



Leicester
City Council



Charnwood



Leicestershire
County Council

CHARNWOOD LOCAL PLAN 2021-2037

Statement of Common Ground between:

- Charnwood Borough Council
- National Highways
- Leicestershire County Council
- Leicester City Council

November 2021

CHARNWOOD LOCAL PLAN

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND BETWEEN NATIONAL HIGHWAYS, LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL AND CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement identifies the areas of common ground between National Highways (formerly Highways England) as the Strategic Road Network Highway Authority, Leicestershire County Council as the Local Highway Authority for Leicestershire, Leicester City Council as the Highway Authority for the neighbouring City of Leicester, and Charnwood Borough Council as the local planning authority; hereafter referred to as ‘the Parties’. It has been prepared in respect of transport and highways matters relating to the Pre-Submission Draft Charnwood Local Plan 2021 – 2037, hereafter referred to as ‘the Plan’. It also identifies those matters outstanding that are still the subject of continued discussions and further work.
- 1.2 The statement should be read alongside the Regulation 19 stage representations made by the Parties on the Plan and the Council’s Transport Topic Paper on the subject. It is made without prejudice to the participation in the formal examination of any participant and the views that may then be expressed. Nevertheless, this Statement of Common Ground reflects the agreed position between the Parties for submission to the Inspector for the Examination of the Plan, based on cooperation and joint working.

2. JOINT WORKING

- 2.1 The Parties have been working closely together, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Department for Transport Circular 02/2013, with all Parties actively involved since preparation of the Plan commenced. The main meetings which have been held are identified by the record of engagement set out in Appendix A, along with the evidence base developed to date as a result of these meetings.
- 2.2 A Transport Topic Paper will be produced which provides a more detailed examination of the transport evidence, including the modelling work undertaken and the conclusions of the transport assessment of the Plan’s impact.

National Highways

- 2.3 National Highways, as the Highway Authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in England, has worked proactively with Charnwood Borough Council throughout the preparation of the Plan and its associated evidence base. Representations have been received at every consultation stage as the Plan has developed and National Highways has provided significant input through various iterations of the transport modelling work that has informed the Plan.

Leicestershire County Council

- 2.4 Leicestershire County Council, as the Local Highway Authority, has been actively engaged throughout all stages of the plan preparation process and has worked collaboratively with Charnwood Borough Council to inform the Plan. The County Council has provided input and expertise in the transport assessment of the Plan through the appropriate modelling of its impacts and subsequent understanding of the outputs.

Leicester City Council

- 2.5 Leicester City Council, as the neighbouring Highway Authority with cross-boundary interests in matters relating to transport and highways has worked closely with Charnwood Borough Council in seeking to improve connectivity with the city. The City Council has made representations at each consultation stage of the Plan and has contributed at key points in the development of transport evidence base to support the Plan.

3. MATTERS OF AGREEMENT

- 3.1 The Parties agree that the requirements for the Duty to Cooperate process with respect to the Charnwood Local Plan have been complied with and there has been effective engagement in terms of transport and highways matters, as evidenced by the record of engagement set out in Appendix A.
- 3.2 The Parties agree that it is important to adopt a new Local Plan for Charnwood as soon as is practicable. There is currently a lack of a 5 year land supply in the Borough, which is leading to unplanned, speculative development. Infrastructure provision for such development, including transport infrastructure, is difficult to coordinate and the effects of cumulative impacts may not be sufficiently assessed through ad hoc development. A new Local Plan will help ensure sustainable development and its supporting infrastructure is delivered in a coordinated, planned manner and minimise cumulative impacts which may arise.
- 3.3 It is agreed by the Parties that the PRTM highway assignment model is a suitable tool to draw conclusions on the forecast impacts of growth proposed in the Charnwood Local Plan.
- 3.4 It is agreed that the modelling work undertaken to date is fit for purpose and the existing evidence base provides the necessary information to understand the pressures on the highway network in the Baseline Scenario without Local Plan growth at 2037, and to identify the impacts Local Plan growth could have on the network by 2037. However, it should be noted that these scenarios could be considered as artificial, as the Baseline Scenario without Local Plan growth at 2037 is not a situation which will occur in practice. The Baseline developments and Local Plan developments will happen progressively and simultaneously from now until 2037 rather than adding Local Plan trips to an existing Baseline.

