthing urban area. Other primary roads include the A24 which connects central Worthing with the M25 to the north and the A259 / A2032 route which passes east – west through the urban area of Worthing.
- 4.3 Worthing is a predominantly a compact urban area. Road congestion during peak periods affects many parts of the highway network throughout the borough,



disrupting journey times and causing poor air quality. Particular problems are on main routes into the town centre (A259 and A24) and along the A27.

## **5.0 Emerging Local Plan and Associated Evidence Base**

- 5.1 After several years in preparation the emerging Local Plan is now well advanced and was submitted for Examination in June 2021. The Plan will help to shape the future of the borough over a 15 year period as it provides the strategy for growth, setting out what development will take place and where. When adopted, the new Plan will replace the borough's existing local planning policies and will be an important consideration in deciding planning applications.
- 5.2 A key challenge when preparing the Plan has been to balance all the identified needs of Worthing's communities with the scarcity of land that we have within the borough. Despite significant development constraints the Council is seeking to allocate 15 different sites for development (6 of which are edge of town sites). These, and other development opportunities, will deliver over 3,650 dwellings over the Plan period (230 dwellings/year) along with over 32,000 sqm of employment floorspace.
- 5.3 Despite taking a positive approach to development, the delivery rate for housing will fall significantly below the levels of housing need identified (14,160 dwellings). Approximately 26% of the overall housing need will be met and this would result in a shortfall in housing delivery over the Plan period of 10,488 dwellings. Whilst acknowledging that this is a very high level of unmet need the Council has robust evidence to demonstrate how all options to reduce this figure and increase the rate of development have been exhausted. Put simply, the tightly drawn boundary around the borough and lack of available land means that there is simply no way that a higher proportion of development needs can be delivered in a sustainable manner.
- 5.4 The provision of additional facilities and services to support new development is a key objective of the planning system. Therefore, in order to promote sustainable future growth, the Local Plan makes clear that infrastructure must be provided in a timely and effective way to address the demands arising from existing and new communities. Transport is a key component of this and, in relation to this SoCG, some key principles and policies are embedded in the Plan.
- Strategic Objective 3 - Improve accessibility to services, local centres and the town by sustainable modes of transport thereby reducing the need to travel by car.
  - Strategic Objective 11 - Enhance the gateway approaches and key transport corridors leading into the town centre.
  - Strategic Objective 19 - Provide an integrated, safe and sustainable transport system to improve air quality, reduce congestion and promote active travel.
  - Policy DM15 – Sustainable Transport and Active Travel, this is the main policy that will be used to ensure that the Plan helps to deliver reliable and efficient transport that supports growth and productivity.

5.5 In progressing the Local Plan WBC has liaised with HE in accordance with the assessment requirements of DfT Circular 02/2013 and NPPF. WBC has also liaised with WSCC throughout this process. To inform and support the development of the new Worthing Local Plan a Transport Study was prepared to demonstrate the traffic implications of potential new land use development and to identify an associated package of transport improvements. The main transport evidence currently comprises:

- Worthing Local Plan Transport Assessment – August 2018:  
<https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/media/Media,151151,smxx.pdf>
- Worthing Local Plan – Transport Assessment – Addendum (Jan 2021)  
<https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/media/Media,159202,smxx.pdf>

5.6 In general, the studies indicate that the development of the proposed Local Plan allocations can be accommodated if a suitable package of mitigation measures is provided. This package consists of capacity improvements to the highway network where appropriate to do so, road safety enhancements where required and sustainable transport improvements to reduce demand for the private car.

5.7 WSCC agreed the following mitigation package based on the results of the transport study:

- Improvements to the A259/A2032/Titnore Lane “Goring Crossways” roundabout
- Improvements to the A2032/Durrington Lane/The Boulevard roundabout
- Minor safety improvements at the A2032/A2031 “Poulters Corner” signalised crossroads
- Minor safety improvements at the A259/Goring Way roundabout and approach links
- Speed reduction measures on B2233 Dominion Road
- Travel Planning Information and promotion
- Car Share scheme
- Improved cycle and pedestrian provision including cycle parking and promotion of cycle to work scheme
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure

5.8 The Addendum, published 2021, provided an update and also helped to address concerns that were raised by HE at Regulation 18 consultation stage (undertaken at the end of 2018). During recent discussions, HE has confirmed that their previous concerns have been largely addressed but, as explained below, some additional work and assessment is still needed. This is currently being progressed.

