

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND – FEBRUARY 2018

BETWEEN

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL (NHDC)

AND

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (HCC)

as the authority responsible for highways

IN RESPECT OF

**THE NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN, PROPOSED SUBMISSION VERSION,
OCTOBER 2016**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared jointly by North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as the local authority responsible for highways in the District (hereafter HCC).
- 1.2 This Statement does not relate to other responsibilities or interests of HCC such as education, waste & minerals planning or land interests. Any agreement(s) on these matters are, or will be, set out in separate agreements as required.
- 1.3 The Statement sets out confirmed points of agreement between NHDC and HCC with regard to the North Hertfordshire Local Plan and supporting evidence base, which will assist the Inspector during the Examination of the Local Plan.

2 Background

- 2.1 This Statement relates to previous Duty to Co-operate meetings, ongoing discussion between the parties and the representations made by HCC to NHDC's Proposed Submission Local Plan (2016) regarding a number of outstanding highway issues and policies.
- 2.2 Reference is also made to the A602 corridor issues raised by HCC in relation to their Matter 6 Statement on Infrastructure as discussed at the Local Plan Examination and the request by the Inspector for NHDC and HCC to agree a way forward on the future transport modelling.

3 Cooperation to Resolve Objections

- 3.1 HCC has continuously responded to public consultations and liaised with Officers as the Local Plan process has developed which has helped inform both the strategy and policy framework within the Plan.

- 3.2 Comments received from HCC have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan to address the requirements under the Duty to Co-operate and the NPPF and support sustainable development.
- 3.3 NHDC have prepared and agreed a Direction of Travel (MOU3) with HCC which seeks to address concerns raised by HCC in their Reg 19 representations to the submission Local Plan. NHDC has prepared a Transport Strategy (ED14) in consultation with HCC as agreed in the abovementioned Direction of Travel.
- 3.4 It is **agreed** that HCC fully supports the approach taken in the NHDC Transport Strategy to promote sustainable forms of travel and provide the necessary infrastructure to support this modal shift.
- 3.5 Further ongoing, active and constructive discussion has taken place under the Duty following the receipt of these representations. It is **agreed** that this statement resolves the remaining objections from HCC in relation to infrastructure delivery in terms of the Transport and Infrastructure policies in the Plan, Policies SP6 and SP7, various site specific policies and the A602 corridor issues.

4 Agreed Matters

- 4.1 It is **agreed** that, subject to the acceptance by the Inspector of the proposed modifications listed in Appendix 1 and 2 to this agreement and their inclusion in the Local Plan, HCC's objections on the following matters, policies and settlements can be considered resolved, and the relevant policies are appropriate and sound:
- 4.2 Policies: (Agreed Proposed Modifications at Appendix 1)
- Modification to Policy SP 6: Sustainable Transport and the supporting text insofar as the NHDC Transport Strategy relates to the Plan and how NHDC will work with HCC, neighbouring authorities, Highways England and other service providers to ensure a range of sustainable transport options are available to all potential users. Reference is also made to seeking implementation of sustainable travel infrastructure at the earliest reasonable opportunity on strategic and other development sites. The cumulative impacts of smaller developments and how these will be addressed in the Plan is included as a new paragraph in the supporting text.
 - Modification to Policy SP7: Infrastructure requirements and developer contributions and the supporting text insofar as addressing the cumulative impacts of larger and smaller scale developments in contributing towards highway and sustainable travel policies and proposals as referred to in the NHDC Transport Strategy and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan updated January 2018.
 - Modification to Strategic Policy SP16 NS1: North Stevenage, SP18 GA2: Land North-East of Great Ashby and Site Policy GA1: Land at Roundwood and supporting text insofar as making reference to sustainable modes of transport and referring to the Stevenage mobility strategy where appropriate.

