

The strategic road network

Planning for the future

A guide to working with Highways England
on planning matters



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Introduction

1. This document describes the approach we take to engaging in the planning system and the issues we look at when considering draft planning documents and planning applications. It offers advice on the information we would like to see included in a planning proposal, and outlines the support we can offer. It will be helpful for local authorities, developers, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), community groups and others involved in plan-making, development management, development promotion or decision-taking in respect of land close to any part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN).

2. The advice and guidance in this document applies to the whole strategic road network, comprising of motorways and all-purpose trunk roads in England.¹

3. The document is written in the context of statutory responsibilities as set out in our Licence, and in the light of Government policy and regulation, including the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**, **Town and Country Planning Development Management (Procedure) Order (England) 2015 (DMPO)**, and **DfT Circular 02/2013 The Strategic Road Network and the delivery of sustainable development** ('the Circular'²).

The role of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in economic growth

4. The Strategic Road Network (SRN) is arguably the biggest and single most important piece of infrastructure in the country and is at the core of our national transport system. Its many arteries connect our major towns and cities, ensure commuters make it to work every day, connect businesses with their suppliers and customers, and help millions of us visit our friends and families. Our motorways and major A-roads are the most heavily used part of the national road network; they carry a third of all traffic and two-thirds of all freight.

South East:

planningSE@highwaysengland.co.uk

South West:

planningSW@highwaysengland.co.uk

East of England:

planningEE@highwaysengland.co.uk

Midlands:

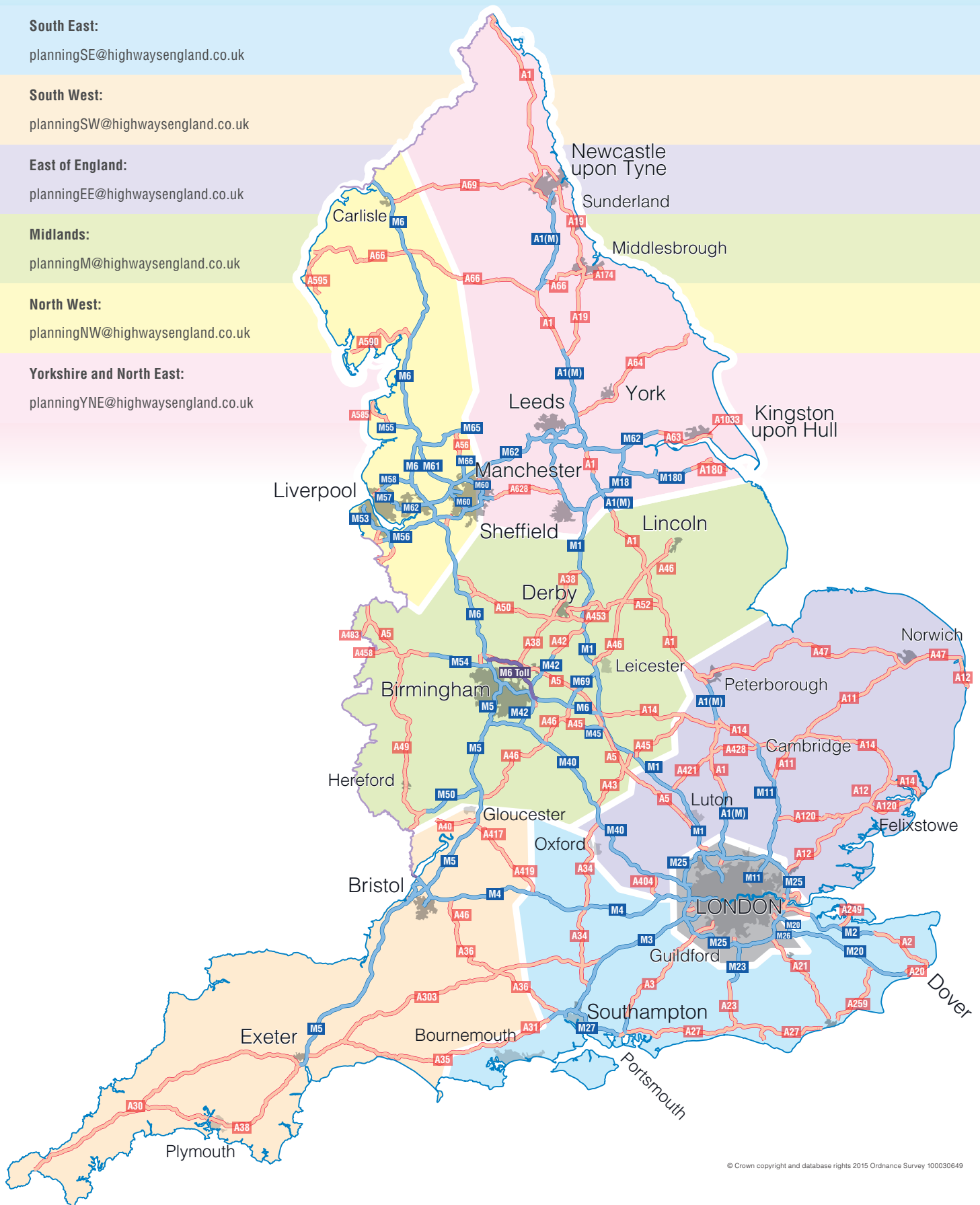
planningM@highwaysengland.co.uk

North West:

planningNW@highwaysengland.co.uk

Yorkshire and North East:

planningYNE@highwaysengland.co.uk



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¹ Including roads managed the Design, Build, Finance and Operate (DBFO) Companies.

² Where considered appropriate, direct references to the relevant paragraphs of the Circular are provided for reference.

5. Operating an effective and efficient SRN makes a significant contribution to the delivery of sustainable economic growth. Efficient and reliable connections enhance the UK's image and reputation as a good place to invest. By enabling the efficient movement of people and goods the SRN helps create the conditions for growth through enabling businesses to:

- access the skills and ideas they need to perform and grow;
- access their suppliers and control their costs;
- serve their customers and reach out to new markets; and
- create effective collaborations and partnerships.

6. The SRN is therefore essential to the growth, well-being and balance of the country's economy.

Working with us

7. Highways England is a statutory consultee in the planning system. In discharging this responsibility we act as a proactive partner. This document is published to help you get the best out of your relationship with us and to show what you can expect from us. It sets out our approach to planning and what we look for in local plans and in planning applications for development proposals. The pages that follow explain our position, providing guidance and

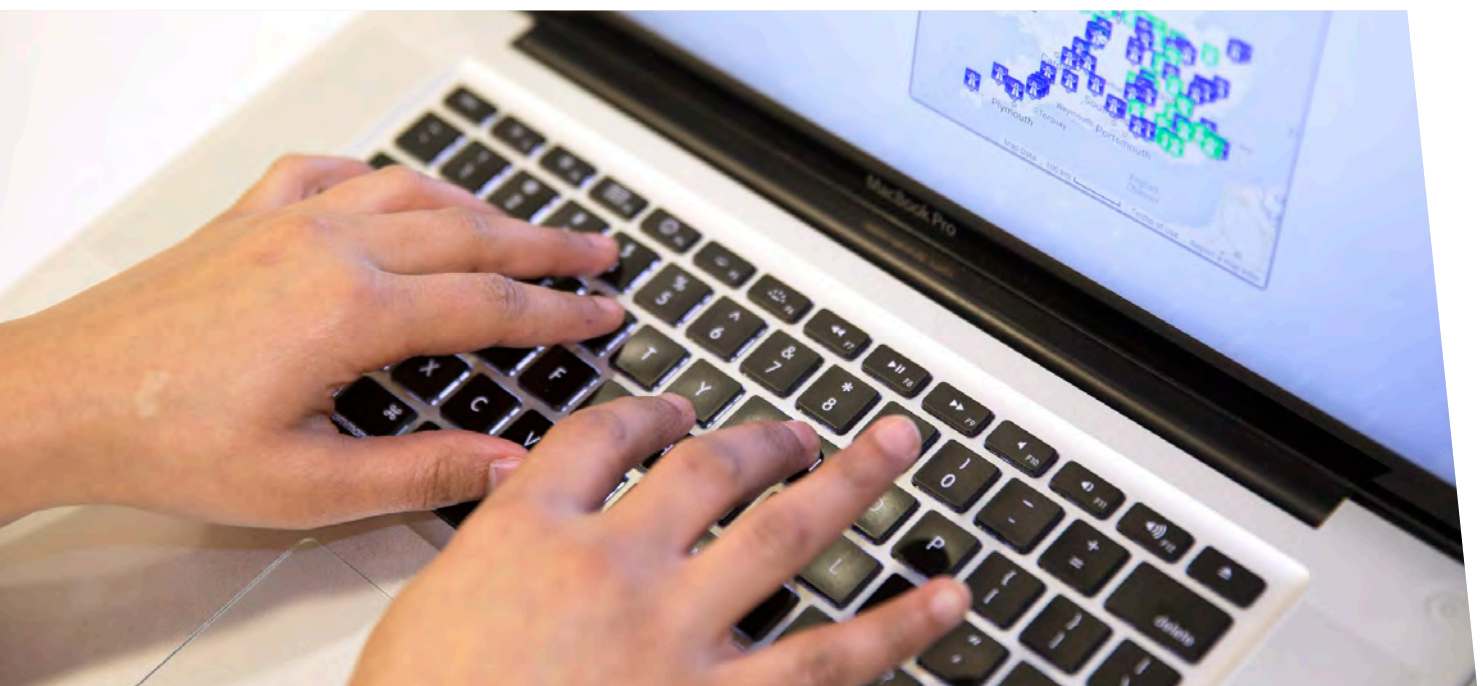
clarity on the matters that we shall have regard to, and what we are likely to find acceptable and unacceptable, to help you shape your proposals and ensure that they are sustainable in every sense.

