

Position Statement on the Transport Assessment to Support the Draft Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011 – 2029

The Borough Council and their consultants, Parsons Brinckerhoff, have consulted with Hampshire County Council (HCC), as the Local Highway Authority and as part of the Duty to Co-operate, on the preparation of a strategic level Transport Assessment (TA). The purpose of the TA is to inform and guide both the draft Local Plan and the supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This short statement outlines the agreed position between both authorities to inform the examination process.

The assessment has been undertaken through the use of a spreadsheet based model initially prepared in 2013, which takes into account traffic flows on the Basingstoke Network, including traffic arising as a result of development proposed in the draft Local Plan, and other sources, including committed development, forecast growth in background traffic and that associated with development in adjoining authority areas. The principle of utilising a spreadsheet based model was endorsed by HCC prior to commissioning of the TA.

The model is based on data and assumptions drawn from a range of sources including:

- The latest available traffic counts, scaled to a base date of 2012 where required;
- Junction capacities, extracted from existing junction models where available, or other information provided by HCC;
- Link capacities, based on link classification using guidance in TA79/99;
- National Trip End Model (NTEM) forecasts and the TEMPRO (Trip End Model Presentation Program) software, which factors in data such as changes in population, employment, income levels and car ownership; and
- Trip generation rates, derived from TRICS and adjusted to reflect relevant local policies and the scope for smarter choices, such as cycling and walking promotion and travel planning.

The TA sets out a proposed package of measures, which is reflected in the Local Plan and IDP, to mitigate the impact of the additional traffic generated. The package concentrates on a number of key junctions in and around Basingstoke, where the Local Plan traffic levels are 10% above the reference case. Junctions which are already scheduled for improvement (including the A33 and A340 corridors and Black Dam, Brighton Hill, Thornycroft and Winchester Road roundabouts) were excluded on the basis that these schemes will provide adequate capacity for growth in the plan period. These junction/corridor improvements are jointly funded by the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), developer contributions and the Borough and County Councils. These major schemes are planned for phased implementation over the next five years.

Both the Borough Council and HCC recognise that the spreadsheet model can only represent a high level approach to assessing future traffic flows, and that this approach has its limitations. Nevertheless, the approach has been endorsed by HCC and was the best methodology available at the time.

It is noted that, the trip rates utilised in the model are lower than has been accepted by HCC in considering proposals for development elsewhere in the Borough and that HCC does not fully endorse the methodology to derive the trip rates. In particular, HCC is concerned that the allowances made for sustainable travel measures are potentially overstated in the absence of a policy commitment and identified delivery mechanisms for sustained delivery of the range of measures associated with the 'Travel Towns' initiative, cited as the basis for the final level of reduction.

Notwithstanding, the authorities are content that this strategic model is sufficiently robust to assess the impact of development, principally because future traffic growth, including background as well as development-related growth, has been constrained to TEMPRO forecasting.

It should be noted that the final traffic generation projections have been used principally as the basis for junction assessment. In addition, the TA takes no account of:

- The spreading of journeys to times which are less busy;
- The scope to divert to alternative routes to avoid congestion;
- Changes to trip frequency, origins, destinations or journey distance.

It is also recognised that the approach used considers all travel demand that intends to go through individual junctions and assumes all of the travel demand can reach the specific junction during the modelled period of time. In reality, it is recognised that some of the travel demand may not materialise due to congestion elsewhere on the network, which leads to lower actual flows arriving during a given period of time. In this respect, the TA is considered to represent a worst case scenario.

This joint statement recognises, notwithstanding some specific concerns over elements of the methodology, that both local authorities consider that overall the TA is fit for purpose as a strategic assessment of the traffic impacts of the proposed Local Plan development. Both parties are broadly content with the findings and agree that the level and location of development proposed in the draft Local Plan can be accommodated at the strategic level with the required package of mitigation and that the development scenario is unlikely to result in severe cumulative impacts on traffic congestion on key routes. There is also recognition that the mitigation proposed is likely to be broadly acceptable at the strategic level, subject to more detailed design work in the future.

Further transport impact studies will be undertaken as part of the DCLG funding for South West Basingstoke, which will refine the TA findings in this part of the Borough.

Given the high level approach of the assessment, individual proposals to bring forward development in the borough will require a detailed site based Transport Assessments to consider the impact of the development on the highway network, and to identify appropriate mitigation, where required. These will be considered by the Highway Authority through the development planning process.

The two authorities will continue to work together to deliver improvements to the transport infrastructure in the Borough, including the implementation of schemes with approved funding and the submission of future funding bids to the LEP and other potential sources.