

Statement of Common Ground

Portsmouth City Council & National Highways

February 2025



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL



national
highways

This page is intentionally left blank

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SCG) is a jointly agreed statement between Portsmouth City Council (PCC) and National Highways. It sets out the position and understanding with respect to key strategic issues between the City Council and National Highways. It is not binding on either party but sets out a clear and positive direction to inform ongoing strategy and plan making. It should be noted that this is a bilateral agreement between these two organisations only.
- 1.2 This SCG has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 27 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the section of the Planning Practice Guidance on Maintaining Effective Cooperation. It has also followed guidance prepared by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) on this matter. It has been prepared in parallel with the emerging Local Plan (Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). This Plan, upon adoption, will supersede the existing Portsmouth Local Plan (2012), the saved policies from the 2006 Local Plan and two Area Action Plans. The new Local Plan will cover the period to 2040 and sets out the vision, objectives and policies to guide future development in the City over the plan period.
- 1.3 The Portsmouth Local Plan will be submitted in accordance with paragraph 234.b of the NPPF (2024) and before 12 March 2025. The Portsmouth Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the version of the NPPF published in December 2023.

Relation between Portsmouth City Council and the Statutory undertaker

- 1.4 National Highways 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). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such National Highways works to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity.

Planning Policy and national legislation (Transport)

- 1.5 Paragraph 20 of the NPPF states "Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places (to ensure outcomes support beauty and placemaking), and make sufficient provision for [...] infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat)".
- 1.6 Paragraph 108 of the NPPF states: "Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:
 - a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;
 - b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;
 - c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;
 - d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and
 - e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places."

1.7 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states "The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making."

1.8 Paragraph 110 states that "Planning policies should [...]

b) be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned;

c) identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development;"

Portsmouth Context

1.9 Within Portsmouth, the SRN consists of the M27, part of the M275, and the A27. It should be noted that the M275 is a short spur into Portsmouth, serving the City Centre and Portsmouth International Port, that marks the end of its parent motorway, the M27. The section of the M275 north of Junction 1 (Tipner/ Park & Ride) is considered part of the SRN and is managed by National Highways, but the M275 south of Junction 1 is managed by Portsmouth City Council.

2. Key strategic matters

2.1 This section sets out where agreement has been reached on strategic matters, or where further work to reach common ground is required. It should be noted that all the figures where included relate to the plan period for the Portsmouth Local Plan of 2020-2040.

Future Growth

Housing Need	Housing Supply	Unmet need
17,980 (899 dpa)	13,603 (680 dpa)	4,376 (219)

Employment Need	Employment Supply	Unmet need
42,500	Office 77,099	0
96,300	B2/ B8 / R&D 79,784	16,516

Strategic Transport Assessment

2.2 PCC commissioned SYSTRA in March 2023 to assist in delivering a Strategic Transport Assessment (STA) in support of its emerging Local Plan to 2040. Throughout the STA process, SYSTRA and PCC have liaised with National Highways (NH) on an on-going basis, including a number of meetings and workshops including those on the following dates:

- 28th March 2023 – to discuss the initial modelling approach;
- 20th November 2023 – to discuss the model results/ principles of mitigation;
- 31st July 2024 – to discuss the proposed mitigation;
- 20th November 2024 - to discuss the modelling data and NH clarifications; and
- 17th February 2025 - to discuss finalising work prior to submission of the Local Plan.

