

Comment

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Question 1

Which document/modification does this representation relate to? Main Modification Schedule *

Question 2

What best describes the nature of your representation? Support

Question 4

Please give details of why you consider the Darlington Local Plan, incorporating the proposed Modifications to which your representation relates, is not legally compliant or is unsound. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the Plan or comment on the Sustainability Appraisal Report Addendum/Habitats Regulations Screening please also use this box to set out your comments.

see attached representation

Question 5

Please set out what changes you consider necessary to make the Plan legally compliant or sound and why, thinking about what you identified in Question 4. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording or any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

n/a

Darlington Local Plan – Infrastructure Delivery Plan Review

Prepared for:	Sunny Ali [National Highways]
Prepared by:	Richard Edwards [JSJV]
Date:	30 th November 2021
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Reviewed/approved by:	Richard Edwards [JSJV]

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Task Overview

The Darlington Local Plan 2016 – 2036 was submitted to the Planning Inspector on 23rd December 2020. To date, a number of submissions have been made in relation to the Local Plan and are available on Darlington Borough Council's [DBC's] Local Plan website. Following the Examination in Public [EIP] hearing sessions for the Local Plan, the Planning Inspector has requested that Main Modifications are required to ensure the soundness of the Plan. As part of the review of the Main Modifications, it was identified that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan [IDP] had not been reviewed.

The Jacobs Systra Joint Venture [JSJV] has reviewed the IDP and considered the approach to planning applications coming forward in the Borough assuming the Main Modifications are adopted. The results of this review are set out below.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

The Darlington Borough Council Local Plan 2016 – 2036 includes an IDP dated 2020. It is understood that the IDP was published in March 2020, before the completion of the modelling work and the Statement of Common Ground [SoCG] between DBC and National Highways which was agreed in April 2021.

Section 2 of the IDP deals with Transport. This identifies that the Strategic Road Network [SRN] along with the Local Road Network [LRN] is a key element of hard infrastructure and is necessary to provide capacity for economic growth.

It identifies a number of highway mitigation schemes on both the SRN and LRN. These are listed in Appendix 3 and it is noted that contributions will be sought from developers as well as other sources to fund these schemes.

This is based upon the evidence base for the Local Plan and in particular documents SD66 – SD69 which are the various modelling reports for different areas in the Borough.

Appendix 3 identifies the highway improvements in 5 year periods. The mitigation set out in Tables 1-3 below is the relevant mitigation for the SRN.

Darlington Local Plan – Infrastructure Delivery Plan Review

Table 1: 2020 – 2025 Highway Infrastructure Projects

Ref	Project	Description	Indicative Cost	Potential Funding	Lead Organisation	Indicative Phasing
E6	A66 Morton Palms Roundabout Improvements	Widening of A67 and B6280 approaches to A66 Morton palms Interchange (SRN)	Above 500k – 1m	Highways England	Highways England	Delivered
E8	Little Burdon left turn filter	Formation of a third lane on the northern approach to Little Burdon roundabout to create a left turn filter lane.	Above 500k – 1m	Highways England	Highways England	Delivered

Table 2: 2025 – 2030 Highway Infrastructure Projects

Ref	Project	Description	Indicative Cost	Potential Funding	Lead Organisation	Indicative Phasing
E11	A66/Little Burdon Circulatory Upgrade	Increase to three circulatory lanes with one dedicated to A1150 traffic.	TBC (1m -5m)	Developer, Funding Bids -DFT, TVCA, HE	Highways England	2025
E12	A66 Tornado Way Junction Improvements	Widening of A66 exits from roundabout to accommodate two lanes.	TBC (1m -5m)	Developer Funding Bids -DFT, TVCA, HE	Highways England	2025
E14	Neasham Road Improvements Phase 1	Lengthen flare on the Neasham Road approach to the roundabout	TBC (1m -5m)	Developer Funding Bids -DFT, TVCA, HE	Highways England	2025
E15	Blands Corner Improvements Phase 1	Widening of flare on Carmel Road South approach and reconfiguration of existing carriageway to provide a two lane exit on A66 (eastbound)	TBC (500k - 1m)	Developer	Highways England	2025