## **6.0 Highways England Responses to the Regulation 19 Worthing Local Plan**

6.1 Within its response April 2021 to the Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation HE confirmed that they will continue to work with WBC, their consultants WSP and WSCC to agree the Transport Study supporting the Local Plan. HE agree that good progress has been made and they support the council's strategy to minimise car trips from development by encouraging more sustainable forms of travel – this



will help to reduce demand on the SRN. However, HE also highlight the further work to be undertaken in relation to its potential impacts on the safe and efficient operation of the A27 Trunk Road. This will need to include:

- additional work on the indicative cost of the Offington Roundabout Mitigation Scheme.
- an assessment of the costs for the other sustainable transport measures set out in the Transport Study.
- a commitment to consider a blended approach of mitigation measures and developer contributions.
- a review of how best to collect contributions from development to ensure timely and successful delivery of agreed mitigations.

6.2 It will be noted that in accordance with Highways England's roles and responsibilities under C2/13, NPPF and its Operating Licence, it remains neutral on the principle of development, including that contained in Local Plans; since this is a matter for the determining authority. Instead it purely focusses on assessing the impacts of any plans and agreeing any necessary mitigation. Therefore, Highways England's assessments are based on strategy in the submission Local Plan. If the strategy, including, housing numbers, changes for any reason, a reassessment of impacts and mitigation requirements will be required.

## **7.0 Key points of agreement**

7.1 The technical evidence base that supports the WLP is presented within the documents listed in section 5.5 of this SOCG. The scope of assessment, use of models, key inputs and assumptions have been discussed with Highways England and WSCC during the production of the Transport Assessment. WBC, and their consultants WSP, have continued to work with Highways England to produce a supplementary Transport Assessment Addendum. The addendum provides further information specifically on:

- the suitability of the traffic model
- the impact upon the strategic road network
- the mitigation strategy for the strategic road network

7.2 Through the production and review of the Addendum, the suitability of the traffic model has been reviewed and agreed. Highways England's A27 traffic model has been confirmed as suitable for the assessment the RIS1 schemes for A27 Worthing and Lancing and A27 Arundel and is the basis for the traffic assessment of the WBC Local Plan. As part of the Addendum, the further analysis of the model has confirmed the following:

- Traffic flows – additional link flow comparisons have shown a very good fit between the observed and modelled flow data, including on the A27, at both peak period and peak hour levels.
- Traffic routing – analysis has shown that the traffic routing within the model is intuitive for key routes associated with the A27 and A2032

- Journey time – the traffic model validates well against observed journey time data along the A27 through Worthing Borough, and for shorter sections of the route through the Worthing urban area.
- Trip rates and distribution – assumptions have been agreed as suitable for the purposes of the Local Plan transport assessment.

7.3 The A27 modelled traffic data has been shown to provide a good fit with the observed data and provides a suitable basis for transport forecasting and scheme. There is one agreed limitation in relation to the modelled traffic flows on the A24 Warren Road, between the A27 Offington junction and the A27 Grove Lodge roundabout. The modelled flows for the A24 Warren Road are lower than the level of observed flows when compared with observed turning count data. This limitation has been addressed in an agreed method for the operational assessment of key junctions on the strategic road network.