- 2.3 National Highways commented on the different stages of the modelling which helped establish the methodology for conducting both the strategic and local junction modelling. This SoCG demonstrates the areas of agreement between PCC and NH in the preparation of the STA, specifically the methodology and criteria-based modelling work. Appendix 1 provides further detail of the partnership working between PCC and National Highways.
- 2.4 The methodology for the modelling was initially agreed to include four modelling scenarios, a 2019 Base, 2041 Baseline (no Local Plan development except for committed sites and infrastructure), 2041 Do Minimum (with full Local Plan development, without mitigation measures) and a 2041 Do Something (with full Local Plan development and with mitigation measures).
- 2.5 The modelling approach was initially agreed in a meeting with National Highways on 28th March 2023. It was agreed that the STA would use the Solent Sub-Regional Transport Model (SRTM) model in conjunction with local junction modelling (LinSig and Junctions 10). This approach is consistent with the previous study undertaken by SYSTRA in 2019 on behalf of PCC to assess Local Plan growth in Portsmouth, which at the time was developed with corresponding engagement with NH officers. NH were involved in the agreement of SRN schemes to include in the 2019 baseline models and were also made aware of the parallel process for the local road network being undertaken with PCC highways. As part of the updated Local Plan process, SYSTRA reviewed all comments received from National Highways as part of the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation process (carried out in August 2021) and incorporated these comments into an updated draft Strategic Transport Assessment as well as applying them to the modelling scope as necessary. Due to updates in the scale of the Local Plan allocations and various transport projects within the City having progressed since the 2019 study, updates to the SRTM model runs were required. These updates therefore need to be reflected in an updated Strategic Transport Assessment and associated transport modelling to assess overall impacts.
- 2.6 For the purposes of local junction model validation, SYSTRA proposed to adopt the same principle applied in the 2019 study which used either queue length data where survey data was available **or** used the queue length outputs from the SRTM model, model validation criteria included:
- **For non-signalised junctions**, model validation is required when either the SRTM outputs or the local junction model initial outputs are reporting a mean maximum queue length of 5PCUs or more. A non-signalised local junction model is considered validated if the queue lengths reported within the local junction model are within $\pm 15\%$ of the comparable SRTM output results;
 - **For signalised junctions**, a local junction model is considered validated if the Volume to Capacity (v/c) SRTM metric compared with the local junction Degree of Saturation are within a ± 5 percentage points for 75% of the arms. Remaining arms are required to validate within ± 15 percentage points.
- 2.7 This approach was agreed by National Highways subsequent to the meeting held in March 2023.
- 2.8 National Highways were supportive of the approach to use the junction modelling to test and challenge the operation of individual junctions and balance sustainable/active modes of transport as part of mitigation packages. The Local Plan Strategic Transport Assessment ensured that any mitigation measures considered in the Do Something scenario would consider a range of sustainable and active travel modes including

walking, cycling, public transport and shared travel. This is in accordance with Department for Transport Circular 01/2022.

- 2.9 SYSTRA consulted with PCC to determine a list of committed land use and highway schemes that been confirmed and therefore needed to be included in the SRTM model runs. This includes schemes within Portsmouth and those in adjacent boroughs.
- 2.10 SYSTRA published a Draft Strategic Modelling Assumptions Note which was shared with NH on the 7th June 2023, with a final version shared on the 24th July 2023. This technical note summarised the Strategic Modelling Assumptions to be applied in the updated model runs using the strategic Solent SRTM.
- 2.11 National Highways raised several queries in relation to the draft, which were discussed and an agreement reached as documented in the final version of the Assumptions Note. This included an agreement reached that TEMPRo V7.2 would be used in the modelling as opposed to TEMPRo V8 as it would yield a more robust case.
- 2.12 SYSTRA and PCC agreed to consult with National Highways on all proposed mitigation that had the potential to significantly affect the SRN and access to it, for example; re-routing away from the M275 and resulting in additional pressure on alternative SRN junctions providing access into the city like the Portsbridge Roundabout and A27/ A2030 junction. Local junction modelling of proposed mitigations impacting the SRN was undertaken, following a review of the Reference Case and Do Minimum (with LP Development) SRTM model runs, the mitigations were fed into a Do Something scenario whereby the impact of the proposed mitigation was assessed cumulatively in the SRTM.
- 2.13 Following progression of the STA, PCC and SYSTRA held a meeting in November 2023 with National Highways to provide an overview of the results from the strategic transport model runs undertaken in the SRTM and provide an overview of flow difference plots between the 2041 Baseline Model and 2041 Do Minimum model runs (with full local plan development).
- 2.14 The meeting provided an opportunity to describe findings with regard to SRN junctions and present the approach for developing mitigation at Portsbridge roundabout and cover next steps, providing an opportunity to seek any comments.
- 2.15 Key SRN junctions discussed during the meeting included:
- **Portsbridge Roundabout** - there has been a considerable amount of previous work completed and discussions between PCC and National Highways around Portsbridge roundabout. In order to seek a way forward, a “first principles” approach was taken to assessing the impacts of the Local Plan and appraising how those impacts would affect the safe and efficient operation of the SRN (including delays, queue lengths and interactions with mainline traffic). SYSTRA described the associated issues with the Lakeside development and how the intention was to examine the effects of proposed mitigation for the Lakeside issues on traffic flow patterns through Portsbridge. (SYSTRA acknowledged that the Do Minimum baseline has traffic avoiding Portsbridge and it is likely that some of this traffic will route back if proposed mitigations are effective, so this needed to be accounted for in the consideration of mitigation options).
 - **A27 Havant Bypass / A2030 Eastern Road roundabout** – the modelling work indicated that the Local Plan traffic would not lead to a material change in conditions on the A27 slips, but that traffic and delay increases substantially on the Eastern Road (south) arm, however the queues are within available stacking space. The junction is already heavily engineered but SYSTRA examined ways to try and ease