8. We will support economic growth, providing the conditions that help businesses to succeed and grow, facilitating new development around the network, and supporting investment and trade. This will take place alongside maintaining a safe and efficient SRN. The document sets out how we, along with those working on our behalf, will work with development promoters to help you to assess and successfully manage the relationship between your proposed development and the SRN.

9. We encourage all parties promoting and preparing plans or planning applications that could have an impact on the SRN to engage with us as early as possible.

10. Engaging with us early helps to ensure that issues that may take time to analyse and resolve are identified as soon as possible. We can then work together to:

- consider the most appropriate locations for development;
- assess the potential impact of proposed development proposals on the SRN;
- progress an appropriate sustainable



development (including considering how best to deliver the development, and any associated mitigation works scheme, whilst minimising the adverse impacts that it might give rise to); whilst

- maintaining the efficiency and safety of the SRN.

Contacting us

11. Our response to planning enquiries is locally led through regional teams who know and understand the SRN in their areas. This enables us to provide:
- a. strong intelligence, evidence and an understanding of how the SRN and surrounding local roads operate;
 - b. information on relevant local factors;
 - c. named contacts who are able to establish positive and productive relationships with all involved in the planning process.
12. We would advise local partners - planning officers, highways officers, developers and LEPs - to focus their engagement with us via the regional teams:

South East:
planningSE@highwaysengland.co.uk

South West:
planningSW@highwaysengland.co.uk

East of England:
planningEE@highwaysengland.co.uk

Midlands:
planningM@highwaysengland.co.uk

North West:
planningNW@highwaysengland.co.uk

Yorkshire and North East:
planningYNE@highwaysengland.co.uk

13. We also have a national Growth and Economic Development Team, who lead our corporate approach around supporting growth and

our engagement with the planning system, including this guide. You can contact our Growth and Economic Development Team at: growthandplanning@highwaysengland.co.uk.

Our Planning Values

14. As a proactive planning partner we commit to:

- **engage early** and at all relevant stages of the preparation of local plans and development proposals.
- **work openly** to support appropriate development of infrastructure options.
- **share evidence**³ to support the development of consistent and robust analysis as to the likely relationship between proposed developments and the SRN, including providing access to relevant data and traffic models.
- **share knowledge** and experience of how the SRN interacts with local roads and on the highways-related consequences that can arise from development. We can also use our knowledge and experience to help you to consider options for managing the traffic generated by the development and its relationship with the surrounding area.
- **work collaboratively** with you to help you prepare strong policies and proposals that are sustainable, practical and well-designed.

Limitations of this document

15. While this document sets out general principles by which we will seek to engage and support the planning process it cannot provide answers to all of the questions that might arise through the planning process. If you are uncertain about how to engage with us, or how we might approach a particular issue, contact us at the email addresses provided.

³ Where we are able to.

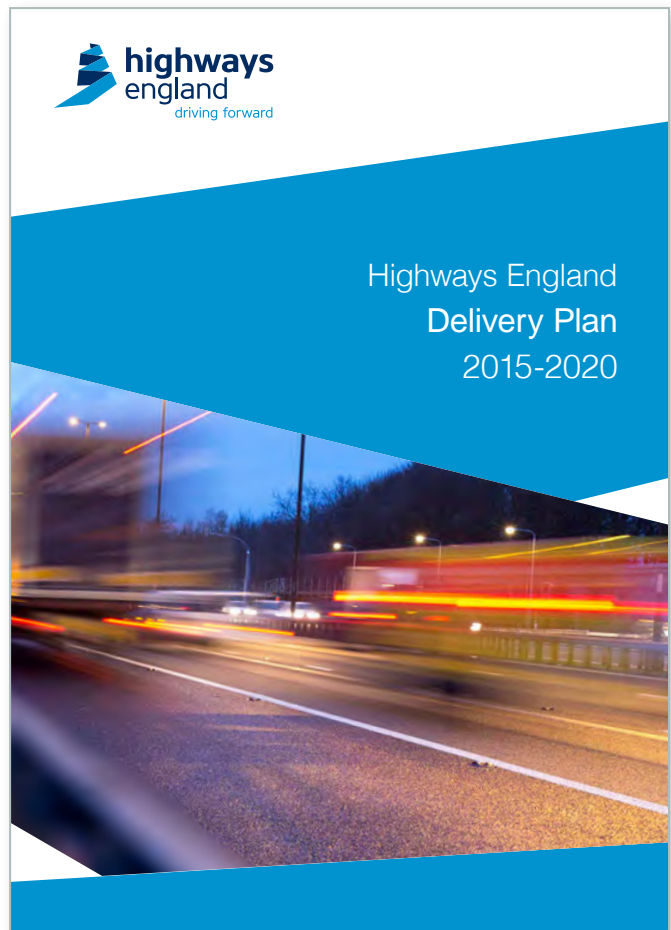


Our role in planning

16. Highways England has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as a strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015. We are responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the SRN in England, in accordance with the Licence issued by the Secretary of State for Transport (April 2015) and Government policies and objectives.
17. As a statutory consultee in the planning system, we are under a regulatory duty to co-operate. Consequently we are obliged to give consideration to all proposals received and to provide appropriate, timely, substantive responses.
18. Our desire to be a proactive planning partner for local partners goes beyond this statutory role, but follows the spirit of the Licence which stipulates that we should support local and national economic growth and regeneration. We would strongly encourage you to engage with us at an early stage of thinking on all planning matters that might have an impact on the SRN.
19. We commit to co-operating with local highway authorities and recognise that we have a responsibility to support and develop a more coordinated approach to planning on the SRN and the local highway network, as well as with neighbouring jurisdictions and other key infrastructure providers.

Roads Investment Strategy funding

20. The Roads Investment Strategy (RIS) programme is the Government's primary means of investing significantly in the SRN. Our Delivery Plan 2015-2020 sets out an ambitious 5-year investment plan to operate, maintain and modernise the strategic road network in the context of the RIS.
21. These investments will bring about essential and material improvements in the performance of the network and facilitate growth. They can



- change the land-use around the SRN, and can unlock or encourage new developments in the surrounding area. In this context the planning landscape in terms of local plans and other planning applications is therefore an essential factor to consider so that the local plans are consistent with, and appropriately plan for RIS interventions.
22. The transition to Highways England brings longer-term funding certainty that we did not have as Highways Agency. This enables us to look further ahead in our investment planning, considering both current and future needs of the network. We will seek opportunities to exploit this by being more flexible and pragmatic in our investments, for example, where we can, aligning our investments with other funding streams and timetabling highways work to fit better with development timescales.
 23. As we deliver the current RIS we will also begin planning for investment in the next road period. The first step in this process, and primary opportunity for strategic partners to inform

and shape this future planning, will be through Route Strategies. We will review current and future performance, including the priorities of our partners and stakeholders, working in collaboration to identify future investment across our roads.