7.4 The Transport Assessment describes the transport impacts of the proposed Local Plan sites. As part of the assessment, an 'area of influence' was established for further, more detailed investigation which included three specific junctions on the strategic road network:

- Beeches Avenue / A27
- Lyons Way / Upper Brighton Road / A27
- A27 / A280 / Titnore Lane

7.5 Highways England required more detailed consideration of two further junctions of the strategic road network and these were subject to assessment within the Addendum. These junctions are:

- A27 / A24 Grove Lodge Roundabout
- A27 / A24 / Offington Lane

7.6 It is agreed that there would be no material impact upon the overall performance of all junctions, with the exception of the A27 / A24 / Offington Lane junction. It is agreed that the Addendum shows that the conditions on the A24 Warren Road approach of the A27 Offington Lane would be exacerbated by an increase in traffic movements and therefore mitigation would be required. It is also agreed that whilst there is no notable issue with regard to the prevalence and severity of collisions at this location, the junction is not compliant with current DMRB standards.

7.7 The agreed approach to mitigation has been to identify appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures, ensuring that what is proposed promotes sustainable transport outcomes and avoids unnecessary works to the strategic road network. In this context, a package of sustainable measures has been proposed within the Transport Assessment. Should the sustainable package not mitigate the impacts upon the strategic road network, a concept highway mitigation scheme has been developed. This scheme illustrates a form of mitigation that would be sufficient to mitigate the Local Plan impacts at this location. It is agreed that a scheme would need to improve the operational performance of the junction, maintain or improve safety, but would not necessarily address all variances of the existing junction from current DMRB standards.



## **8.0 Agreed Actions and Next Steps**

- 8.1 WBC are committed to working with Highways England to plan, seek funding for, and facilitate implementation of improvements (particularly to help support sustainable modes of transport) which are necessary to address future traffic growth impacts associated with the WLP.
- 8.2 WBC will work with Highways England to consider and agree the means by which the appropriate sustainable or physical infrastructure funding can come forward once the Local Plan is adopted, including in relation to monitoring of transport conditions and impacts.
- 8.3 In the first instance, WBC will work further with Highways England to cost the concept infrastructure package, including the A27 / A24 / Offington Corner junction, and as agreed undertake further technical development of the scheme to reach a position where the broad scope of intervention is considered acceptable.
- 8.4 WBC will engage with Highways England and WSCC in the production and continued update of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

## **9.0 Key Outstanding matters**

- 9.1 WBC will set out and agree an apportionment showing how developer contributions from each of the proposed site allocations secured through s106 contributions would deliver improvements to the A27. Whilst, a combination of CIL and s106 contributions will provide funding to help deliver the identified mitigation measures across the wider Strategic Road Network. This will help site promoters to be aware of their required contributions when bringing forward applications.
- 9.2 This work will be taken forward in parallel with the emerging Local and be set out in detail in 3 key documents: the Infrastructure Delivery Plan; the Infrastructure Investment Plan (CIL Priority and Implementation plan), and; a new Supplementary Planning Document - Development Contributions which will set out the basis for securing contributions from major developments to implement sustainable transport initiatives across the Borough and specific improvements to the A27.

## **10 Other Matters**

- 10.1 At the time of preparation, the international community is experiencing a worldwide pandemic of Coronavirus (Covid-19). This situation is widely acknowledged to have yielded very significant uncertainties and risks in strategy-making for the medium and long term, including in plan-making. The parties agree that this will necessitate a flexible approach to addressing matters covered in this statement, for example due to likely (yet unknown) impacts on the economy at all levels including working practices and related commuter flows.
- 10.2 Also at the time of preparation, the UK Government is consulting on radical and fundamental changes to the English planning system. However, transition arrangements are proposed which would allow Local Plans at an advance state of

preparation to continue being prepared in accordance with current legislation and guidance. The parties are therefore agreed that the Worthing Local Plan 2021 should continue to be prepared in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

## **11 Conclusion**

- 11.1 The parties to this statement have demonstrated that they have worked jointly and constructively throughout the preparation of the Worthing Local Plan. The parties confirm that they will continue to do so, through sustained joint dialogue.
- 11.2 It is intended that the SoCG will be a living document, updated to reflect progress of the Local Plan and the transport related elements. If there are any changes of the content of the SOCG these matters can be discussed at future Duty to Co-operate meetings.



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