4.3 Settlements: (Agreed Proposed Modifications at Appendix 2)

- Modification to supporting text for Hitchin and Letchworth insofar as securing contributions that will seek to promote other forms of sustainable travel and modal shift.
- Modification to supporting text for Royston insofar as referencing junction improvements identified in the Transport Strategy in the Plan and in securing contributions that will seek to promote other forms of sustainable travel and modal shift.
- Modification to supporting text in relation to the villages of Codicote, Graveley, Ickleford, Knebworth and Wymondley insofar as recognising the highway concerns raised in the Transport Strategy and including suggested mitigation measures to address these in the Plan.
- Modification to supporting text for Lower Stondon, Site LS1, insofar as requiring transport assessments to address traffic impacts on the A600 and in relation to the nearby village of Ickleford

4.4 A602 corridor Study

- 4.4.1 In order to address HCC concern regarding transport impact around A1(M) Junction 8 and associated impacts on the A602 corridor (including parallel routes), it is **agreed** that issues in this area will be investigated as one of the interactions identified in the North Central Growth Transport Plan (GTP) to be produced by HCC and completed in 2018.
- 4.4.2 Following completion of the GTP a more detailed study of this interaction will be jointly commissioned. The scope of this study will be agreed between HCC, NHDC and other third parties including, Stevenage Borough Council.
- 4.4.3 It is **agreed** that the aim of the study will be to recommend a balanced package of measures which seek to:
- facilitate more sustainable journeys and more sustainable modes of transport thus mitigating the impact of higher levels of traffic using inappropriate routes;
 - encourage traffic to use the most appropriate parts of the road network.
- 4.4.4 The study will develop an understanding of where people are travelling from and to along the A602 corridor (including parallel local routes) so that a holistic approach can be taken for all those routes. The villages reviewed will include but may not be limited to Great Wymondley, Little Wymondley, Todds Green, Titmore Green and Graveley. It is expected that the measures will be implemented through contributions from development and other potential funding sources.

4.4.5 In line with the suggested amendments to Policies it is accepted that development proposals identified in the interaction area will be expected to contribute towards the package of mitigations that will be identified to address the cumulative impacts of the growth in this area. It is agreed that any additional funding sources will also be investigated and sought where appropriate as a means of contributing towards the package of mitigation measures.

5 **Conclusions**

5.1 HCC welcomes the proposed submission version of the NHDC Local Plan as a well written document with a positive commitment to addressing highway and sustainable transport measures. This is subject to the inclusion of the proposed amendments identified above, and a joint study being undertaken of the A602 corridor following completion of the North Central Growth Transport Plan in in 2018.



Councillor David Levett

Executive Member for Planning and Enterprise

Signed on behalf of

North Hertfordshire District Council

21 February 2018



Roger Flowerday

Head of Profession – Local Plans and Strategic Development

Signed on behalf of

Hertfordshire County Council

21 February 2018

Appendix 1: Agreed proposed Modifications to the NHDC Local Plan for Policies SP6, SP7, NS1 and Site Policy GA2

Text to be deleted showed struck through. New text in **bold**.

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
Policy SP6 – Sustainable Transport	43	<p>We will deliver accessibility improvements and promote the use of sustainable transport modes insofar as reasonable and practicable. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Comply with the NHDC Transport Strategy and the provisions of the, the Local Transport Plan and other supporting documents as relevant considered necessary; b. Encourage development in locations which enable sustainable journeys to be made to key services and facilities; c. Work with Hertfordshire County Council, neighbouring authorities, Highways England and service providers to ensure that a range of sustainable transport options are available to all potential occupants or users. This may involve new or improved pedestrian, cycle and passenger transport (including rail and/or bus) links and routes; d. Seek the earliest reasonable opportunity to implement early implementation of sustainable travel infrastructure on Strategic Housing Sites and other development sites in order to influence the behaviour of occupiers or users, along with supporting Travel Plans in order that sustainable travel patterns become embedded at an early stage; e. Assess development proposals against the parking standards set out in this Plan and having regard to relevant supplementary advice; f. Require applicants to provide assessments, plans and supporting documents to demonstrate the safety and sustainability of their proposals; and g. Protect existing rights of way, cycling and equestrian routes and, should diversion be unavoidable, require replacement routes to the satisfaction of the Council. 	<p>For effectiveness to ensure reference to NHDC Transport Strategy, the role of neighbouring authorities and the need to seek the opportunity to implement sustainable travel infrastructure from all development.</p> <p>Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962] and Stevenage Borough Council [7993]</p>