24. We will work collaboratively with strategic partners, in particular those developing local plans, to help consider appropriate locations for growth and ensure that strategic infrastructure priorities are identified and funding opportunities maximised.

Local Enterprise Partnerships and Strategic Economic Plans

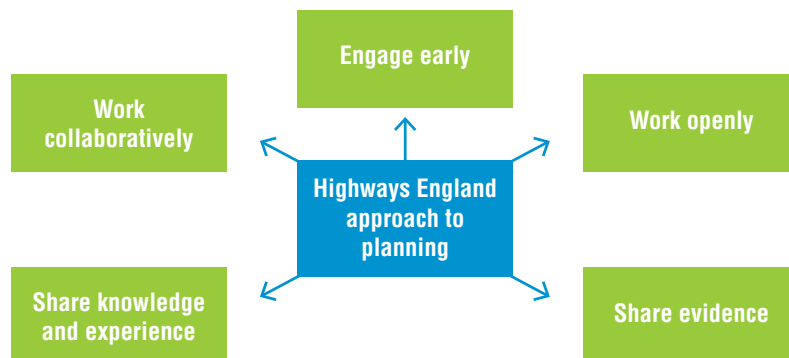
25. Our commitment to developing a more proactive and collaborative approach to national and local growth is leading us to develop a new, stronger relationship with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), including through the LEP Network.
26. As a national infrastructure provider we will engage with LEPs to better understand the challenges and opportunities related to the SRN, and to support the development of evidence-based long-term plans to bring about local economic growth and development.
27. We would strongly encourage LEPs to engage with us as they refresh their strategic economic plans, revisit their strategic priorities, and develop and deliver proposals for specific projects and developments. Whilst primarily focused on our relationship with the statutory planning process, much of this document is relevant to the way we would seek to approach working alongside LEPs in shaping their strategic thinking and future priorities.



Our approach to planning

Planning values

28. We are committed to 5 values that describe how we will always try to work when we engage in the planning system. We will:



Engage early

- We encourage all parties promoting and preparing Plans or planning applications that may have an impact on the SRN to engage with us as early as possible so we can work together to deliver positive outcomes as quickly as possible.
 - Engaging early, such as pre-application, gives all parties maximum time to understand the impacts of proposed development on the SRN, the level of assessment required to understand impacts, and to agree the most appropriate actions required as a result to help ensure the development proposal is sound and deliverable.
- provide on request where it is available;
 - several validated traffic models and land-use models for certain areas of the network, which can be used by local authorities and developers to support decision-making and forecast the highways-related impact of future development;
 - accident data; and
 - information on known local environmental issues.
 - We will provide access to other information and intelligence we hold about our network, where this is available, relevant to the development or proposal, and where we are legally entitled to do so.

Work openly

- We are committed to being a proactive partner and will, at the earliest opportunity, assign a named officer to you who will work openly and collaboratively with you as you develop your plan or development proposal.
- We can help you use such information to identify and analyse potential highways-related impacts of your plans or proposed development, and to support the development of a robust transport evidence base for your plan or proposal.

Share evidence

- We collect and analyse significant amounts of information about the SRN and how it interacts with the local road network. This information includes:
 - automated traffic count information, which is made available online through the Traffic Flow Data System TRADS database;
 - speed and flow information, which we can
- Where data needs to be extracted through a re-run of an existing model, we will make a reasonable charge for providing it and will provide quotes to those seeking such data at the earliest opportunity.
- Where the relevant data and models are not available, we will work with the local planning authority (LPA), local highway authority (LHA) and the developer to scope the work required.

Share knowledge and experience

- Our teams are highly experienced and knowledgeable about the complex issues of traffic management, driver behaviour, and the processes involved in development, design and delivery of traffic schemes. We will willingly share this knowledge and experience to help you ensure your plans and proposals are robust, appropriate and deliverable.

Work collaboratively

- We will respond formally to consultation in a timely manner and with full regard to statutory requirements, as required at each stage of the planning process, whether this is for Local Plans, other statutory Plans or planning applications.
- We will also work with local authorities and plan-making bodies prior to and between formal consultation periods to contribute to the thinking, and support the analysis of options and development of strong plans and proposals that take full account of highways issues.



Key assessment considerations on all planning matters

Enabling growth through a safe and efficient road network⁴

29. The primary function of the SRN is to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of goods and people.
30. A safe and efficient network supports the national and regional economies by providing certainty, improving access to markets, enabling competition, improving labour mobility, enabling economies of scale, and helping to attract inward investment.
31. Our approach to planning is also shaped by our corporate commitments to supporting environmental and social aims in the way we manage the SRN. This includes reducing car-use and supporting sustainable transport options, and supporting biodiversity and climate change mitigation.
32. The NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
33. Moreover, the Circular states that development proposals are likely to be wholly acceptable if: **they can be accommodated within the existing capacity of a section (link or junction) of the SRN,**
or
they do not increase demand for use of a section that is already at full capacity, taking account of any travel plan, traffic management and/or capacity enhancement measures that may be agreed.
34. Where the Circular tests are not satisfied, additional assessment will be required to enable all parties to understand the scope and scale of the impact that the proposals are likely to have on the SRN. This assessment should:

i	demonstrate how the proposals will reduce the need to travel, especially by car;
ii	demonstrate how the proposals will improve accessibility by all modes of travel and influence travel behaviours;
iii	assess the likely impact of residual trips (i.e. after measures above have been considered);
iv	identify appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures, and ensure that what is proposed promotes sustainable transport outcomes and avoids unnecessary works to the SRN.

35. Our advice to local planning authorities will be to refuse or place conditions on developments only where the residual cumulative impacts of development on the capacity of the SRN (once proposed mitigations are taken into account) are still assessed to be severe. For example if development would lead to operating conditions that significantly erode the safe operation of the SRN.
36. We will look at planning applications assessed as being ‘severe’ on a case by case basis. This will take in account the performance and character of the relevant section of the SRN, and the predicted effects on the development on its safe operation.
37. Transport assessments should generally be carried out in line with prevailing government guidance in agreement with us, through pre-application and scoping, such as a road safety audit (stage 1). For more information on road safety audit please refer to the **Design Manual for Roads and Bridges** (DMRB) HD 19/15.

⁴ See also the Circular paragraphs 7 to 11.

38. The continued safe operation of the SRN will remain our primary consideration, even where proposals would not result in capacity issues.
39. Where there would be physical changes to the network, schemes must be subject to road safety, environmental and non-motorised user audits, as well as any other assessment appropriate to the proposed development. Local authorities and developers need to ensure that their proposals comply with requirements for access, design and audit as set out in the DMRB.

Ensuring highways issues are addressed

40. Although identification of the scale and nature of action required to support a particular development is the responsibility of the development promoter, we will help to identify options for this and share with you any relevant information we hold to help you make informed decisions. The issues can be complex and take some time to work through, so we encourage engagement with us at the earliest opportunity.

41. The mitigation of impacts should be approached in the following manner:

Avoidance – the promoter should take all reasonable steps to minimise the level of physical mitigation required, through the use of measures such as Travel Plans, and travel demand management measures, such as development phasing, HGV booking systems and encouraging flexible working and sustainable travel;

- ii **Off-line improvements** – before considering to propose changes to the SRN, the promoters of development should assess the potential for alterations to be made to the local road network in the alternative;

- iii **Alterations to the SRN** – once all other options have been examined, we will consider the potential for changes to be made to the SRN.



New access points to the SRN⁵

42. Access points and junctions on busy, high speed roads generate weaving and turning manoeuvres by drivers, which are likely to create adverse effects on the safety and reliability of journeys .
43. Our Licence sets out directions and guidance for what we will consider in respect of proposed new access points to the SRN, i.e.:

In the case of sections of the network designed for high-speed traffic, with partially or comprehensively limited access, there should be a presumption against connection, except where it can be provided safely and where there is a demonstrable benefit to the economy;

On all other sections of the network there should be a presumption in favour of connection, except where a clear case can be made to prohibit connection on the basis of safety or economic impact.