the congestion on Eastern Road without creating issues for the A27 slips or the roundabout circulatory.

- **Other Junctions** – SYSTRA discussed the additional work being done for Lakeside and Rudmore Roundabout as the observed issues arising from the Do Minimum modelling either already have a clear impact on SRN locations or have the potential to do so.

2.16 National Highways stated that they were content with the approach taken at the SRN junctions.

2.17 In preparation for Portsmouth City Council's Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation, SYSTRA prepared a Strategic Transport Assessment which was published on 9th July 2024 along with the Local Plan and all other supporting documents. The consultation ran for an eight week period until 3rd September 2024. Prior to this, a technical note was shared with National Highways on 13th June 2024 to provide an early indication of the assessments undertaken and mitigation proposed at SRN junctions. This provided additional detail on the optioneering process for the relevant SRN junctions and detailed the assessments and conclusions presented at the previous meetings held with National Highways.

2.18 National Highways raised clarifications on 13th September 2024 and additional model data and detail on the modelling approach has been provided as clarification. SYSTRA and PCC continue to work in a collaborative manner with National Highways and in principle agreement has been reached on the partial signalisation of Portsbridge Roundabout forming the potential Local Plan mitigation alongside a wider package of measures on the local road network to be assessed.

2.19 Based on the evidence supplied to support the Local Plan, National Highways consider the Portsmouth Local Plan to be sound and have no objections in principle to the potential mitigation schemes being included within the Strategic Transport Assessment.

2.20 National Highways agree that a potential mitigation scheme at Portsbridge Roundabout may include signalisation of the A27 Western Road and A397 Northern Road arms with the A27 westbound off-slip and A3 London Road remaining un-signalised as set out as part of the proposed Local Plan mitigation. The currently proposed potential Local Plan mitigation scheme is not required to mitigate any adverse impacts to the SRN.

2.21 National Highways do not object in principle to potential mitigation at the Portsbridge Roundabout junction, however, consider it necessary to undertake microsimulation modelling of the Portsbridge Roundabout as part of the project level design process to demonstrate its deliverability. As National Highways are not reliant on a potential improvement, they are content that this is not carried out at the plan making stage. This modelling is proposed to be undertaken at the project stage post Local Plan adoption, to ensure that optimal mitigation can be delivered to cope with anticipated development traffic demand and does not have any detrimental impact on the SRN. The exact parameters of the mitigation at this junction will be determined following microsimulation and more detailed modelling at the project level.

2.22 PCC and National Highways agree to continue to work together to agree any final project level design at Portsbridge Roundabout.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

2.23 PCC will continue to work collaboratively with National Highways to support and deliver key strategic infrastructure including those detailed within the PCC Strategic Transport Assessment (2024).