It is also recognised that it provides a good foundation to produce the further evidence identified and formulate a continuing work programme.

- 3.5 The Parties agree that the Baseline Scenario at 2037 indicates that many junctions on the SRN will be at or approaching capacity, resulting in the reassignment of traffic to secondary routes. The route preferences identified demonstrate the desirability of the SRN (and other major routes) for trips in the absence of underlying congestion. The addition of traffic from Local Plan developments will further exacerbate the problem, displacing traffic and potentially creating congestion at other locations.
- 3.6 The Parties acknowledge that the mitigation package and any future transport strategies should seek to minimise the additional traffic generated by planned growth (e.g. by improvements to sustainable forms of travel) as far as practicable and allocate residual traffic to utilise the most appropriate route possible.
- 3.7 The Parties understand and accept the need to commit to additional transport assessment work to provide further evidence which will assist: in developing a more detailed understanding of the impacts of Local Plan development on the transport network; and towards the case for securing investment from both public and private sources.
- 3.8 The Parties agree that a structured, coordinated and strategy-led approach which continues beyond the Plan's adoption will be required to address the transport challenges identified in Charnwood. Alongside highway infrastructure improvements, this needs to include the coordinated provision of passenger transport service improvements and cycling and walking measures.
- 3.9 Some of the key transport challenges identified (and the potential measures required to address these challenges) are cross-boundary in nature; especially in respect of growth in and around the edge of the Leicester urban area. Accordingly, the Parties agree that key aspects of the aforementioned strategy-led approach will need to be pursued on a cross-boundary basis, with the involvement of the relevant neighbouring planning and highway authorities. In the case of the edge of Leicester urban area, such cross-boundary working would need to involve:
 - Charnwood Borough Council, Blaby District Council, Leicester City Council and potentially Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council as local planning authorities;
 - Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council as local highway authorities; and
 - National Highways.
- 3.10 The Parties agree that the further transport assessment work currently being undertaken will be used to address the outstanding matters which are identified below to ensure a strategic approach to transport assessment and mitigation which is agreed by the key partners involved in this statement.

4 OUTSTANDING MATTERS WHERE BOTH PARTIES ARE OPEN TO FURTHER COOPERATION

4.1 The Parties have identified that further work is required to build upon the existing evidence and provide a more detailed understanding of the Plan's impact upon the highway network. A proposal for this work has been agreed and will initially include:

- a review of existing modelling work and further refinement to establish an initial analysis of the scenarios at 2026 and 2031 to provide a more incremental and multi-modal approach;
- assessment of the development taking place in the next five years to inform mitigation measures needed in the near future;
- separating background traffic growth forecasts and the impact of external factors on key parts of the network; and
- evaluation of the distribution of development and cumulative impact of each allocation to provide a clearer understanding of mitigation requirements and associated costs for each stage of the Plan period and to inform a proportional, fair and reasonable approach for each site.

4.2 The Parties identify that following this initial work, further evidence would be needed to:

- provide sufficient evidence on impacts to the highways network in the first five years, notably on the SRN;
- enable sufficient identification of the direct impacts of Local Plan growth, separate from the impacts of Baseline congestion arising from committed development located outside the Borough;
- enable the cumulative, cross-boundary impacts of Charnwood's and adjacent authorities emerging Local Plans to be understood;
- separate the impact of mitigation measures on the local road network (LRN) from those of future potential schemes on the SRN for which funding is not confirmed; and
- evidence the feasibility and value for money of all the mitigation interventions proposed.

4.3 The Parties agree that further work is necessary to identify sustainable transport opportunities and support a shift from travel by private car to more sustainable modes of travel, not only in Charnwood but also improving cross-boundary opportunities into the City of Leicester.

4.4 The Parties recognise that the additional evidence could identify that short term impacts may occur. In this case, further discussions will be needed to establish acceptability to ensure that in the longer term the highway network functions in the best manner possible.