44. As a consequence we will encourage the promoters of new development to access their proposals via the local road network or existing junctions on the SRN. Modifications to existing junctions will be agreed where the residual cumulative impact of the proposed development would not be severe. In line with the standards contained in the DMRB, direct connections to slip roads and/or connector roads will not be allowed for safety and operational reasons.
45. Where a new junction or access is proposed in connection with a signed roadside facility, permanent highway depot or major transport interchange, we will seek the imposition of planning conditions which prohibit subsequent changes of use and the creation of any form of through access to any adjacent development.
46. Where a new junction or direct means of access is agreed, the promoter will be expected to

secure all necessary consents, and fund all related design and construction works.

47. In our formal planning consultation response to local planning authorities, where required, we will set out our recommendation with regard to access points and explain the reasons for our position. Our response will only be applicable to the particular planning application and accompanying documents, including any subsequent agreed papers pertaining to any SRN works that have been agreed. Where the design of SRN works have not yet been agreed, our response will be subject to the developer or scheme promoter developing a design that is acceptable to us and has been subject to the required road safety audit and non-motorised user audit procedures.

Environmental impact⁶

48. Developers and scheme promoters will need to provide sufficient environmental information to satisfy the LPA, and any other consenting authorities, that all environmental implications of the proposals have been appropriately considered.
49. We will expect to see measures implemented that fully mitigate any and all environmental impacts arising from and relating to the interaction between developments and the SRN. There are three aspects to this:
- the environmental impacts arising from the temporary construction works;
 - the environmental impacts of the permanent transport solution associated with the development; and
 - the environmental impact of the road network upon the development itself.
50. To assist in this process we will willingly participate in the screening and scoping processes to help identify any significant transport-related environmental impacts of proposals.

⁵ See also the Circular, paragraphs 37 to 44.

⁶ See also the Circular, paragraphs 45 to 48.

51. Assessment undertaken by the promoter of the development should be sufficiently comprehensive to establish the likely transport-related environmental impacts, including air quality, light pollution and noise, and to identify the measures to mitigate these impacts.
52. To avoid potential delay or challenge, transport assessments/statements and environmental statements/impact assessments should be mutually consistent and pay due regard to each other.
53. If a developer or scheme promotor wishes to use land within the highway boundary of the SRN for any reason, including for the siting of environmental measures or the storage of construction materials, they should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with the regional team (see contacts at paragraph 12). Depending on circumstances, this may be possible, but only if:
- these measures enhance or do not affect the normal operation of the SRN, and
 - all costs, including future increased maintenance costs, if any, are borne by the developer.

Physical impact of development on the SRN⁷

54. There may be development proposals that the LPA is not required to consult us on but which nonetheless have the potential to impact on the SRN or its amenities, or put road users at risk. Examples include fire hazard, stability of embankments and cuttings, integrity of structures, water run-off, air quality, or visibility of traffic signs. Developers and local authorities are encouraged to identify such potential risks and discuss these with us at the earliest opportunity so they can be quantified and addressed as necessary and appropriate.
55. Water run-off that may arise due to any change of land use will not be accepted into the highway drainage systems, and there shall be no new connections into those systems from third party development or drainage systems. The DMRB should be consulted further in such cases.
- ## Roadside facilities, including Motorway Service Areas
56. We continue to have an interest in roadside facility proposals and will provide advice to local planning authorities on matters relating to the impact that such proposed developments will have upon the SRN. New and existing roadside facilities are subject to the provisions of relevant planning legislation and regulation, which together set the framework within which local planning authorities should consider the planning proposals for such developments.
57. Local planning authorities, developers and operators are encouraged to discuss with us at the earliest opportunity any proposals to develop new roadside facilities or to alter and/or sign existing sites. All such proposals should be referred to:
roadsidefacilities@highwaysengland.co.uk
58. For the provision of signed roadside facilities for road users, permanent highway maintenance depots (and associated compounds) and major transport interchanges, our planning response will be limited to the initial development only. We would require further consultation to consider any subsequent expansions at the site or new development on adjacent land. To this end we will seek planning conditions restricting changes of use of the premises and its associated access onto the SRN so as to ensure that any such proposals are the subject of separate assessment through the planning process.
59. On a trunk road that is not a motorway or road of similar standard, any proposal to change the use of an existing roadside facility for road users will be considered against local conditions and the merits of the individual case.

⁷ See also the Circular, paragraphs 49 and 50.

60. Developments surrounding roadside facilities⁸ will be a matter of consideration by the relevant LPA. However, LPAs should have regard to the primary function of roadside facilities which is to support the safety and welfare of the road user. They should also ensure that:

- there would be no demonstrable adverse impact on the safety and/or operation of the SRN or the roadside facility in question;
- there is no risk of the sites becoming retail destinations in their own right;
- separate parking is provided to service developments such as hotel, conference or business centres, or other public transport hubs so as to avoid any reduction in the general parking provision available to other road users .

61. Annex B of the Circular sets out particular policy requirements with regard Roadside Facilities.

Special types of development

62. Policy for 'special types of development' is set out in Annex A of the Circular. This includes:

- Noise fences and screen fences;
- Advertisements;
- Gateway structures and public art;
- Telecommunications equipment; and
- Wind turbines.



⁸ Such as retail activities, hotels, conference centres, business centres, coach interchanges, park and ride, park and share, or parkway railway stations.

Local Plans and Plan-making⁹

Engaging in the development plan process

63. Local development plans set out policies to guide development in a locality, including 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 local traffic flow, road and transport connections, and options for sustainable travel.

64. The preparation of local plans provides an opportunity to support a pattern of development that minimises the need for travel, minimises journey lengths, encourages 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.

65. For all these reasons we are keen to contribute to the plan-making process. We can help you identify the most suitable locations for development that make best use of the capacity on the SRN, so encourage you to engage with us from the earliest stages of thinking. Figure A, at the end of this section sets out how we see ourselves engaging with the local plan process. Where possible and appropriate this could also include strategic site identification, strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA) and employment land availability assessment (ELAA).

66. We will engage fully and positively in the plan-making process with a view to helping deliver sustainable growth and minimising the potential for development to have an adverse impact on the SRN and its operation.

⁹ See also the Circular, paragraphs 12 to 20.

Evidence base

67. In supporting and considering draft local plans, we will seek to influence the scale and patterns of development so that it is planned in a manner which makes best use of capacity on the SRN and will not compromise the fulfilment of the primary function¹⁰ of the SRN. Ideally, development locations should be chosen that would minimise the need for travel and facilitate the use of sustainable transport .

68. We will work with local planning and highways authorities to ensure that local plans and other relevant development plan documents are underpinned by a robust transport evidence base which fully assesses the transport implications of the growth options being considered. This will include two key assessments:

- the individual and cumulative impacts of the authority's policies and proposals upon the ability of the road links and junctions on the affected parts of the SRN to accommodate the forecast traffic flows in terms of capacity, safety and cumulative environmental effects; and
- the interactions between the strategic and local road networks.

We will input to this work where we are able to, as well as share evidence that we have, and input our knowledge and experience of the network.

Location of development

69. Development should be promoted at locations that are or can be made sustainable, that facilitate the uptake of sustainable transport modes, and support wider social and health objectives, and which support existing business sectors as well as enabling new growth.

70. We will work with local planning authorities, highway authorities and developers to identify

opportunities to introduce travel reduction and demand management measures through the local plan.

71. It should be noted that electric vehicles, whilst having a lower carbon footprint, take up the same space on the road as traditional vehicles, so can contribute to congestion and its effects on the environment and economy.

Site allocations

72. When a local plan document proposes site specific allocations we will want to ensure that all relevant transport impacts and requirements are taken into account. To this end we will work with LPAs to:

- identify the impact that the proposed allocations are likely to have on the SRN on an individual and, insofar as is necessary, a cumulative basis, factoring in the demands arising from development planned in adjacent authorities where appropriate;
- assess the impact of the SRN on the development potential of sites that are proposed to be allocated;
- consider travel plan, travel demand and off-network improvements; and,
- as necessary, identify the infrastructure requirements of the proposed allocations, or specific parts (phases) of proposed allocations.