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
4.67	44	<p>Although the LTP3 Local Transport Plan identifies some specific schemes, the majority of transport schemes are identified at settlement level. From time to time the County Council, North Hertfordshire District Council, and neighbouring authorities publishes other documents and strategies¹ which will also need to be taken into account when considering development proposals. This includes the NHDC Transport Strategy and also relevant strategies prepared by neighbouring authorities, such as the Stevenage Mobility Strategy, for sites that are functionally attached to, or in close proximity to North Hertfordshire.</p>	<p>For effectiveness to ensure consideration NHDC Transport Strategy, and other relevant strategies prepared by neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962] and Stevenage Borough Council [7993]</p>
New paragraph after 4.68	44	<p>Many of the developments in the smaller settlements may not be enough on their own to have a major transport impact within an area, However, cumulatively a number of developments can create additional demands and burdens on existing infrastructure (such as increased use of less appropriate roads, higher volumes of traffic through constrained village centres) which may require suitable mitigation to be implemented. Such mitigation can also include better, walking and cycling improvements and public transport services which will reduce the need to travel by car. The Council will consider these overall cumulative impacts as far as they are able as part of Policy SP7 and may require appropriate contributions from all such development sites.</p>	<p>For effectiveness to address wider impacts of smaller scale developments on the transport network.</p> <p>Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]</p>

¹ These could include the forthcoming HCC Growth Transport Plans, the NHDC Transport Strategy prepared as part of the evidence base as well as other local strategies, for example cycling.

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
Policy SP7: (a) (i)	45	<p>a. Require developers to provide, finance and / or contribute towards provision which is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, including:</p> <p>i. On-site and/or off-site improvements and infrastructure necessary as a result of the development in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure appropriate provision of facilities and infrastructure for new residents; • contribute toward addressing help address cumulative impacts that might arise across multiple developments; • avoid placing unreasonable additional burdens on the existing community or existing infrastructure; • mitigate any adverse impacts where appropriate; and/or • enhance critical assets or make good their loss or damage; and <p>ii Maintenance and/or operating costs of any such new provision;</p>	<p>For effectiveness. To ensure cumulative impacts of development contribute towards transport infrastructure.</p> <p>Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]</p>
Policy SP7 (b)	45	<p>b. Ensure essential new infrastructure to support new development is will be operational no later than the completion of development or during the phase in which it is needed, whichever is earliest unless otherwise agreed with relevant providers;</p>	<p>For effectiveness. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]</p>
Policy SP7 (d)	45	<p>d. Have regard to any relevant national guidance or requirements in relation to planning obligations and any Community Infrastructure Levy or successor funding tariff which may be introduced by the Council;</p>	<p>For effectiveness. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]</p>
Policy SP7 (e)	45	<p>e. Work with landowners, developers and other agencies in facilitating the delivery of sites identified in the Local Plan and associated infrastructure and seek to overcome known</p>	<p>For effectiveness. Representations by HCC as</p>

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
		obstacles; and	Highway authority [12962]
Paragraph 4.75	45	On the largest development sites, it will be necessary to directly provide facilities alongside the primary use – schools within residential areas, bus stops within business parks, cycling route and new footways etc. In other areas, much of the growth arises from a number of smaller developments. A small development on its own may not be enough in itself to have a major impact within an area, However, cumulatively a number of developments (including both the larger and smaller sites) can create additional demands and burdens on existing infrastructure which may require suitable mitigation to be implemented. Transport infrastructure including highways improvements and sustainable transport measures such as walking, cycling, improved public transport and behaviour change - projects are needed to address cumulative impacts - the latter seek to reduce vehicle travel to improve capacity and enable more sustainable travel. The NHDC Transport Strategy sets out the measures required, and all developments will be expected to contribute to these measures.	For effectiveness. To ensure cumulative impacts of development contribute towards transport infrastructure and sustainable transport measures. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
Policy SP16 (b)	65	b. Integration with adjoining development in Stevenage Borough including site-wide solutions for access, sustainable travel , education, retail, and other necessary social infrastructure;	For effectiveness following proposed modification to Policy SP6. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962] and Stevenage Borough Council [7993]
Paragraph 4.196	66	It is envisaged that principal access to the site will be in the form of a looped estate road, one end of which will be in Stevenage Borough. The northern end of this road will emerge at, or close to, the existing junction of the B197 at Graveley Road / North Road. A new arrangement, possibly a roundabout, will need to be provided. Any transport proposals should consider the effects on adjacent networks and communities such as Graveley , and propose suitable	For effectiveness. To ensure cumulative impacts of development contribute towards transport infrastructure and sustainable transport measures.

