

Memorandum of Understanding on Highways &
Transportation Matters for the Calderdale Local Plan between
Calderdale Council and Highways England

1 Background

1.1 Local Plans set out policies to guide development in a locality, including policies and proposals for specific sites to meet the housing, employment, environmental and social needs of the area. The suitability of sites for any of these uses depends on several factors, including transport matters such as local traffic flow, road and transport connections, and options for sustainable travel.

1.2 The preparation of Local Plans provides an opportunity to support a pattern of development that minimises the need for travel, minimises journey lengths, encourages multi-modal sustainable travel, and promotes accessibility for all. This can contribute to the achievement of environmental objectives and reduce the cost to the economy arising from the environmental, business and social impacts associated with traffic generation and congestion, whilst also ensuring that economic growth and housing supply can continue to be maintained.

1.3 In accordance with RIS 2 (Working in partnership):

Getting the best out of the SRN requires Highways England to cooperate with a wide range of partners, in particular those with expertise and understanding of local and regional priorities so that decisions are respectful of place. We envisage Highways England cultivating close working relationships, building on those established during the delivery of RIS1 and the research phase for developing RIS2, in particular with:

- *Sub-national transport bodies (STB), local authorities (in particular those with local transport responsibilities), and local enterprise partnerships (LEP) to help align activities with local plans for growth, housing and transport provision.*

1.4 Calderdale Council (also referred to as the ‘the Council’ in this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)) have a substantial history of co-ordinated working on strategic planning issues such as assessing housing need and planning for future growth. This coordinated working includes the Statement of Common Ground that was signed by Highways England and Calderdale Council in June 2019 during the Stage 1 hearings (EV51.54). The Statement of Common Ground concluded that:

“There are no in-principle impediments to the adoption of the Local Plan on account of its impact on the Strategic Road Network. However, both parties to this Statement agree that it will be necessary to work collaboratively to ensure that the necessary mitigation is delivered at the appropriate time. As Statutory Consultee in the planning process, Highways England will review all planning applications in relation to the aspirations of the Local Plan, and will work with site promoters and the Council to identify the appropriate transport infrastructure mitigation where necessary.”

The above-mentioned cooperation has and will continue through joint working on major schemes (an example of this working effectively was the Clifton Business Park outline planning permission that was permitted in December 2019, following agreement between the Council and Highways England that the impacts identified on the SRN have been mitigated through planning conditions).

1.5 In advance of the Inspector's Stage Two Hearings into the Calderdale Local Plan (the Local Plan), this MoU has been prepared, agreed and signed between the Council and Highways England to provide the Inspector with further clarity and assurance on the work undertaken to date, the agreed position on highways and transportation matters and what further work needs to be undertaken and by whom.

1.6 Furthermore, the MoU is based on the questions that are being asked by the Inspector of Highways England at the Local Plan, which are:

- *Questions relating to the evidence base on transport infrastructure and impact of growth on the SRN – including Highways England's views on the latest cumulative modelling work undertaken by the Council (in Technical Note 13, document CC62b in the examination library), the updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2020 (CC66) and whether HE has carried out any additional sub-regional modelling.*
- *Linked to this, Highways England's up to date position on the improvements required to the SRN to support overall growth and/or specific sites in the Plan (including details of funding, timescales and delivery). E.g. relating to Junctions 24, 25 and 26 and your position on 24a.*
- *Highways England's input into the EIA Scoping Opinion for Woodhouse Garden Suburb*
- *Clarification on Highways England's position regarding mitigation and safeguards in the Local Plan relating to the SRN, and the implications of paragraph 3.1 in the Statement of Common Ground with the Council.*

1.7 For clarity it is agreed that mitigating impacts on the SRN includes consideration of better management of traffic using the SRN; encouraging modal shift and other behaviour changes through mechanisms such as travel planning, investment in multi-modal transport schemes, and effective area wide master planning (for example the co-location of homes, employment and services as is being planned in South East Calderdale). Whilst it is recognised that physical works to create capacity can have a part to play in facilitating development, it is agreed that all parties will need to continue to work together to implement more sustainable long-term solutions to the challenges presented by the SRN.

2 Question 1 - Highways England's views on the latest cumulative modelling work undertaken by the Council

2.1 Work has only been completed in August 2020 before being added to the examination library. As such, it is not considered that Highways England are currently in a position to provide any comment on the suitability of that particular document.