73. Whilst we may comment upon proposals where they impact the SRN, allocating land for particular uses is a matter for local authorities and others providing services or facilities to meet this need. This includes the provision of truck parking.

¹⁰ See paragraph 29 of this document.

Capacity enhancement (local plans)

74. Capacity enhancements and the infrastructure required to deliver strategic growth should be identified at the local plan stage. In this way options for road capacity enhancement or other transport infrastructure to support strategic development sites can be considered long before the planning application stage. We will work with strategic delivery bodies, including LEPs, to identify infrastructure and access needs at the earliest possible opportunity, and will assess the suitability, viability and deliverability of such proposals together with potential funding arrangements.
75. Where the approach and measures described above are insufficient to enable planned growth to be accommodated without affecting the safe operation of the SRN within its capacity, we will seek to agree measures to increase the capacity of the SRN so as to allow the development to proceed.
76. Where a potential need for additional capacity is identified, the following factors will be considered:
- the needs of all road users;
 - impact on the local / regional community, including businesses;
 - local economic needs and opportunities;
 - local environmental issues;
 - how the measures will be paid for (this will ensure that all relevant requirements can be captured in relevant local policy, such as the authority's infrastructure delivery plan);
 - the forward programme of works currently planned for the SRN in the area.
77. In circumstances where necessary capacity enhancements are unlikely to be deliverable in the plan period, we will work with the LPA to modify its site selections or the phasing of site releases. We will take account of capacity enhancements identified as necessary and deliverable when preparing our forward programme of network renewal and improvement when developing our route strategies and associated investment plans.

Summary of local plan considerations

78. When we are formally consulted upon local plan documents we will seek to provide a recommendation as to the soundness of proposed policies and proposals in relation to their interaction with the SRN. Having been engaged in the development of the plan this process should be straight-forward.
79. The list below highlights those matters which we are likely to have particular regard to when engaging in the local plan process:

The **robustness of the evidence base** used in preparing development proposals;

The **sustainability of policies**, specifically in relation to potential impacts on and around the SRN;

The way in which the size, type and location of development proposals have **impact on the operation of the SRN** (the Impact Assessment);

The **methodology** used to determine the quantities, locations, likely phasing and mix, and viability of housing and employment development;

The **economic, social, and environmental benefits** of the local plan policies and its proposed site allocations;

The **accessibility** of sites that are proposed to be allocated;

The **cumulative impacts** on the SRN associated with any known development sites within the plan area and in adjacent areas;

Proposed enhancements to the transport network, including measures relating to sustainable modes, the delivery/ implementation plan including the anticipated costs and funding source(s) as well as the forecast outcome of the enhancement(s);

Our investment priorities as identified in our delivery plan and route strategies; and

Any **residual impacts** arising from the proposals that will not be mitigated by the enhancement measures.

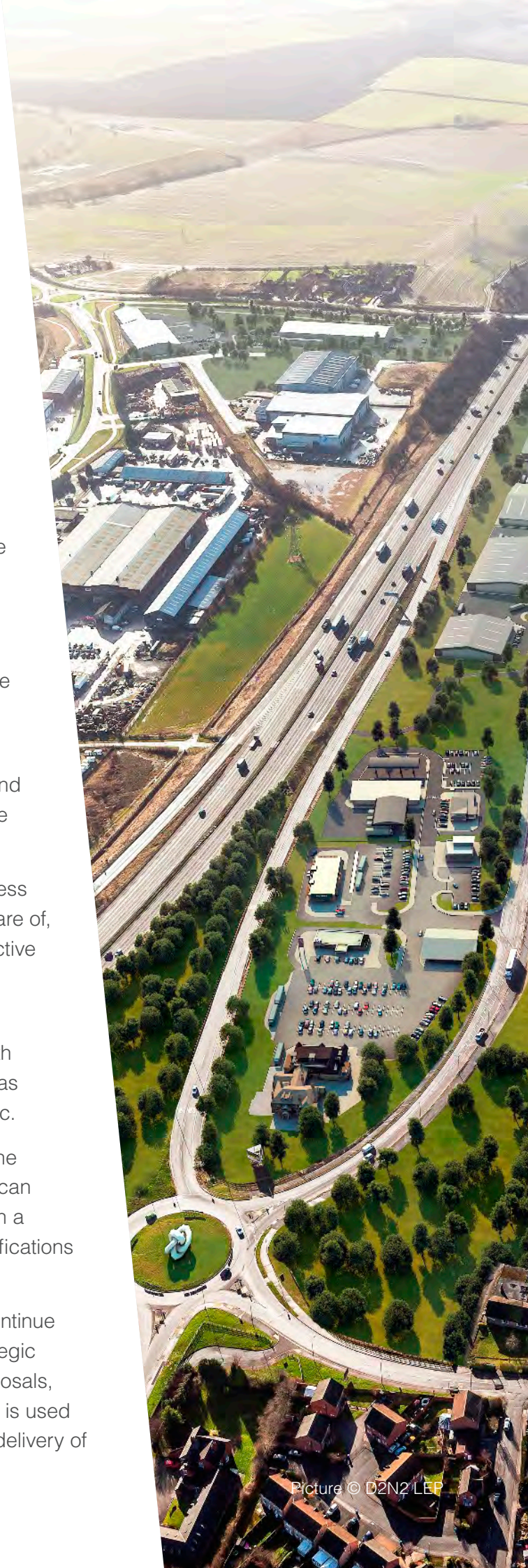
80. In addition, the following are likely to be of interest to us:

- The **consistency** between the policy approach being promoted in the document and any associated documents such as infrastructure plans, that have bearing on the SRN;
- The relationship between the local plan and the **local strategic economic plan**;
- Whether there are any significant policy **amendments or additions** in the document relevant to any previous comments or issues we have raised;
- Whether there have been any **changes** to key development targets, particularly for housing and employment, and what the implications of these are;
- Any **other concerns** about the overall soundness of the document that we need to make you aware of, and whether we consider it to be justified, effective and in accordance with national policy.

81. Where appropriate, depending on the strength of our recommendation and the consistency of this with other stakeholder views, we will seek to participate as appropriate and necessary in Examinations in Public.

82. We would wish to be advised of the publication of the Inspector's Report as soon as is practicable so we can consider the implications of the recommendations in a timely manner, and then work with the LPA on modifications as necessary.

83. Once local plan documents are adopted, we will continue to work with local authorities to ensure that our strategic planning is fully cognisant of their policies and proposals, to ensure that up to date information about the SRN is used when such plans are reviewed, and to support the delivery of development.



