Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Reviewing the Plan for **Solihull's** Future

Solihull Local Plan Review

Reg 19 Draft Local Plan: Transport Topic Paper

October 2020

Issues and Options | Draft Plan | **Submission Plan** | Examination of Plan | Adoption of Plan

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Contents

1. Introduction

1. This volume contains a series of papers supporting the Council's Submission Draft Local Plan which has been published for consultation. The topic papers look at the relevant national and local guidance that impact on the emerging plan. They also provide a summary of the evidence base and how it has been used to shape the local plan. The topic papers do not contain any policies, proposals or site allocations and should be seen as explanatory supporting documents.
2. The topic papers have focussed on the issues that have been subject to more significant change from 2013 local plan and address the following:

    - Introduction
    - Reference relevant national & regional policy/references
    - Identify the evidence used to inform the policy/policies
    - Explain how evidence has been used to shape the policy
    - Explain how representations on previous iterations of plan have been used to shape the policy

2. Background

Transport Policy in the Solihull Local Plan 2013

3. The 2013 Local Plan was developed to accord with the West Midlands Metropolitan Authority's 'Local Transport Plan 3', supported by the then Integrated Transport Authority, Centro.

4. The Plan identified that although the Borough enjoys excellent connectivity in terms of the Strategic Road Network and rail links to Birmingham and London. However, there are challenges in terms of poor local public transport connectivity across the Borough from north to south; poorer accessibility and high car reliance in villages and suburban fringe; congestion on the key road network routes such as the Stratford Road; motorway junction capacity; higher than average carbon emissions from transport and air quality concerns.

5. The 2013 Local Plan policies and proposals sought to manage patterns of growth actively, to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations, which currently are or can be made accessible by sustainable transport modes.

6. For the five Area Strategies, the Council committed to working with partners to deliver high quality, integrated public transport, cycling and walking networks to provide viable, safe, attractive and convenient alternatives to car travel and improve opportunities to access health, employment, leisure, education, retail and tourism services.

7. Policy P7 'Accessibility and Ease of Access' introduced specific accessibility criteria for housing, retail, leisure and offices to ensure that key local services be within walking distance, and to encourage walkable neighbourhoods, in accordance with Manual for Streets. For commercial development, the policy sought to focus new businesses in those areas that generate significant travel demand to encourage linked trips and co-location of services. Ease of access for all users, and door-to-door journey experience were also introduced as considerations in the policy.

8. Policy P8 'Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion' sought to ensure that development does not significantly increase delays to travellers or reduce their safety, by managing congestion and minimising adverse impacts on the local economy, people's health and the environment.

9. The Plan recognised the regional and national importance of the Borough's key economic assets, and the importance to maintain and enhance ease of access to, e.g. the NEC venues, Birmingham Airport and Solihull Town Centre.

10. The Plan also recognised the HS2 Hybrid Bill that was passing through Parliament at the time of plan preparation, and that the proposal could play a key role in the Borough's future growth. The Plan stated that (Sec. 9.3.23) "Localised delivery of HS2, both in terms of mitigation of its impacts and securing of its potential benefits, will need to be carefully planned and managed. The Council will prepare an Action Area Plan or Plans or take other appropriate action as and when necessary in this regard." As can be seen below, the need for wider consideration of the HS2 Interchange site was a key reason for progressing to an early review of the Plan.

3. Local Plan Review

Introduction

11. In July 2015, the Council decided that instead of pursuing a Local Area Plan (LAP) for potential development around the HS2 Interchange, it should be pursued through a review of the Solihull Local Plan (SLP), which was adopted in December 2013. Two further factors also pointed to an early review of the plan; namely to deal with the legal challenge to the housing requirement in the SLP and to address the housing shortfall that is occurring in the wider housing market area.

Scope, Issues and Options

12. The Local Plan Review Scope, Issues & Options was published for consultation during December 2015 and January 2016[1]. The document indicated that the Council considered that Challenge H relating to transport remained relevant, and that Policies P7 and P8 would require minor amendments.