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
		mitigation; the analysis should also consider cumulative impacts.	Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]
New paragraph after paragraph 4.196	66	The site will need to integrate provision for walkers, cyclists and public transport in line with the aims of the Stevenage Mobility Strategy. This will include connections to the wider sustainable travel network.	For effectiveness following proposed modification to Policy SP6. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962] and Stevenage Borough Council [7993]
Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
Policy SP18 (d)	69	d. Principal access from Mendip Way including provision for sustainable modes of transport in accordance with the Stevenage Mobility Strategy;	For effectiveness following proposed modification to Policy SP6. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962] and Stevenage Borough Council [7993]

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
Policy GA1 insert a new criterion after 3 rd bullet point	156	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision for sustainable modes of transport in accordance with the Stevenage Mobility Strategy; 	For effectiveness following proposed modification to Policy SP6. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962] and Stevenage Borough Council [7993]

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
Insert new paragraph after paragraph 13.99	156	The Stevenage Mobility Strategy or subsequent strategy aims to significantly increase the proportion of journeys undertaking on foot, by bike and by public transport over the plan period. Sites on the edge of Stevenage will need to make appropriate provision for sustainable modes of transport, and appropriate contributions to relevant sustainable travel schemes across the town, to ensure that they meet these aims.	For effectiveness following proposed modification to Policy SP6. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962] and Stevenage Borough Council [7993]
Paragraph 13.100	157	Our transport modelling does not identify any specific mitigation scheme requirements for Great Ashby. There are however local concerns that Back Lane, a narrow minor road which leads to Church Lane in Graveley, could be used by increased numbers of vehicles leaving the new development sites, and that junctions in Graveley itself will suffer from congestion as a result of increased flows . These issues are also part of wider network issues concerning junction 8 of the A1(M) and alternative routeings to this, which is being reviewed by the Council and HCC, and which will propose mitigation measures in the area. These will be reflected in future iterations of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Any transport proposals should consider the effects on adjacent networks and communities such as Graveley , and propose suitable mitigation; the analysis should also consider cumulative impacts. It is also recognised that there are localised highway issues in the area, particularly relating to on-street car parking¹⁴¹. These The parking issues have arisen, in part, as a result of national planning policies in place at the time Great Ashby was developed which restricted the amount of off-street car parking the District Council could require.	For effectiveness to address concerns relating to A602 corridor. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]
Paragraph 13.101	157	Some elements of potential solutions to these issues highway management measures, such as the use of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to deal with the parking issues , lie outside the direct control of the planning system and it is therefore not for this Local Plan to dictate the most appropriate solution(s).	For clarity purposes.
Paragraph	157	It is recognised that a careful balance needs to be struck between facilitating new	For effectiveness to address

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
13.102		development, encouraging sustainable travel choices , ensuring safe vehicular access throughout Great Ashby, the provision of parking places and the need to ensure that any measures which might be implemented do not simply displace problems to other less appropriate locations.	concerns relating to A602 corridor. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]
Paragraph 13.103	158	We will continue to work with the community council, Stevenage Borough Council and highway authority to determine the most appropriate solution(s). Sites in Great Ashby will need to ensure that any transport assessments appropriately take these matters into account and contribute reasonably to any necessary mitigation measures, or wider strategies which may seek to address these issues.	For effectiveness following proposed modification to Policy SP6. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962] and Stevenage Borough Council [7993]

Appendix 2: Agreed proposed Modifications to the NHDC Local Plan supporting text for Site Specific Policies

Text to be deleted showed ~~struck through~~. New text in **bold**.