4.5 The Parties will seek to explore all potential routes for funding to address transport and highways issues and will continue discussions to ensure that the appropriate evidence to access any available funds is provided. Dependent on

the outcomes of the further work, current routes to/sources of funding might include via the Road Investment Strategy process; through Government bidding processes and programmes, such as the Levelling Up Fund, Major Road Network funding; Large Local Majors funding; and from private sources, such as developers. The Parties will cooperate and support each other with any future funding bids when they arise to secure the required highways and transport investment.

- 4.6 National Highways have raised no matters of soundness relating to the Plan's approach to transport and highways matters, subject to the outstanding matters identified above being addressed. This includes ensuring that highway mitigation options are at the correct locations; are treating the causes of congestion, rather than secondary impacts; have been tested at the correct scale; and, are feasible and provide value for money.
- 4.7 Leicestershire County Council also raise no issues of soundness but do anticipate that the outcomes of the continuing work programme will necessitate changes to the Plan's narrative text and policies to reflect the evolving situation. This would ensure the Plan provides a strong policy platform to secure the required highways and transport investment through appropriate national/public funding and developer contributions, addressing cumulative impacts and avoiding any potential adverse economic and environmental impacts.
- 4.8 Leicester City Council have raised issues of soundness in relation to Policy LUA1: Leicester Urban Area; Policy CC5: Sustainable Travel; INF1: Infrastructure and Development Contributions; INF2: Local and Strategic Road Network and Appendix 3: Infrastructure Schedule. The continuing work will assist in formulating a tight set of principles and narrative that will address these areas of concern alongside the commitment to an evidence based partnership approach between the Parties.

5 GOVERNANCE

5.1 In terms of governance arrangements the Parties agree to:

- seek to resolve any outstanding matters relating to transport and highways;
- remain committed to working closely together to deliver a transport network which can successfully deliver growth in the Borough;
- review and update the delivery assumptions in light of any material change in circumstance, such as additional evidence provided by the continuing work programme; and
- adopt positive principles of cooperation.

6. SIGNATORIES TO THE STATEMENT

Signed on behalf of National Highways [REDACTED]	Signed on behalf of Leicestershire County Council [REDACTED]
Name: Eri Wong	Name: JOHN SINNOTT
Position: Spatial Planning Manager	Position: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Date: 22 Nov 2021	Date: 3/12/2021

Signed on behalf of Leicester City Council [REDACTED]	Signed on behalf of Charnwood Borough Council [REDACTED]
Name: Andrew Smith	Name: Richard Bennett
Position: Director of Planning, Development & Transportation	Position: Head of Planning & Regeneration
Date: 02 Dec 2021	Date: 3 December 2021

APPENDIX A

Record of Engagement - Main Meetings

DtC Partner	Date	Purpose of meeting
Leicestershire County Council	20/12/17	Initial meeting to discuss potential for transport modelling of development strategy options using LLITM Lite. Outcome: Drafting initial brief commenced.
Leicestershire County Council	12/03/18	Meeting to discuss strategic development options transport modelling. Outcome: Draft brief refined.
Leicestershire County Council	06/09/18	Inception meeting for Local Plan development strategy options modelling. Outcome: Data and information supplied for modelling to commence.
Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and National Highways	29/11/18	To discuss Stage 1 transport modelling undertaken (option testing - no mitigation) and how to progress with Stage 2 (option testing – with mitigation). Discussed background growth issues and the results of the development strategy options tested at Stage 1. Outcome: Stage 2 modelling commenced
Leicestershire County Council	01/02/19	Interim transport modelling meeting to discuss initial results of Stage 2 option testing for Loughborough, Syston and Leicester. Outcome: Stage 2 modelling refined
Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and National Highways	07/05/19	Discussion on the results of the Stage 2 development strategy option testing. Outcome: Modelling results used to inform plan preparation.
Leicestershire County Council	13/01/20	Initial meeting to discuss transport assessment of the pre-submission Local Plan. Outcome: Initial draft brief produced
Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, and Blaby	23/03/20	Inception meeting to discuss the Pan Regional Transport Model used for the transport assessment of the Local Plan, including the model parameters and inputs (i.e. study area, baseline information, and information requirements). Outcome: Refined brief produced, and modelling commenced
Leicestershire County Council	15/05/20	Update on progress with Local Plan and input required from the highway authority. Outcome: Assistance provided to plan preparation and evidence base requirements
Leicestershire County Council and National Highways	05/06/20	Meeting to discuss Local Plan progress and potential inputs and requirements for the strategic road network.

