

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXAMINATION OF SUBMITTED CORE STRATEGY

GENERAL – 7TH SEPTEMBER 2010 (AM)

HIGHWAYS AGENCY WRITTEN STATEMENT - AUGUST 2010

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2. Is the Core Strategy (CS) broadly compliant with national policy? Will the CS deliver sustainable development?
 3. Does the CS address cross boundary issues, including transportation, effectively?
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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Role of the HA

1. The Highways Agency (HA) is an executive agency of the Department for Transport (DfT). We are responsible for operating, maintaining and improving England's Strategic Road Network (SRN; i.e. motorways and all-purpose trunk roads) on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport. In spatial planning and development control terms we have a duty to safeguard the safe and efficient operation of the SRN, as set out in DfT Circular 02/2007 (Planning and the Strategic Road Network).
2. Maintaining a safe and efficient SRN is important to the viability of existing and proposed development and to the local and national economy (PPG13). In the case of Havant, the sections of SRN that are of principal concern are the A3 (M) Junctions 2 to 5, the A27 between Farlington and Emsworth, and (just outside the borough) the M27.
3. Further information on the current status of the SRN and the HA programme of works, in and around Havant, can be found in our Strategic Sites written representation.

POSITION ON CORE STRATEGY

4. The HA first began working with Havant Borough Council (BC) to develop their transport evidence base in October 2007 and formally stated the requirement for an evaluation of transport impacts in our response to their Preferred Options Core Strategy document, in April of 2008. The HA has since submitted further

comments on this in October 2008 and November 2008. A meeting also took place between the HA and Havant BC on 23rd November 2009.

5. Unfortunately the HA still has a number of concerns regarding the robustness and credibility of the evidence base, and it has not yet been feasible to reach agreement on a strategy to mitigate impacts (as far as possible) on the SRN, due to the outstanding issues with the modelling work produced.
6. The results from the evidence base forecast a significant level of traffic being added to the SRN as a direct result of the development proposed in the Core Strategy. Whilst a number of general mitigation measures have been outlined in the Havant Transport Impact Mitigation Study (January 2010) it is not clear if the measures outlined are sufficient to mitigate the impacts of the proposed developments on the SRN.
7. In summary, the specific mitigation measures/infrastructure required to deliver the strategic sites have not been outlined within the Core Strategy or its evidence base. At present, it is not possible to determine whether the proposed development can be delivered in a sustainable manner or whether the general mitigation measures are capable of reducing impacts to an acceptable level.

HAVANT CORE STRATEGY PROGRAMME ISSUES

Does the Core Strategy comply with national policy?

8. As noted above, there are question marks surrounding the validity of the modelling work produced as part of the evidence base. On this basis it is the view of the HA that the proposed Core Strategy does not comply with national policy. Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12) states (paragraph 4.36) that for a DPD to be 'Justified' it needs to be "*founded on a robust and credible evidence base*".
9. PPS12 also requires that in order for the Core Strategy to be considered 'Effective' evidence should be provided to demonstrate how infrastructure, required to deliver the strategy, will be delivered (paragraphs 4.44 and 4.45). As things stand the HA does not consider the evidence submitted to be sufficient to provide us with confidence that the proposed infrastructure can be delivered.
10. It is therefore considered, at present, that the Development Plan Document (DPD) is unsound when assessed against the requirement criteria set out in national policy PPS12.

Will the CS deliver sustainable development?

11. Based on the evidence provided to the HA to date it is not known, in transport terms, if the Core Strategy will deliver sustainable development. As stated previously (paragraph 7) the specific mitigation measures, required to deliver strategic sites, have not been outlined within the evidence base. It is also the

case that the evidence submitted for the general mitigation measures that have been proposed does not provide sufficient detail in terms of delivery mechanisms.

12. The DfT's Circular 02/2007: Planning and the Strategic Road Network states that in relation to Local Development Frameworks *"the Agency cannot be expected to cater for unconstrained traffic generated by new development proposals. Such growth would be unsustainable and would restrict opportunities for future development where available capacity is limited. Development should be promoted at sustainable locations, and the Agency will expect to see demand management measures incorporated in development proposals"*.
13. Due to uncertainty as to whether the Core Strategy can deliver sustainable development the DPD is considered, at present, to be unsound.

Does the CS address cross boundary issues, including transportation, effectively?

14. The HA is concerned that cross boundary transportation issues have not been effectively addressed by Havant BC within their Core Strategy. This is particularly relevant to the West of Waterlooville Major Development Area.
15. Whilst it has been noted that a Town Centre Integration Project Masterplan has been jointly commissioned by developers, Hampshire County Council, Winchester City Council and Havant BC, the HA requires reassurance that the content of the document will address cross boundary transportation issues and deliver a sustainable development.

RESOLUTION OF CORE STRATEGY SOUNDNESS ISSUES

16. Whilst it has not yet been possible to agree a transport strategy to support the proposed development in Havant, the HA would like to stress that we wish to continue working with the Council and are keen to explore a mechanism that will enable us to work together after adoption of the Core Strategy. This will enable the HA to withdraw part of its representations but would be on the condition that the strategy will form part of a lower level DPD, and therefore be subject to public examination. This represents a pragmatic way forward and will allow us to address the impacts of proposed development on the SRN, ensuring the HA can continue to perform its duties as an Agency, as set out in DfT Circular 02/2007.
17. However given that the Core Strategy does not presently contain such a mechanism, the HA must reluctantly maintain its representation that the Plan is unsound. It should also be noted that the HA is not challenging the principle of development itself, rather we are seeking an augmentation to the Core Strategy that will provide the reassurance that an optimum transport strategy, to mitigate development impacts on the SRN, will be developed in due course.
18. Further details on the mechanism proposed above can be found in our Strategic Sites representation.