2.24 PCC have worked closely with National Highways in the production of their Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and will continue to engage with National Highways through any updates to the IDP.

3. Signatories

3.1 Both parties agree that this statement is an accurate representation of matters discussed and issues agreed upon.

3.2 Both parties agree that they have engaged positively on an ongoing basis and that on this basis the Duty to Cooperate has been met.

3.3 Both parties agree that there are no substantial areas of disagreement between the parties relating to the emerging Portsmouth Local Plan and will both continue to work proactively on the key strategic cross boundary issues identified in this SoCG.

 Signed:	Signed: 
Name: Lucy Howard	Name: Patrick Blake
Position: Head of Planning Policy	Position: Area 3 Spatial Planner
Portsmouth City Council	National Highways
Date: 21-02-25	Date: 21/02/2025

Appendix 1: Table detailing the partnership working between PCC and National Highways

Action	Partnership working with National Highways	Date of resolution
28/03/2023 Meeting between NH/PCC/Systra to discuss and agree the initial modelling approach	The meeting allowed Systra to explain the modelling approach proposed for the STA and offered an opportunity for NH to raise any concerns.	All parties agreed with the approach proposed during the meeting and Systra commenced with the STA modelling following this.
07/06/2023 PCC shared with NH the Local Plan Strategic Modelling Assumptions Technical Note which summarised the Strategic Modelling Assumptions that were going to be applied in the model runs	NH responded with queries and points of clarification on the 21/06/2023. PCC and Systra responded to these queries on the 24/07/2023. National Highways were content with the responses provided. There were no outstanding concerns prior to modelling being undertaken.	Final version of the technical note was shared with National highways on the 24/07/2023
20/11/2023 Meeting held between NH/PCC/Systra to provide an overview of results and difference between 2041 baseline and 2041 do min at SRN junctions (with full Local Plan development). Also discussed approach for assessing individual junctions through local junction models	This meeting provided an opportunity for PCC/Systra to present the findings with regards to the SRN junctions and present approach for developing mitigation. This meeting predominantly focussed on Portsbridge Roundabout. Further discussions were had regarding A27 Havant Bypass / A2030 Eastern Road roundabout and Rudmore Roundabout.	During the meeting National Highways stated that they were content with the approach taken at the SRN junctions and the approach for mitigation.
13/06/2024 Following completion of the modelling, PCC shared with National Highways a technical note focussed on the mitigation results at the Strategic Road Network	Prior to the publication of the Local Plan and Strategic Transport Assessment for Regulation 19, PCC shared a technical note with National Highways that focussed on the results of the SRN following mitigation. A meeting was held on the 31/07/2024 to discuss the results. NH raised several queries in an email (05/08/2024) which Systra provided a full response to (23/08/2024) including modelling data. PCC and Systra continued partnership working with NH who raised further queries on the 13/09/2024 and 22/10/2024, which responses were provided to on the 15/10/2024 and 05/11/2024 respectively.	05/11/2024
09/07/2024 Portsmouth City Council Local Plan published for the Regulation 19 Consultation including the Local Plan Strategic Transport Assessment	Following publications of the Local Plan, National Highways requested additional modelling clarifications on the 10/07/2024 and 15/07/2024 (see cell above for actions following this).	10/12/2024

	National Highways provided a Regulation 19 response to the Local Plan on 02/09/2024	
20/11/2024 Meeting between PCC/NH/Systra to discuss additional information that NH would need in order to fully understand the modelling and mitigation proposed	NH wanted to further discuss their review of the STA, including the modelling and mitigation. Systra provided explanations re. the modelling during the meeting, however, NH requested additional GIS files which were shared on the 11/12/2024. NH confirmed this data would allow a final decision on their review.	17/02/2025
17/02/2025 Meeting between PCC/NH/Systra to discuss finalising the SoCG and any further works to finalise the STA	It was agreed during the meeting that NH required no further modelling prior to submission of the Local Plan. NH considered the plan to be sound and raised no objections to the principle of the mitigation schemes proposed within the STA.	18/02/2025