



Submission Surrey Heath Local Plan (2019-2038)

Statement of Common Ground SCG07

Pre-Submission with Submission update
with National Highways



June 2024, updated November 2024

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1. Submission Update

- 1.1. In August 2024, alongside the Pre-Submission Surrey Heath Local Plan, Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC) published a series of Statements of Common Ground (SCG) to support the Pre-Submission Local Plan, including a SCG with National Highways (NH). It was noted that these would be updated following the Pre-Submission Local Plan Publication process and prior to Submission.
- 1.2. This Statement of Common Ground Update with NH sets out further duty to cooperate activities that have taken place between the two bodies since the previous Statement of Common Ground was signed in June 2024 and up to the point of Submission. It outlines the latest position on any agreed or outstanding matters relating to strategic cross boundary planning matters. Any engagement up to July 2024 was also recorded in the Council's Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance, July 2024 published alongside the Pre-Submission Local Plan.
- 1.3. Section 2 onwards of this Statement of Common Ground is as agreed at June 2024.
- 1.4. Engagement with National Highways since June 2024 has been:
 - Notification by SHBC of the Pre-Submission Local Plan publication and Pre-Submission response from NH;
 - Agreed Statement of Common Ground (this document)

Pre-Submission Representations

- 1.5. The table below sets out a summary of the representations raised by NH to the Pre-Submission Local Plan and the Council's response:

NH representation	SHBC Response
Welcomes Council's vision to provide sustainable development. Would have concerns if any material traffic increases were to occur on the SRN or at its	Support noted.




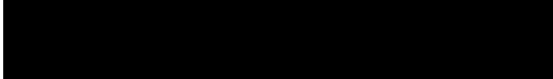
NH representation	SHBC Response
<p>junctions because of planned growth with the borough. Noted a SOCG was signed in June 2024 and subject to agreed future modelling approach to M3 Junction 3, agree with the findings and conclusions of the Strategic Highway Assessment Report (SHAR).</p> <p>SHAR demonstrates that there is no reliance on any M3 schemes to demonstrate that the local plan and its allocations are deliverable.</p>	
<p>Policy IN2 - Welcomes aim and requirements of the policy. Add that where a development is likely to place a significant number of trips through any SRN junction, early engagement with National Highways at the scoping stage is recommended.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>Need for early engagement with NH noted.</p>
<p>HAI - Note no allocations directly adjacent to the SRN. Highlight that should unallocated development come forward adjacent to SRN, this will require early engagement with National Highways.</p>	<p>Need for early engagement with NH noted.</p>
<p>ER4 - Any applications proposing increase in employment use at Watchmoor Park requires a comprehensive assessment on the impacts on M4 Junction 4 within the Transport Assessment. As a minimum, floorspace increases would need to include full turning movements of development traffic at M3 J4, and junction capacity assessments may be required for proposals with a significant impact.</p>	<p>Redevelopment at Watchmoor Park has recently been granted planning permission (Ref 23/1100/FFU). NH commented “we are satisfied that it will not have significant impact to the safe and efficient operation of the SRN (M3 motorway) and our previous response dated 19 December 2023 and offering ‘No Objection’, still stands”</p>



- 1.8. In response to comments from NH no modifications are proposed to the Local Plan. The Council is grateful for the support from NH through the plan-making process and notes that NH agrees to the findings and conclusions of the Strategic Highway Assessment Report as above.

Signatories for SCG Update November 2024

National Highways	
Name	Patrick Blake
Position	Area 3 Spatial Planner
Date Agreed	14 November 2024
Signature	

Surrey Heath Borough Council	
Name	Gavin Chinniah
Position	Head of Planning, Housing, Corporate Enforcement and Parking (interim)
Date Agreed	7 November 2024
Signature	

The remainder of this Statement of Common Ground is as agreed at June 2024.



2. Introduction

- 2.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SCG) has been prepared jointly between **Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC)** and **National Highways (NH)**. It sets out the agreed position as at June 2024 in relation to strategic highways matters. It has been prepared to support the Pre-Submission Surrey Heath Local Plan (2019 – 2038) (Local Plan) and has been agreed by both SHBC and National Highways and demonstrates ongoing co-operation between the two Parties in line with the requirements set out below.
- 2.2. Under Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011) and in accordance with paras. 24-27 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023), it is a requirement under the duty to cooperate for a local planning authority to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in the preparation of development plan documents and other documents. This is a test that local authorities need to satisfy prior to the local plan examination stage and is an additional requirement to the test of soundness.
- 2.3. The duty to cooperate applies to strategic cross boundary matters (those that might apply are set out in para. 20 of the NPPF). The statutory requirements of the duty to co-operate are a legal obligation although it is not a duty to agree. Co-operation should produce effective and deliverable policies on strategic cross boundary matters in accordance with national planning policy, as further explained in National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
- 2.4. This SCG has been prepared to support the Pre-Submission version (Reg19) of the Local Plan and is in line with paragraph 27 of the NPPF which encourages SCG to be made publicly available throughout the plan-making process. The SCG may be updated following the Pre-submission Local Plan consultation if it is considered helpful to add other matters prior to Submission which will support the Local Plan Examination.
- 2.5. Nothing in this SCG fetters any comments that National Highways may make on the Pre-Submission Surrey Heath Local Plan consultation due to run from 7 August to 20 September 2024.