Picture © D2N2 LEP

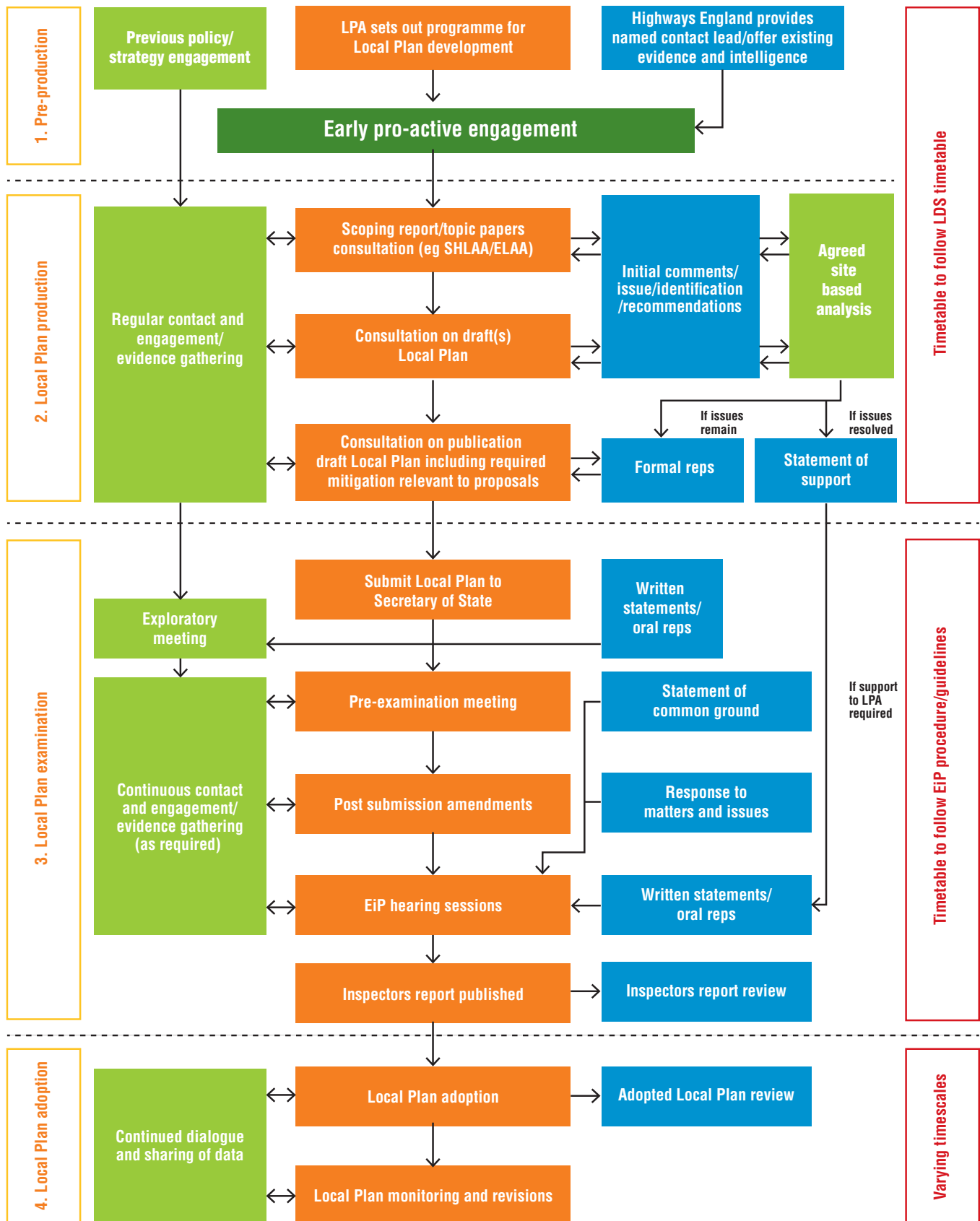


Figure A

- The blue boxes identify what we will do;
- the orange boxes identify the key stages in the plan preparation process from the perspective of the Local Planning Authority (LPA); and
- the green boxes identify actions for both parties and relate mainly to engagement between ourselves and the LPA.

Planning applications and development management¹¹

General principles

84. We encourage local partners to talk with us as early as possible when it is apparent that they are likely to need to consult us on a planning application. This will allow time for us to help guide you to prepare all the information that we will need to fully consider the interaction of the proposed development with the SRN, and the suitability of any related actions proposed. Effective pre-application engagement is essential in helping us to meet statutory deadlines later in the planning process. Figure B, at the end of this section, sets out how we see ourselves engaging with planning applications.
85. Where we are made aware that significant development proposals are being prepared that might impact upon the SRN, and we have not been engaged in pre-application discussions, we may contact the applicant through the LPA and will invite them to scope the submission with us.
86. In submitting a planning application, the developer should provide all the information that we will need to fully consider the interaction of the development with the SRN, and the suitability of any related actions proposed.
87. If the development is in an approved local plan, and has had an appropriate level of assessment of the impact of the development undertaken, we do not anticipate the need to repeat the full assessment process at the planning application stage.
88. If, however, the development proposed has not been subject to an appropriate level of assessment, or is not included or consistent with an approved local plan, then we would anticipate agreeing the scope of work required to make a full assessment. For those sites that have been considered at local plan stage, we will take into account any assessment already undertaken.
89. We would anticipate that a full assessment would include assessment of the impact of the development based on the performance and character of the SRN as determined by the presumption that the local plan proposals (if any) will be fully implemented, unless other more appropriate assumptions about development in the area should be made as a result of local circumstances changing. We would expect proposals set out in an emergent local plan to be afforded weight appropriate to its stage of development.
90. We would also anticipate that the assessment would include the identification of any mitigation necessary, and a road safety audit (stage 1). We will also seek to agree appropriate levels of assessment and mitigation relating to the scale of the development in relation to other development in the area.
91. We will provide the LPA or other relevant consenting body with our response to the assessed transport impact in line with the principles in this document and in line with the statutory requirements on us. Our advice will reflect our conclusions on the likely transport impact of the proposal, as a result of assessing the transport-related information provided with the application, and drawing on our own expertise, knowledge and experience of the SRN and transport issues.

¹¹ See also the Circular, paragraphs 21 to 36.

92. Where appropriate, we will recommend that one or more planning conditions be included in any planning permission granted, in order to address or reduce the effects that are predicted to occur. Wherever possible, we will make this recommendation in discussion with the applicant and local planning and highway authorities (as appropriate).

Pre-application Stage

93. The Development Management Procedure Order (DMPO) 2015 sets out the legal requirements on local planning authorities to consult with us. However, we would encourage you to engage us earlier and to think more broadly than these minimum standards. We would encourage you to consult with us in cases where development;

- other than minor development, is likely to result in an adverse impact on the safety of, or queuing on, a trunk road;
- is likely to prejudice the improvement or construction of a trunk road;
- consists of or includes the construction, formation or laying out of access to or from a trunk road;

94. Formal pre-application discussions are an effective means of gaining a good, early understanding of the development, its benefits, its likely impacts and its infrastructure needs. By consulting with us pre-application, you will ensure that the transport assessment you prepare is appropriately scoped and is based on the most relevant and up-to-date data. It will also ensure that you are made aware of, and can take account of, any SRN issues that might have a bearing on the way in which the development is planned and/or delivered. This, in turn, helps avoid delays and difficulties further into the application process.

95. When contacted in respect of any development proposal, we will engage in line with our planning principles. Specifically we will:

- **Respond** within 7 days to a request for initial discussion;
- Provide a **named contact** for discussions, which will be someone with knowledge and experience of the area;
- Advise the promoter whether the development proposal is likely to be **of interest** to us;
- Advise the promoter of **known potential constraints** to the development, and jointly explore **potential solutions**;
- Provide **access** to all relevant data and models, where this is available, relevant to the proposal, and where we are legally entitled to do so;
- Review, comment on and, where acceptable, agree the **methodology** for assessing the likely impacts of the proposed development, as relevant to the SRN;
- Review, comment on and, where acceptable, agree the principles of the scale and nature of **mitigation** required;
- Identify any other elements of the development, or its likely impact, that might be of interest to us.

96. Where it is likely that a proposal will be considered unacceptable in principle, we will provide guidance as to what, if any, steps could be taken to address the concerns that we have.

97. Depending on the nature of the site and the proposed development, the developer may submit a written scoping report or arrange a meeting with us. Where a meeting is arranged we would encourage other relevant parties to attend as necessary, including the LPA and LHA; we would particularly recommend this for larger and more complex sites.

98. If a scoping report is to be prepared, we would advise this includes:

details of the development, such as location, access arrangements, use class, size or number of units, likely phasing, maximum number of parking spaces and any other relevant information;

proposed methodology for estimating the vehicular trip generation and distribution on the SRN, and resulting trip generation figures;

proposed methodology for assessing the **impact** of this trip generation on the SRN; and

proposed methodology for assessing the **environmental consequences** of the transport impacts of the development.

99. As previously indicated, we will allow local authorities and development promoters access to all relevant data that we hold, including all relevant data and models, where this is readily available, free of charge, throughout the planning process. However usage of data and models may be restricted at later stages in the process by our need to assess the proposal ourselves within 21 days.

Assessment of development impact

100. The overall forecast demand¹² on the SRN and surrounding local road network should be assessed and compared to the ability of the existing network to accommodate traffic. For developments which will be brought forward in phases, this assessment should focus on the overall forecast demand of the development as a whole, not just the initial phases(s).

101. Assessments should be carried out for:

- the development and construction phase; and
- the opening year, assuming full build out and occupation, and
- either a date ten years after the date of registration of the associated planning application or the end of the Local Plan period (whichever is the greater).

The assessment at opening will be used for the determination of impact mitigation needs whilst the latter is necessary to determine the risk which will transfer to us.

