HIGHWAYS AGENCY

Safe roads, reliable journeys, informed travellers

WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CORE STRATEGY EXAMINATION

HIGHWAYS AGENCY WRITTEN STATEMENT: MATTER 15 – INFRASTRUCTURE

JANUARY 2012 EXAMINATION

MATTER 15 – INFRASTRUCTURE

MAIN ISSUE: WHETHER THE INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CORE STRATEGY ARE SOUNDLY BASED AND DELIVERABLE?

15a: Have the critical infrastructure requirements in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan been justified by the evidence base? What would be the consequences for the strategy if any of the critical infrastructure was not delivered? Is there sufficient commitment at this stage from the relevant organisations responsible for delivery?

1. Based on the SWETS modelling results, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) identifies that improvements to the Cophall roundabout, A27/A2270 signalised junction, A27/A22 roundabout and A22/Dittons Road Roundabout are required to mitigate the impact of Core Strategy development proposals on the Strategic Road Network (SRN). We are content that the infrastructure improvements have been appropriately justified within the transport evidence base.

2. The identified infrastructure is critical to allow development to take place in Polegate and Willingdon in particular. If the infrastructure is not delivered the Core Strategy allocations cannot come forward without significant impact on the A27 and associated junctions which could affect the safe and efficient operation of the network. It is therefore essential for the improvements to be in place prior to large scale development in the district although, as noted in our response to Matter 8, the thresholds are unclear for exactly when the infrastructure is likely to be needed.

3. The Highways Agency is the delivery agent for the proposed improvements (except A22/Dittons Road) but have no available funding for any part of the proposals. The onus is on developers to mitigate the impact of their development. The Highways Agency is committed to delivering the necessary improvements subject to a number of caveats:

    a) The improvements are funded through developer contributions / Wealden District Council sources
    b) Junction improvement designs are agreed by the Highways Agency
    c) A delivery timetable is developed and agreed

15b: Is it clear what infrastructure is required for the first 5 years of the plan and who is going to provide it?

1. As discussed within our Matter 8 written statement, the timing of the necessary SRN infrastructure has not been determined. As such, it is unclear whether the junction improvements will be required in the first 5 years of the plan.

2. The critical nature of the junction improvements to the delivery of the Core Strategy would imply the need for early delivery but to date we are unclear when the necessary improvements would be required by.

15c: Does the Core Strategy take sufficient account of the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy?

The Highways Agency does not wish to comment on this issue.

15d: Does the Core Strategy provide an adequate basis for the achievement of more sustainable forms of transport and travel? Should there be a policy setting out the transport strategy for the District?

The Highways Agency does not wish to comment on this issue.

15e: Does the requirement for all new residential development to contribute to the green infrastructure network and make provision for new open space in Policy WCS13 accord with the tests in Circular 05/2005 and the CIL regulations?

The Highways Agency does not wish to comment on this issue.