

Statement of Common Ground

between

Rother District Council

and

Highways England

**Relating to cumulative impact of Bexhill housing
allocations on the Strategic Road Network**

13 May 2019

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Statement of Common Ground has been agreed between Rother District Council (RDC) and Highways England.

It has been prepared to assist the Inspector conducting the Examination in Public of the Rother Development and Site Allocations (DaSA) Local Plan and seeks to clarify the following question:

“ Highways England comments on Policy BEX9 were that the combination of allocations BEX6, BEX9, BEX10 and BEX11 may have a cumulative impact on the Strategic Route Network and may be required (sic) towards improvements on the wider highway network. The Council responded by saying that there was continuing dialogue with Highways England to provide confidence in the modelling and in the policy provisions for the relevant sites and through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. In its statement the Council indicated that Highways England was satisfied with the proposals within the current planning application for the Policy BEX9 site. However, I am unclear as to what the position now is regarding Highways England’s concerns about impact of the proposals cumulatively on the SRN and whether it supports findings of the Peter Davidson Consultancy report.

Can the Council and ideally jointly with Highways England, please provide a brief statement of where the dialogue to provide confidence in the modelling is up to, what matters are agreed and what matters are not agreed?

The Inspector would like this statement to be provided by Thursday 9 May ideally, and by the opening of the hearing session on Tuesday 14 May at the latest”.

2. Position Statement – matters in agreement

- 2.1. Since the District Council submitted its Initial Responses to Representations¹, there have been a number of discussions jointly with East Sussex County Council and Highways England in terms of the next steps with regards to the transport modelling to support the DaSA.
- 2.2. Highways England put forward two approaches that they considered to be acceptable to ensure that the transport assessment evidence for the Local Plan can be considered robust. The two approaches include either:
1. Updating the Bexhill Hastings transport model through additional validation; or
 2. Undertaking an alternative assessment for relevant A259 junctions that do not involve the use of the Bexhill Hastings model.

¹ RDC-DaSA-004 Initial Responses to Representations (6 Mar 2019)

2.3. During telephone discussions with Highways England all three parties agreed that the alternative assessment (option 2) was the most appropriate way forward. Therefore, Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council have further commissioned Peter Davidson Consultancy to undertake the additional transport modelling based on the advice received from Highways England. A methodology was presented to Highways England setting out the approach. This can be viewed at Appendix 1. The methodology sets out that the modelling will look at the following specific junctions:

- A259 / Little Common roundabout;
- A259 / A269 London Road (signal controlled crossroads);
- A259 / Dorset Road (signal controlled crossroads); and
- A259 / Glyne Gap roundabout.

2.4. The methodology was agreed by Highways England on 12 April 2019 and confirmation of this can be found in Appendix 2.

2.5. Since then, Peter Davidson Consultancy have commenced the work set out within the agreed methodology regarding the assessment of the two roundabout junctions.

2.6. To enable the assessment of the two signalised junctions, Highways England are seeking to obtain the signalised junction timing information to feed into the modelling work. However, Highways England have agreed that if this signal timing data is not forthcoming by 3 May 2019 that optimised signal timings can be used to undertake the two junction modelling assessments

2.7. Further discussions are timetabled between Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council and Highways England to discuss the results of the alternative assessment and where, if appropriate, any mitigation is required so that the allocations set out in the DaSA can be accommodated on the Strategic Road Network in accordance with Department for Transport Circular 02/2013.



2.8. All parties are committed to continued collaborative working to ensure that the transport assessment evidence for the Local Plan can be considered robust and will work towards any setting out any required mitigation.

3. Position Statement – matters in disagreement

3.1. As of the date of this Statement of Common Ground, there are no matters of disagreement between Rother District Council and Highways England.