102. We need these assessments to enable us to better plan for the future of the network, to inform an appropriate split of responsibilities between the parties involved, and to identify and plan to address any future problems before they arise. In line with the NPPF these assessments will also help us, and the LPA, to assess whether any development proposals which do not feature in an adopted or emerging Local Plan could compromise the delivery of that Plan.

Travel plans and demand management

103. We expect the development promoters to put forward initiatives that reduce the traffic impact of proposals by supporting the promotion of sustainable transport and the development of accessible sites. This is particularly necessary where the potential impact is on sections of the SRN that could experience capacity problems in the foreseeable future. Early engagement with us enables us to support this thinking, and we will work with developers and LPAs to identify appropriate measures to facilitate the delivery of sustainable development.

¹² The overall forecast demand will be the existing flow plus traffic likely to be generated by development already committed, plus traffic likely to be generated by the development under consideration, less any reduction arising from any travel plan or demand management measures that are being proposed.

104. The preparation, implementation, monitoring and updating of a robust travel plan that promotes the use of sustainable transport modes (such as walking, cycling and public transport) is an effective means of managing the impact of development on the road network, and reducing the need for major transport infrastructure. This contributes to the ongoing effectiveness of the SRN in ensuring swift connections nationally and regionally, minimising delays and congestions. Retaining some network capacity within the SRN facilitates the provision for further developments.
105. We will work with local planning and highway authorities and developers to develop travel plans that identify opportunities to introduce specific, route-based and/or area-wide travel plan measures for developments that will support sustainable transport choice. We will expect such plans to be supported by robust performance indicators which can be effectively monitored.
106. By the inclusion of existing development within the provisions of a travel plan associated with new development, it may be possible to free-up additional capacity within the road network to offset the demand generated by a proposed new development, increasing the likelihood of an assessment that the additional development can be accommodated.
107. However, quite often, the implementation of travel plan measures alone will not be sufficient to reduce the traffic demand of proposed development to acceptable levels. In such instances we will work with LPAs and local highway authorities to determine whether the implementation of more direct demand management measures could effectively regulate and manage traffic flows so as to support the delivery of the travel plan outcomes and to make the most effective use of the available capacity on the SRN.



Capacity enhancement (planning applications)

108. Where the overall forecast demand in the opening year of the development can be safely accommodated by the existing infrastructure, capacity enhancement will not be sought.
109. Capacity enhancement measures on the SRN will only be considered after the travel plan has been incorporated in the development proposal. While capacity enhancements should normally be addressed at the plan making stage, such measures may be considered at the time when individual planning applications are submitted, subject to the over-riding principle that delivery of the adopted local plan proposals should not be compromised.
110. Where insufficient capacity will be available to provide for overall forecast demand in the development's opening year, the impact of the development would need to be mitigated to ensure that, at that time, the SRN is able to accommodate existing and development specific traffic. Such works can take place on the SRN or on the adjacent local road network, and both options should be explored, and the impact on and relationship with both networks should be considered.
111. Where a development is to be brought forward in phases, any needs for related works on the SRN will be assessed at the point at which the final phase of development is completed. However it may be necessary or appropriate to implement some transport measures in line with the opening of certain phases of development according to the impacts generated at key stages of the development; such measures may be identified through sensitivity tests.
112. The measures proposed must be sufficient to accommodate or offset the impact of development on the SRN and on its surroundings. Support will be given to appropriate mitigation measures that are fully funded by the development promoter.
113. Where we do not consider the proposed transport measures adequate to support the scale of the development proposed we will explain this to the promoter and/or LPA and work to explore alternative options and establish an agreed position. In circumstances where there remain several impacts that are considered severe we may recommend that the application is not approved until sufficient future assessment has been carried out in order to assess the cumulative impact of these, allowing a more definitive recommendation. In exceptional cases we may recommend that planning permission is refused.
114. Scheme promoters should not assume that a departure from standard will be acceptable. This information will need to satisfy our appropriate operational and technical teams who will be required to agree to the principle of any necessary departures from standards before the application can be granted. Full approval for departures from standard can only be given following the completion of detailed design.
115. Where physical changes to the SRN are proposed in order to support a planning application a road safety audit (stage 1) and non-motorised user assessment is required before planning permission is granted, carried out in accordance with the standard current at the time. Pre-application engagement with us is particularly important in this situation.
116. Measures to address development impact upon the SRN will normally be delivered by means of a funding agreement between the developer(s) and ourselves, such as a section 278 agreement. See the following chapter for more information on funding.

Our formal responses to LPAs

117. Within 21 days of being consulted on a planning application we will respond in writing to LPAs with a formal recommendation that will take one of the following four forms:
- a. Offering no objection to the development.
 - b. Recommending conditions that should be attached to any planning permission that may be granted by the LPA.
 - c. Recommending that permission not be granted for a specified period, usually to allow for the provision of any missing information or to allow for negotiations with the developer.
 - d. Recommending refusal.
118. For all but (a) above we will provide the LPA with a statement explaining our position and the assessment and analysis behind it. As per the conditions of our Licence, we will also copy these responses to the Secretary of State for Transport (SoS).
119. Where an LPA decides that it does not wish to accept our recommendation, they must refer the case to the SoS 'as soon as practicable'.¹³ The decision of the SoS will be binding on all parties, subject only to challenge on point of law.
120. This referral process sits separate to the Planning Appeals process, which focuses on the LPA's decision.



Picture © Burnley Borough Council

¹³ The Town and Country Planning (Development Affecting Trunk Roads) Direction 2015.