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
<u>Codicote</u> Insert new paragraph after paragraph 13.81	154	Some minor roads leading to/from Codicote may require mitigation . This includes Bury Lane/Park Lane to Old Knebworth, and St. Albans Road. The effects of increased traffic through the village centre could also be off-set by environmental improvements.	For effectiveness and ensuring cumulative impacts of development on the transport network are addressed as referenced in the supporting text to policies SP6 and SP7 above. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]
<u>Hitchin</u> paragraph 13.145	166	All schemes in Hitchin will be required to make reasonable contributions towards the funding of these works, and to walking and cycling schemes in Hitchin which aim to influence mode share and free up capacity for new development. However, appropriate funding arrangements will need to be made. These need to reflect the fact that background traffic growth triggers the requirement for the schemes with new development than utilising some of the additional capacity that would be provided. In some cases, existing traffic or background growth may result in junction capacity issues, and new development will further increase these problems. However any additional capacity developed to resolve existing or background growth issues will also be taken up by new development, and appropriate contributions are therefore likely to be required.	For effectiveness and clarity. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]
<u>Ickleford Site IC3</u> Paragraph 13.158	170	Our transport modelling work does not identify any specific mitigation works that are required on the Ickleford road network. Development here will, however, contribute toward traffic generation within Hitchin and appropriate contributions will be sought towards identified schemes in the town. Any transport assessment should also consider the junction of the A600 and Turnpike Lane, where improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists may mitigate higher traffic volumes at this junction.	For effectiveness. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
<u>Knebworth</u> Paragraph 13.195	179	Our transport modelling does not identify any specific mitigation scheme requirements for Knebworth. However, the high street, including the junction of Stevenage Road/London Road/Watton Road and Station Road , is a known pinch point, particularly when delays or incidents on the A1(M) result in the B197 being used as an alternate route between Welwyn Garden City and Stevenage. There are also issues of poor pedestrian/cycle access along Station Road under the railway line, and similar issues at Gun Lane, and new development will be expected to consider improvements to walking/cycling conditions here and contributions towards this.	For effectiveness. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]
<u>Letchworth</u> Paragraph 13.228	188	Schemes in Letchworth will be required to make reasonable contributions towards these schemes and / or other schemes in nearby locations (see Baldock and Hitchin sections of this chapter in particular) where traffic generation arising from new development will have an impact. In addition schemes will be required to make contributions to walking and cycling schemes in Letchworth which aim to influence mode share and free up capacity for new development.	For effectiveness. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]
<u>Lower Stondon</u> Site LS1 Paragraph 13.244	191	Site LS1 will require the creation of a new access onto the A600 Bedford Road. The most appropriate solution, along with any consequential works – such as changes to speed limits entering / exiting the village from / to the north – will be explored through transport assessments. Any transport assessment should also consider the traffic implications for the A600, and the junction of the A600 and Turnpike Lane, where improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists may mitigate higher traffic volumes.	For effectiveness. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]
<u>Royston</u> Paragraph 13.301	204	In its role as Highway Authority, Hertfordshire County Council has recently developed a new county-wide transport model, 'COMET'. This will be used to identify transport mitigation schemes in the Royston Area. This has identified that a number of improvement schemes will be required in Royston by 2031: Particular congestion points identified included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A505/ A10 Roundabout; • A505/ A1198 Roundabout; and • A10/ Newmarket Road/ Melbourn Street Roundabout In line with the Transport Strategy, development in Royston will be required to make reasonable	For effectiveness. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]

Para / ref	Page	Change	Reason [representor no]
		<p>contributions towards improvement schemes at these locations and / or other schemes improving walking and cycling in Royston which aim to influence mode share. These will be reflected in future iterations of the Infrastructure Development Plan.</p>	
<p><u>Wymondley</u> Paragraph 13.355</p>	<p>214</p>	<p>Our transport modelling identifies the junction between Hitchin Road and Arch Road in Great Wymondley as a location where a mitigation scheme will be required to support new development< partly as a consequence of more ‘through’ traffic using the village roads However capacity improvements here are likely to encourage more ‘through’ traffic , and a wider, more balanced set of mitigation measures is likely to be required. Some minor roads leading to and from the villages within Wymondley parish may require other traffic management measures which will also need to be investigated and will be reflected in future iterations of the Infrastructure Development Plan. Mitigation could include environmental improvements to the village centre. The mitigation of these issues will be part of the wider package of measures identified through the A1(M) j8 study referred to in paragraph 13.100 under Great Ashby.</p>	<p>For effectiveness to address concerns relating to A602 corridor, and seeking to address cumulative impacts of development on the transport network as referenced in the supporting text to policies SP6 and SP7 above. Representations by HCC as Highway authority [12962]</p>