4. Summary and next steps

- 4.1. This Statement sets out the current position in respect of where the dialogue to provide confidence in the transport modelling related to the DaSA, what matters are agreed and what matters are not agreed between Rother District Council and Highways England.
- 4.2. All parties are committed to continued collaborative working to ensure that the transport assessment evidence for the Local Plan can be considered robust and will work towards any setting out any required mitigation.
- 4.3. Highways England are confident that where highway works are required at the four junctions under detailed consideration set out in para 2.3 above to mitigate the impacts of development, there is a reasonable prospect that those works will be deliverable and affordable within the development context.

Signed on behalf of Rother District Council	Signed on behalf of Highways England
	
Tim Hickling	Paul Harwood
Date 13 May 2019	Date: 13 May 2019
Position Head of Service - Strategy + Planning	Position: Regional Lead Spatial Planning

Appendix 1: Methodology for assessing the A259 junctions on the Strategic Road Network

Rother Local Plan - Bexhill
Proposal response to Highways England
Peter Davidson Consultancy Ltd
10 April 2019

Overview

This proposal has been prepared by Peter Davidson Consultancy Ltd (PDC) outlining the methodology for assessing the impact of proposed development (DaSA) on four specific junctions on the Strategic Road Network. This was discussed with Highways England by teleconference on 8 April 2019 and the overall methodology agreed. This proposal outlines the detail of the methodology, with the requirement for the Highways England (HE) to sign this off, to enable RDC to instruct Peter Davidson Consultancy.

1. We would separately model the following four junctions of interest:
 - o A259 / Little Common roundabout;
 - o A259 / A269 London Road (signal controlled crossroads);
 - o A259 / Dorset Road (signal controlled crossroads); and
 - o A259 / Givnet Gap roundabout.

The queues and delays on each arm of these junctions will be assessed using turning movement counts (see point 2 below):

2. We propose to use ARCADY for analysis of roundabouts and LinSig 3 for signalized intersections. These are industry- approved software products for modelling capacity, queues and delays at roundabouts and signal controlled junctions respectively. However, PDC do not currently hold software licences for these products, so there would be additional cost to purchase these.
3. We will convert the junctions from their coding in the SATURN model to the formats required by ARCADY and LinSig. We will check with Rother District Council (RDC) and East Sussex County Council (ESCC) that coding such as geometries, number of lanes, lane allocations to turns, sight lines, signal timings, etc., are realistic according to local knowledge.
4. We require observed turning counts at the four junctions of interest. These should cover the AM and PM peak hours (consistent with the hours modelled in SATURN) and count the number of vehicles making each turning movement, by vehicle type, in 15 minute time intervals. At time of writing this proposal, 12-hour classified turning counts have been provided by East Sussex County Council:
 - o Little Common roundabout (counted September 2018)
 - o A269 London Road (June 2017)
 - o Dorset Road (September 2016)
 - o Glyne Gap roundabout (June 2016)

These were all conducted at least 6 months after the opening of Bexhill-Hastings Link Road in 2015, and were agreed for use by Highways England by teleconference on 8 April 2019:

5. We will convert the turning count data to the format required by the modelling software.
6. We will model the current queues and delays based on the observed turning counts. At this point we will check with RDC and ESCC that the modelled queues and delays appear realistic according to your local knowledge;
7. We will then factor up the turning counts to the 2028 forecast year (without DaSA), consistent with TEMPro and our earlier modelling work in SATURN;
8. The turning counts from point 7 will be used to forecast the queues and delays in the future year (2028) without DaSA;
9. The DaSA trips along A259 road will be obtained from the earlier SATURN modelling work i.e. flow difference between with and without DaSA, as these trips would have

- accounted for distribution and routing patterns. The project trips will then be added to the trips from point 7 to obtain the future year (2028) with DaSA.
10. The forecast turning counts from point 9 will be used to forecast the queues and delays in the future year (2028) with DaSA;
 11. We will present the results in a Technical Note which can be used as an Appendix to our previous Report.

Work plan

Aligning with the EIP time table, the Gantt chart is illustrated in Table 1. The work plan includes a weeks' time for HE to review and signoff the analysis.