2.2 Notwithstanding, Highways England will review Technical Note 13 in due course and will provide the Council with comments regarding it, and how it aligns to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

2.3 Technical note TN11 (EV54.12) was produced in January 2019, with very similar levels of overall growth as now presented in TN13. This has shown the predicted changes in traffic flow at the end of the plan period and the contributions from Calderdale, Bradford, Kirklees and elsewhere. The locations shown in TN11 (EV54.12) are considered to be the key points on the SRN and the Council considered that the information therein provided allows consideration of the contribution made to these congested nodes from growth in Calderdale and growth from Bradford/Kirklees/elsewhere.

2.4 TN11 shows that measures will be required to mitigate the impact of strategic housing and employment developments on the SRN (in line with the aspirations of paragraph 1.7 above). The eventual form that the mitigation takes will be dependent on transport assessment, travel planning, master planning and detailed design work that can only be undertaken at the stage of a planning application. Of course, detailed mitigations have already been agreed in this respect with regards to the Clifton Business Park scheme (see paragraph 1.4 above).

2.5 With regards to Highways England undertaking additional sub-regional modelling that covers the Calderdale area, Highways England are currently undertaking study work regarding junctions on the M62 within West Yorkshire, considering the cumulative impact of Local Plans on the Strategic Road Network (SRN). Whilst this work is not expected to report in the short term, it will be utilised to inform the Councils as to what mitigation measures may be needed in the future to accommodate growth generated by Local Plans.

3 Question 2 - Highways England's up to date position on the improvements required to the SRN to support overall growth and/or specific sites in the Plan (including details of funding, timescales and delivery)

3.1 Highways England has no schemes within the forward programme of works at M62 Junctions 24, 25 and 26. However, Highways England will assist the Council in pursuing any available funding opportunities and sources, should the need arise for future network improvement schemes. It should be noted though that multi-modal improvements are planned by the Council to the main roundabout at Ainley Top (J24) through Phase 4 of the A629 Corridor Improvement Programme (West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund); capacity improvements are also planned to junction 25 as part of the recently consented Clifton Business Park development. Junction 26 is outside the administrative area of Calderdale.

3.2 Notwithstanding, it is considered by Highways England that the Local Plan should clearly identify the potential need for mitigation measures on the SRN, to support the growth aspirations contained within the Local Plan, and how such mitigation could be funded. It is agreed that draft Local Plan policies IM1 and IM7 meet the requirements of Highways England in this respect.

4 Question 3 - Highways England's input into the EIA Scoping Opinion for Woodhouse Garden Suburb

4.1 Highways England reviewed the Woodhouse Garden Suburb proposals in June 2020, and the Clifton Garden Suburb proposals in July 2020. At the time of review, both proposals took the form of a Request for an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion. Highways England's commentary was only in relation to those matters that have a potential influence at the SRN, specifically the proposed Environmental Statement chapters. This work remains ongoing.

4.2 In addition to the above, Highways England are participating in the current Garden Villages consultation, thus providing Highways England with a further opportunity to influence and shape the development proposals in these locations.

5 Question 4 - Clarification on Highways England's position regarding mitigation and safeguards in the Local Plan relating to the SRN

5.1 It is considered by Highways England that the Council has lead responsibility for providing the information regarding the funding and delivery of mitigation at the SRN to accommodate growth contained within the Local Plan; however, Highways England will assist the Council by providing information where available on where the impacts on the SRN could be likely to occur. To this end, Highways England will continue our joint working, post adoption of the Local Plan, alongside the Council on individual sites that may have an impact at the SRN.

6 Key contact details

6.1 The primary contacts for this Memorandum of Understanding are as follows.

Highways England:

Simon Jones

simon.jones@highwaysengland.co.uk

Calderdale Council:

Richard Seaman

richard.seaman@calderdale.gov.uk

7 Signatures and seals

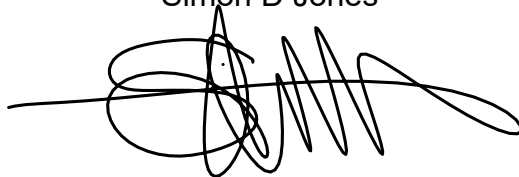
7.1 This Memorandum of Understanding is signed by and duly authorised for and on behalf of:

Highways England

Name (printed):

Simon D Jones

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by several vertical, wavy lines that resemble the letters 'D' and 'J'.

Designation:

Regional Spatial Planning Manager

Date:

06/10/2020

Calderdale Council

Name (printed): Richard Seaman

Signature: *Richard Seaman*

Designation: Corporate Lead - Planning

Date: 6/10/2020