

Planning Policy & Strategy Team
Shropshire Council
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via Email: Planningpolicy@Shropshire.gov.uk

22 February 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

CONSULTATION ON THE PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT (REGULATION 19) OF SHROPSHIRE LOCAL PLAN

Highways England welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on the pre-submission draft version (Regulation 19) of the Shropshire Local Plan which covers the plan period between 2016 to 2038.

Highways England has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). It is our role to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the strategic road network whilst acting as a delivery partner to national economic growth.

Within Shropshire the SRN comprises of the M54 motorway, the A5, A49, A458 and A483 trunk roads and are most relevant in the context of the current consultation.

In responding to Local Plan consultations we have regard to DfT Circular 02/2013 - Strategic road network and the delivery of sustainable development ('the Circular') which sets out how interactions with the Strategic Road Network should be considered in the making of local plans. Paragraph 16 of the Circular sets out that:

“Through the production of Local Plans, development should be promoted at locations that are or can be made sustainable, that allow for uptake of sustainable transport modes and support wider social and health objectives, and which support existing business sectors as well as enabling new growth.”

In addition to the DfT Circular 02/2013, the response set out below is also in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other relevant policies.

We note that the pre-submission version of the Local Plan contains locally specific policies and site allocations to complement the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011) and Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan (adopted in 2015). We

also note that upon adoption of the Shropshire Local Plan 2016 to 2038, policies set out in this will replace the policies of the Core Strategy and SAMDev Plan, except for the SAMDev site allocations which are yet to be delivered.

As you would be aware, Highways England most recently responded to the Shropshire Local Plan consultation during the 'Regulation 18: Pre-Submission Draft' stage. In the current 'Regulation 19' consultation, we note that some of the proposed sites have been discontinued and a few new sites added. However, the housing and employment requirement to be delivered across the Shropshire Council during the period 2016 to 2038 remains the same as was identified in the 'Regulation 18' consultation.

As such, our general comments provided during the 'Regulation 18' consultation remain the same. Further transport evidence for the Local Plan is needed.

Highways England is working closely with Shropshire Council to understand the cumulative transport implications of the site allocations. This will include assessing the cumulative and individual impacts of the Local Plan proposals upon the ability of the road links and junctions affected to accommodate the forecast traffic flows in terms of capacity and safety. Highways England expects to be consulted imminently on a Model Specification Report (MSR) for modelling work proposed to be undertaken by the Council as part of the draft Local Plan and for this modelling work to inform a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG).

Where Local Plan proposals are anticipated to have an impact on the operation of the SRN in the area, we note that the wording of the policies in the Regulation 19 Pre-submission draft have been amended to include the requirement for a Transport Assessment for each site allocation, to determine the extent of any adverse impacts (including cumulative impacts) on the smooth functioning of the SRN in the area.

Highways England are content with the inclusion of this wording in principle; however, we would recommend exclusion of "cumulative impacts". Instead, we recommend that a Transport Assessment will be needed for each site allocation, agreed through site specific pre-application consultation with Highways England. At the planning application stage the Transport Assessment will be reviewed in accordance with DfT Circular 02/2013 paragraphs 21-50. Where appropriate, conditions may be agreed to offset any unacceptable impacts that may be identified through the assessment process.

Based on the above, we would welcome you to have continued discussions with Highways England regarding progression of the Local Plan transport evidence and make changes to the draft Local Plan as recommended above.

Yours Sincerely,

Neil Hansen