Table 3: 2030 – 2035 Highway Infrastructure Projects

Ref	Project	Description	Indicative Cost	Potential Funding	Lead Organisation	Indicative Phasing
E16	A66 Morton Palms to Little Burdon Dualling	Dualling of A66 between A67 Morton Palms roundabout and A1150 Stockton Road roundabout incorporating new large roundabouts at A667 and A1150	above 5m - 50m	Highways England	Highways England	2030
E18	Neasham Road Improvements Phase 2	Widening of A66 exits from roundabout to accommodate two lanes.	TBC Above 1m – 5m	Developer Funding Bids -DFT, TVCA, HE	Highways England	2030
E19	Blands Corner Improvements Phase 2	Widening the Bridge Road approach to three lanes and associated changes to circulatory carriageway.	TBC Above 1m – 5m	Developer Funding Bids -DFT, TVCA, HE	Highways England	2030
E21	A66 Morton Palms Larger Roundabout	Increased ICD of roundabout. Creation of third lane on southbound approach and two exit lanes on northbound and southbound exits.	TBC Above 1m – 5m	Developer Funding Bids -DFT, TVCA, HE	Highways England	2030

It should be noted that the schemes identified for the 2020 – 2025 period have already been delivered by National Highways. The above schemes are those identified within Appendix 1 of the SoCG. However, the SoCG goes on to say:

‘Traffic modelling indicated that additional improvements may be required at Junctions 58 and 59 of A1(M). There is a potential issue related to the southbound off slip roads queuing back onto the main carriageway of the A1(M). This will be reviewed though potential mitigation schemes involving signalling the junctions has been discussed. This will be considered through the Transport Assessment process when detailed planning applications are submitted. It is not clear at this time that full signalisation of the junctions will be required.’

The identified improvements within the IDP are therefore considered acceptable. However, it is important through discussions with DBC that the agreement reach over the need for the assessment of the A1(M) junctions at the time of planning applications is supported.

National Highways Approach’ to Local Plan Developments

Policy IN 1 Point C v) of the Plan indicates that contributions will be sought from developers to a programme of SRN highway improvements where applicable. Paragraph 10.5.23 – “*The detailed traffic modelling indicates that the development within the Local Plan does not have a severe impact on the local and strategic highway network subject to schemes identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan being implemented*”.

Policy H10-part f, relates to the Skertingham Statagic Allocation and states the following:

‘The phased implementation of the highways works, and improvements will be linked to appropriate phases of development within the plan period. This shall include, but not be limited to, the following schemes from the IDP, exact details to be identified as part of the comprehensive masterplan, infrastructure phasing plan and any future applications for the site:

- i) A66/Little Burdon Circulatory Upgrade;*
- ii) A1150/Thompson Street East Roundabout Improvements;*
- iii) A167/Burtree Lane Junction Improvements; and*
- iv) Barmpton Lane upgrade works including its junction with Whinbush Way.’*

These Local Plan Policies are generally supported by National Highways and the details of the required mitigations are set out within the IDP and SoCG. However, the IDP nor the Local Plan set out the need for developments along the A1(M) corridor to assess their impact on the SRN as identified within the SoCG. Discussions with DBC are required to ensure that this agreement as made within the SoCG is implemented.

Summary and Conclusions

On the basis of this review, the recommendation to National Highways is:

Discussions required with Darlington Borough Council on delivering the Local Plan and agreements within the SoCG and IDP

Darlington Local Plan – Infrastructure Delivery Plan Review

The Darlington Local Plan and IDP provide a framework for assessing and approving development proposals within Darlington. However, this review has highlighted the following:

- 1) Policy IN1 Point C v) sets out the principle of collecting contributions from developers towards necessary improvements at the SRN.
- 2) Paragraphs 10.5.7 and 10.5.8 of the Local Plan set out that the necessary mitigation for the Local Plan is set out in the IDP. These include the agreed mitigation on the A66.
- 3) Neither the IDP nor the Local Plan set out the need for developments along the A1(M) corridor to assess their impact on the SRN as identified within the SoCG.