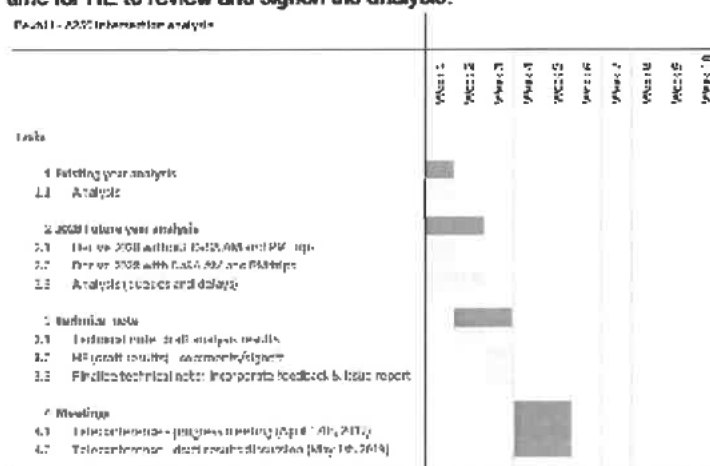


Table 1 illustrating the time allocation for each task

The cost fee proposal required to carry out the above tasks have been submitted to Rother District Council.

Limitations

The scope has been designed to carry out a desktop study and specifically excludes the following:

- Site visits and/or reconnaissance surveys.
- PDC do not propose undertaking or procuring additional traffic counts, although we can provide a separate quotation to do this if requested.

Disclaimer

In our projects that involve forecasting travel, all our forecasts will contain an element of uncertainty. This uncertainty depends upon the basis upon which the forecasts are made, the forecasting methodology and the events which happen between making the forecasts and the outturn travel volumes. For the first two, we use the most appropriate tools and techniques in accordance with generally accepted professional standards and practices which may lead to uncertain forecasts. The third involves a continuation of past trends which we no way of knowing will turn out as forecast. The outturn may therefore be quite different to that forecast. This disclaimer should go on all reports, deliverables and material derived from them, that contain our forecasts.

Appendix 2: Confirmation email from Highway England regarding the methodology for assessing the A259 junctions on the Strategic Road Network

Nichola Watters

From: Franklin, Richard [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 April 2019 13:10
To: Nichola Watters
Cc: Jon Wheeler; Adam Thomas [REDACTED]; 'Jon Wheeler'; Lisa Simmonds [REDACTED]; Chris Flavin [REDACTED]; Bowie, David; WALKDEN, NIGEL; Planning SE
Subject: RE: Methodology Proposal - Additional work for Rother DaSA
Attachments: PDC Proposal - Bexhill Traffic Model response to HE additional task meth....pdf

Dear Nichola,

Thank you for your email below.

We have reviewed the methodology and confirm that it is acceptable, but please note that the TEMPRO growth should be checked so that the Local Plan growth scenario is no less than TEMPRO household and employment growth assumptions.

Regards,

Richard Franklin

Highways England Company Limited | Registered Office: Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ | Registered in England and Wales No. 9346363

Web: www.highwaysengland.co.uk

From: Nichola Watters [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 April 2019 17:36
To: Bowie, David [REDACTED]
Cc: Jon Wheeler [REDACTED]; Adam Thomas [REDACTED]; Franklin, Richard [REDACTED]; 'Jon Wheeler' [REDACTED]; WALKDEN, NIGEL [REDACTED]; Lisa Simmonds [REDACTED]; Chris Flavin [REDACTED]
Subject: Methodology Proposal - Additional work for Rother DaSA

David

Following our teleconference on Monday, I attach the proposed methodology as discussed for your consideration.

Could you please review the attached methodology which has been prepared in light of the alternative approach set out below. I would appreciate it if you could get to me by end of play on 12th April as to whether this meets your requirements, so that I can instruct Peter Davidson Consultancy to under the work.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Nichola

Nichola Watters BSc (Hons), MA, MRTPI

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