3. Background

- 3.1. National Highways was appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as a strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015. NH are responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network (SRN) in England. Their 'Planning for the future – A guide to working with National Highways on planning matters'¹, October 2023 and the Policy Paper, Strategic road network and the delivery of sustainable developments, December 2022² set out how they engage in the planning process.
- 3.2. In Surrey Heath Borough, NH is primarily interested in the impacts of the development plan on Junctions 3 and 4 of the M3 Motorway.

¹ https://nationalhighways.co.uk/media/2depj2hh/final-cre23_0370-nh-planning-guide-2023.pdf

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development>



4. Local Plan engagement and outcomes

- 4.1. SHBC has engaged NH on an active and on-going basis through the preparation of the Local Plan. This has included engagement on the evidence base, specifically the Strategic Highway Assessment Report as well as consultation on drafts of the Local Plan. Engagement in the Local Plan process is summarised below:

Surrey Heath Local Plan Issues and Options, 2018

- 4.2. NH responded to this consultation setting out that their interest is in the M3 and the impact of growth of traffic on that motorway. In response, the Reg19 Local Plan is informed by a robust Strategic Highway Assessment Report which has been informed by discussions with NH as set out below.

Surrey Heath Draft Local Plan consultation, 2022

- 4.3. NH made a number of representations on the Draft Local Plan, 2022. These are summarised in Table 1 below along with the Council's response.

Table 1: Summary of NH comments to the Draft Surrey Heath Local Plan, 2022

Local Plan Policy/Paragraph	NH Comment	SHBC response
General	<p>Any impacts on the SRN will need to be identified and mitigated as far as reasonably possible. We will support a local authority proposal that considers sustainable measures, which manage down demand and reduce the need to travel. Infrastructure improvements on the SRN should only be considered as a last resort. Proposed new growth will need to be considered in the context of the cumulative impact from already proposed development on the SRN.</p> <p>National Highways looks forward to being consulted on the Transport Assessment modelling.</p>	<p>Comments noted. The Council has worked closely with National Highways on the Transport Assessment and agreed a Statement of Common Ground.</p>



CTC3: CTC Movement and Accessibility	Reference to National Highway's funding towards feasibility design works and appraisal for a Camberley to Frimley Cycleway Scheme (para 4.37) is noted. However, 'Highways England' will need to be changed to 'National Highways'.	Noted and amended.
IN2: Transportation	Para 5.20 - would have expected National Highways to have been listed in addition to Surrey County Council.	Noted and reference added.
Monitoring	Requests the inclusion of National Highways amongst the 'Delivery Partners' listed against Objective D. 'Highways England' in the entry for 'SRN' in the Glossary (Appendix I) needs to be replaced with 'National Highways'.	Noted and amended.

Engagement on the Evidence Base

4.4. From early 2022, the Council and Surrey County Council engaged with NH on the preparation of a Strategic Highway Assessment to assess the impacts of the proposed spatial strategy on the highway network. This engagement has included discussion of:

- Local Model Validation
- Forecasting Methodology
- Assessment outputs, in particular related to the M3 J3



- 4.5. The key inputs into the SHAR were agreed between Surrey County Council and National Highways in early 2022. The content of the draft SHAR was discussed at a virtual meeting held on meeting on 8 November 2022 together with Surrey County Council. Further information was exchanged via email between National Highways and Surrey County Council in November 2022, December 2022 and January 2023. This included information provided by SCC concerning base model motorway flow calibration generally and the amount of M3 eastbound mainline traffic detouring the M3 via M3 Junction 3 in the DM and DS AM and PM peak hours because of modelled eastbound on-slip merge delays. The information provided by SCC concerning base model motorway flow calibration satisfied NH's questions. National Highways set out that future modelling of M3 Junction 3 and operational analyses of the eastbound off-slip and on-slip arrangement should account for the detouring traffic, especially given the effect of such traffic on the predicted queuing on the eastbound off-slip.



5. Outcomes

- 5.1. NH is satisfied that the Council has met the requirements of the duty to co-operate and that there has been active and ongoing co-operation in preparing the Pre-Submission Surrey Heath Local Plan.
- 5.2. NH agrees that it has been engaged in the inputs and assumptions used in the Strategic Highway Assessment Report (SHAR) and has agreed that these are appropriate for the current stage of the local plan. The outcomes of the SHAR have also been discussed with NH.
- 5.3. Subject to future modelling of M3 Junction 3 and operational analyses of the eastbound off-slip and on-slip arrangement taking account for the detouring traffic, National Highways has agreed the findings and conclusions of the Strategic Highways Assessment Report. NH's main concern is the safe operation of the M3 Junction 3 off-slip.
- 5.4. Both parties agree to continue to work positively together in the preparation of the Surrey Heath Local Plan and in relation to matters affecting the Strategic Road Network.



Signatories

National Highways	
Name	Patrick Blake
Position	Spatial Planner
Date Agreed	12 June 2024
Signature	[REDACTED]

Surrey Heath Borough Council	
Name	Gavin Chinniah
Position	Head of Planning
Date Agreed	12 June 2024
Signature	[REDACTED]