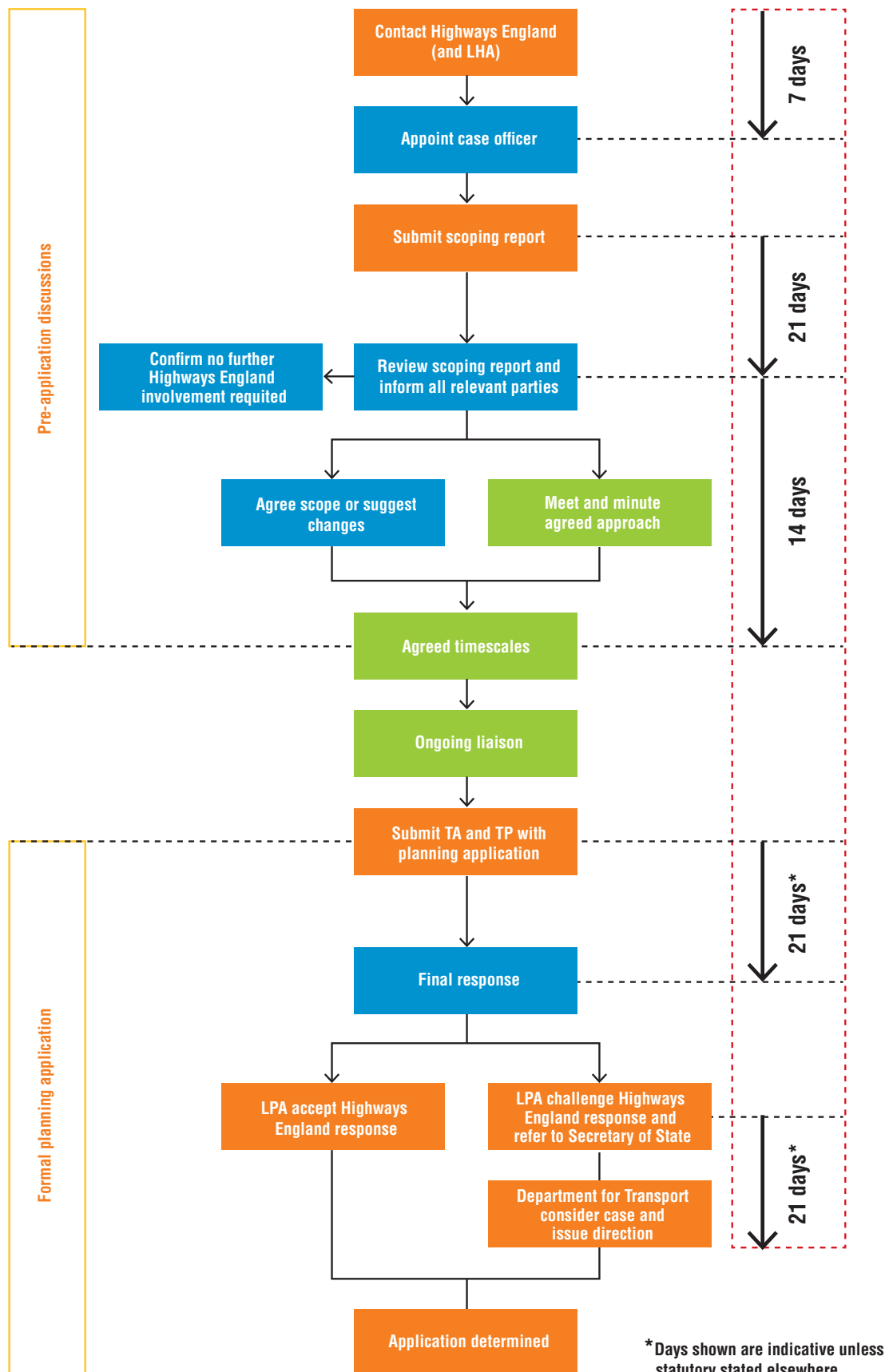


Figure B

- The blue boxes identify what we will do;
- the orange boxes identify the key stages in the plan preparation process from the perspective of the developer or Local Planning Authority (LPA); and
- the green boxes identify actions for both parties and relate mainly to engagement between ourselves and the LPA.
- It indicates a desired maximum duration for these to be completed, unless longer timescales are agreed beforehand by the relevant parties, such as on large or complex applications.

Other statutory Plans

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)

121. As a statutory consultee in respect of all Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) promoted by third parties, the promoters of such developments are required to consult with us where their proposals are likely to affect road or transport operation and/or planning on roads for which we are the highway authority. As with other planning matters we recommend that you enter into discussions with us at the earliest opportunity.
122. The regulations relating to NSIPs do not specifically require that promoters identify their proposed access arrangements or any proposed highway mitigation works during the consultation stage prior to submitting a Development Consent Order (DCO) application.
123. Promoters are encouraged to seek consensus with interested parties, including ourselves where applicable, in order to satisfy the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) that full and thorough pre-application consultation with interested parties has been carried out. Where possible, we will work towards agreeing a Statement of Common Ground at an early stage so that this can be an input to the examination.
124. In any case, promoters must provide sufficient detail to allow the assessment of the impact of their proposals on the SRN, and the suitability and deliverability of their proposed transport arrangements, including means of access, when they submit their application and draft DCO.
125. On the basis of the discussions held and the information provided we will make representations on proposals, or will seek to ensure that requirements we deem essential are incorporated in the DCO.

Local Development Orders and Neighbourhood Development Orders

126. Local Development Orders (LDO) and Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDO) will be considered in the same manner as planning applications.
127. The LDO/NDO process allows for conditions to be imposed by the body making the Order. Should we consider that conditions must be applied to manage or change the anticipated impact of development and ensure sustainability, we will work with the body making the Order with the intention of agreeing the inclusion of appropriate conditions. This might include conditions on the timing, scale or design of development.
128. Where insufficient information is provided to enable us to provide a full response to the consultation, or where we are not given sufficient time to consider the detail of the consultation, we may decide to make representations to the Secretary of State seeking intervention.
129. Upon their publication, we will review LDOs and NDOs to ensure that our views have been properly addressed. If there is reason to consider that they have not been given due weight, we may decide to make representations to the Secretary of State seeking intervention in order that those views might be taken into account by the Secretary of State for Communities when considering the final proposed Order.

Other development plans

130. As a statutory consultee to Neighbourhood Development Plans and associated Orders¹⁴ which have the potential for impact on the SRN, we will work proactively and collaborate with Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Forums in the development and implementation of their proposals, applying the approach described above.

¹⁴ Including Community Right to Build Orders.

Funding

131. Where a landowner or developer proposes changes to the SRN to serve a particular development, they are usually required to enter into an agreement with us to make these changes. Funding is often required to resource these interventions, but the scale of funding required will vary from case to case.
132. With this in mind we do not, in this document, deal comprehensively with each funding mechanism or scenario. Instead we set out our general approach, having regard in particular to the Section 278 (s278) process, the most common mechanism used for procuring works.
133. We will support proposals for third party investment into transport and highways schemes that enable development whilst maintaining the safe and efficient movement of goods and people on the SRN
134. Our teams are experienced in exploring funding options and in delivering funding agreements for transport schemes, and will be able to advise on the specific requirements of a particular scheme. As with other stages of the planning process, we encourage engagement with us as early as possible.
136. In order to enable the scheme to be delivered expediently, the scheme promoter may seek to progress the detailed design and draft the s278 agreement in parallel with the planning process rather than delaying this work until planning approval is given. Nonetheless the s278 agreement cannot be entered into and works cannot commence until planning permission for the development is in place and any relevant conditions have been satisfactorily discharged.
137. To begin this process developers are encouraged to consider read and complete the **S278 questionnaire**.
138. A programme for reporting on progress will be agreed and an 'open book' approach taken to the assessment of scheme costs. Our administrative costs will be based on the published schedule; the scheme promoter will be required to meet all costs associated with the development and delivery of the s278 agreement.
139. Depending on the form of agreement and the likely cost of the scheme, payment(s) may be made in stages, unless agreed otherwise. Under normal circumstances further work will only be undertaken when:

- we have received money from the works promoter to cover the costs of that work; or
- an Abortive Cost Undertaking (ACU) backed by a financial undertaking has been entered into by the works promoter.

Third party funding agreements, including s278

135. Where a s278 agreement is appropriate, a named officer will be identified as the scheme promoter's main point of contact for all matters related to the delivery of the agreement and the works. This may be different from the individual leading on our involvement in the planning application process, but where this is the case we will ensure all are clearly communicated with and that where necessary any handover is comprehensive.
140. Underspend(s) left over at the end of each task or stage can be rolled over to meet costs of the next stage or repaid to the scheme promoter. Any money which has been paid to us that has not been spent in delivering the scheme will be repaid to the scheme promoter once the scheme is complete or cancelled.

141. Where possible, in situations where the s278 involves both ourselves and local highway authorities, a single agreement will be proposed with the two respective highway bodies working collaboratively on the agreed mitigation.
142. For further information with regard third party funding for mitigation, scheme promoters are encouraged to contact the relevant regional planning team.

Other funding, including Growth Deals

143. Through our involvement with local enterprise partnerships, we will support proposals that provide investment into transport and highways schemes that enable development whilst maintaining the safe and efficiently movement of goods and people on the SRN.

Key contacts

Spatially based planning enquiries:

- South East: planningSE@highwaysengland.co.uk
- South West: planningSW@highwaysengland.co.uk
- East of England: planningEE@highwaysengland.co.uk
- Midlands: planningM@highwaysengland.co.uk
- North West: planningNW@highwaysengland.co.uk
- Yorkshire and North East: planningYNE@highwaysengland.co.uk

Roadside facilities: roadsidefacilities@highwaysengland.co.uk

Abnormal loads: abnormal.loads@highwaysengland.co.uk

This document, as well as strategic planning issues or growth enquiries:
growthandplanning@highwaysengland.co.uk

Acronyms and Glossary

ACU Abortive Cost Undertaking

CDM Construction (Design and Management) Regulations

DfT Department for Transport

DBFO..... Design Build Finance and Operate

These are roads which make up part of the SRN which have been built or improved under private finance initiative contracts.

DCO Development Consent Order

DMRB Design Manual for Roads and Bridges

DMPO..... Town and Country Planning Development Management (Procedure) Order (England) 2015

ELAA Employment Land Availability Assessment

LCA..... Land and Compensation Act 1973

LDO Local Development Order

LHA Local Highway Authority

LPA..... Local Planning Authority

LEP Local Enterprise Partnership

NDO Neighbourhood Development Order

NMU Non-Motorised User Audit

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

NSIP..... Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project

PINS..... Planning Inspectorate

RSA Road Safety Audit

RIS..... Roads Investment Strategy

SHLAA..... Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

SRN Strategic Road Network

SoS Secretary of State

TA Travel Assessment

TP Travel Plan

If you wish to contact us regarding any issues on the network please use our customer contact line on **0300 123 5000**





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