DtC Partner	Date	Purpose of meeting
		Outcome: Further understanding of evidence base requirements
Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, and National Highways	01/10/20	Update on progress with the Charnwood transport modelling and discussion on the next steps in the work. Outcome: Initial modelling outputs and requirements for next steps discussed and refined
Leicestershire County Council	22/10/20	Wider discussion on transport and growth with LCC highways and growth unit representatives. Outcome: Advice on plan preparation requirements
Leicestershire County Council	23/10/20	Discussion on the Interim Forecasting Modelling results. Outcome: Further understanding of outputs
Leicestershire County Council	26/10/20	Discussion on additional work and analysis requirements. Outcome: Additional work refined
Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, and National Highways	12/11/20	Mitigation modelling inception meeting to discuss the approach for developing mitigation measures to address the impacts of Local Plan development identified through the Forecasting Modelling. Outcome: Advice on proposals for mitigation
Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, and National Highways	03/12/20	Charnwood Mitigation Workshop to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to provide technical input into transport mitigation proposals. Outcome: Initial mitigation proposals discussed and refined.
National Highways	19/01/21	Meeting to discuss infrastructure policies, transport modelling undertaken to date (outcomes, issues, mitigation package), new proposed allocations, comments received at Regulation 18 stage, delivery mechanisms, and future cross-boundary working arrangements. Outcome: Plan preparation refined.
Leicestershire County Council	25/02/21	Discussion around LCC's response to the draft Forecasting Report, matters raised, and the work required to progress the Local Plan to examination. Outcome: Work programme revised.
Blaby District Council	02/03/21	Meeting to update Blaby DC with progress on Local Plan transport work. Outcome: Information provided to stakeholder.
National Highways	05/03/21	Discussion about Highway England's comments on the Local Plan Forecasting Report. Outcome: Further understanding of position
Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, and National Highways	09/03/21	Meeting to discuss various options available next steps of transport modelling for the Local Plan in support pre-submission consultation and submission. Outcome: Information gathered on further work programme.
Leicestershire County Council	18/03/21	Meeting to discuss transport evidence next steps and best way to proceed towards examination in a timely manner.

DtC Partner	Date	Purpose of meeting
		Outcome: Requirements for further work discussed
Leicestershire County Council	29/04/21	Meeting with consultants to discuss transport evidence and explore further work programme. Outcome: Initial draft proposal produced
Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, and National Highways	15/06/21	Transport workshop to discuss further work programme and stakeholder requirements. Outcome: Initial draft proposal refined and brief produced.
Leicestershire County Council	22/07/21	Clarification of final brief with consultants. Outcome: Final brief agreed, and work commenced.
National Highways	17/08/21	Discussion of Local Plan representations to be made by National Highways. Outcome: Explanation of proposed comments provided.
Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, and National Highways	06/09/21	Discussion regarding contents of proposed Statement of Common Ground between stakeholders. Outcome: Initial draft Transport SoCG produced.

Evidence Base

1. [CBC Local Plan Option Testing \(No Mitigation\) Final Report – Nov 2018](#)
2. [CBC Local Plan: Mitigation Testing Final Report – June 2019](#)
3. [PRTM: Charnwood Local Plan Base Year Model Review – May 2020](#)
4. Charnwood Local Plan Mitigation:
 - i. [SRN Issues – Jan 2021](#)
 - ii. [Technical Note 1: Hybrid Option – Jan 2021](#)
 - iii. [Technical Note 2: Long list of Interventions \(Excel\) – Jan 2021](#)
 - iv. [Technical Note 3: Assessment of Mitigation \(Excel\) – Jan 2021](#)
5. [Revised Technical Note 3: Refined Assessment of Mitigation \(Excel\) – May 2021](#)
6. [Charnwood Local Plan Forecasting Report – May 2021](#)
7. [Charnwood Local Plan Mitigation Report – May 2021](#)
8. [Charnwood Local Plan – Further Analysis and Refinement – May 2021](#)