

## Spatial Planning Framework Commission – Technical Note

Prepared by SYSTRA as named Sub-Consultant to AECOM under the Highways England  
2016 SPA

<b>Job No.</b>	GB01T18C06 – 19	
<b>Job Title</b>	Solihull Local Plan	
<b>To</b>	Catherine Townend	cc
<b>Topic</b>	Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation	

### Introduction

1. SYSTRA has been commissioned by Highways England to undertake a review of documents submitted as part of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council's (SMBC) Draft Local Plan (DLP) Supplementary Consultation.
2. On account of the spatial coverage of the DLP the principal concern for Highways England will be the potential implications for the operation and functionality of the M42 and M6 Motorways, and the A45, A452 and A446 Trunk Roads.

### Background

3. Highways England responded to consultation on the DLP in February 2017. As part of this response Highways England acknowledged the aspirations to deliver a significant quantum of additional employment and residential development within the Borough.
4. Further detail was therefore required in relation to the proposed allocations and the transport related policies put forward in the DLP. Highways England emphasised the importance of this to enable consideration of the implications of the planned growth on the SRN and so plan the necessary infrastructure accordingly.
5. Notably Highways England outlined the need to assess the potential future operation of the M42 Motorway at Junctions 4, 5 and 6 and affected areas of the A45, A452 and A446 Trunk Roads in light of the potential future traffic flows associated with development set out within the DLP.

### Overview

6. The current consultation provides a review of housing allocations. It does not revisit the non-housing related parts of the DLP.
7. Since the previous consultation in July 2017, there has been a third wave of sites submitted within the 'call for sites' which amounted to 26 submissions. Of

these, four were considered suitable for allocation. Of these allocations three (refs: 405, 408 and 410) each provide under 25 dwellings and are located some distance from the SRN. They are therefore in isolation not anticipated to have a significant impact on the SRN.

8. The fourth site, allocation 414, could provide 298 dwellings in south east Balsall Common. Given its location this site in isolation is unlikely to have a significant impact on the SRN. Nonetheless, as the plan seeks to meet the objectively assessed need for Solihull in addition to catering for the housing market shortfall, it seeks to provide substantial allocations across the borough. As such we envisaged that Highways England would require an evidence base detailing the associated transport implications. As previously stated in the response of June 2017 Highways England would be keen to work with SMBC to agree a coordinated way forward for providing the necessary evidence base.
9. SMBC has previously set out an intention to undertake strategic modelling using PRISM considering the strategic traffic flows and multimodal implications. Highways England is not aware of any modelling or outputs, if this has been undertaken to date. Any model would require review by Highways England and be able to input into suitable local assessments of SRN junctions. The mechanisms for assessment of the SRN are not confirmed at this stage.
10. As stated, in order to provide a meaningful indication of the impact of the local plan on the SRN, a transport evidence base is required. A strategic Transport Assessment or similar would be suitable in providing the additional information required. The impact of the local plan on the SRN can be considered in five key areas. These would be expected to consider the cumulative impact of development in the area and planned infrastructure improvements including possible new Motorway Service Area(s).
  - The impact of development in Shirley and Whitlock's End will likely require assessment of M42 Junction 4 and to a more limited extent M42 Junction 3;
  - Dorridge and Knowle developments are anticipated to primarily impact M42 Junction 4 and 5;
  - Development within Solihull Town Centre is unknown and therefore its impact on M42 Junction 5 is uncertain;
  - Major developments at UK Central, the NEC and Birmingham Airport and their associated infrastructure improvements will need to be assessed; and
  - The impact of development at Balsall Common on the M42 and SRN within Warwickshire.
11. A sensitivity test assessing journey to work data for Balsall Common indicates that some 13% of trips would be to Warwick district, including Warwick and Leamington Spa. The cumulative impact of housing developments in Solihull (particularly Balsall Common) and the Warwickshire Local Plan could therefore have a significant combined impact on the A46, in particular Thickthorn roundabout. Therefore, dependent on the location of development, the local plan may have cross boundary implications within Warwickshire and will require further consideration as part of the transport evidence base.

## Conclusion

12. On behalf of Highways England SYSTRA has undertaken a review of the Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation. Since previous consultations on the

Solihull Local Plan there have been no new allocations which would be likely to have a significant impact on the SRN in isolation.

13. However the plan provides significant allocations across the borough. To date HE has not been consulted on a transport evidence base detailing the cumulative impact of the Local Plan policies and allocations on the SRN within the district or the cross-boundary implications.
14. We therefore wish to reiterate previous advice that the quantity of evidence to be considered is significant. The consideration of this evidence required by Highways England for Solihull Local Plan Review has been the subject of a previous SYSTRA Technical Note (Jan 2017) and will be subject to further direct discussion between Highways England and Solihull MBC.