13. The document recognised that to meet objectively assessed needs and potentially contribute to the wider housing shortfall area then the growth options needed to look beyond those adopted in the 2013 Local Plan. The 7 Growth Options included main urban centres (public transport hubs), and along high frequency public transport corridors, as well as limited to significant expansion of the urban edge and existing villages.

14. The Interim Sustainability Appraisal published at the SIO stage analysed the 2013 policies against the 21 topics in the SA Framework.[2]

15. The SA commented that minor amendments were anticipated to the adopted policy on accessibility (Policy P7) and transport demand and congestion (Policy P8) to reflect the growth areas, in particular UKC Hub/HS2 area, and housing sites under consideration. Although new housing would open up the opportunities for greater accessibility to jobs, it could also increase the dependence on the private car if sustainable transport initiatives were not in place from the beginning. The Interim SA also referred to the mitigation options in the upcoming Solihull Connected Transport Strategy, such as SPRINT and Metro.

16. The recommendations for future amendments to Policy P8 from the SA included: requiring developments to 'promote' transport efficiency and highway safety; consider work place charging across UK Central; require developments to be prioritise walking and cycling over the private car; promote reduced parking tariffs for LEVs.

17. Consultation representations[3] from the Integrated Transport Authority highlighted the need to take into account the forthcoming Solihull Connected Transport Strategy and the updating of the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan, Movement for Growth. Highways England sought references to Junction 6 improvements of M42, motorway service area, impacts of Blythe Valley Park development on Jn 4 of M42, potential extensions to the Metro and Sprint Bus network amongst other public transport improvements.

18. In the Council's response to the representations, the Council noted the comments and stated that the review of the Local Plan will seek to ensure sustainable transport options are promoted, and full regard would be made to the strategic and policy direction of Solihull Connected. For the rural areas it recognised that consideration needs to be given as to how best to serve the area by public transport.

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[1] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/Planning/LPR/LPR_Scope_Issues_and_Options_Consultation_Full.pdf

[2] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/Planning/LPR/Sustainability_Appraisal_Scope_%20Issues_%20Options.pdf

[3] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/Planning/LPR/Scope_Issues_and_Options_Summary_of_Represenations_and_Responses.pdf

Draft Local Plan Review (2016)

19. The Draft Local Plan Review document was published for consultation from December 2016 to February 2017.[4] It sought views on a local plan review for the period 2018-2033 and included revised Policies P1-P21 from the adopted Local Plan, a housing requirement figure of 15,765 homes, including a contribution of 2,000 dwellings to the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area shortfall. The spatial strategy provided for 20 new allocations, including 14 into the Green Belt.

20. No single option of the seven put forward at SIO stage was considered sufficient to meet objectively assessed housing and growth needs, therefore the proposed sites reflected a combination of different options, with accessibility and range of services being a key consideration throughout.

21. Amendments were made to Policies P7 and P8 to bring them up-to-date and to take into account the Council's new local Transport Strategy, Solihull Connected. A new sub-policy P8A was introduced to support proposals for the delivery of METRO and SPRINT.

Draft Local Plan - Sustainability Appraisal

22. An Interim Sustainability Appraisal was carried out on the Draft Local Plan's strategy, policies and Call for Sites/site allocations.

23. Sites and policies were appraised against 19 Sustainability Appraisal objectives. 12 reasonable alternative strategies for housing growth and distribution were also appraised using the Sustainability Appraisal framework.

24. The SA considered draft Policy P7 to have a range of minor beneficial effects, and the rest identified as neutral effects, since the accessibility will be a local scale for individual sites. The SA stated that there may be some uncertainty in lowering greenhouse gas emissions, since outcomes were dependent on local circumstances.

25. For draft Policy P8, the SA stated that whilst it could result in three potential moderate positive outcomes; reducing the need to travel (SA3), greenhouse gases (SA5) and health inequalities (SA17), it should be recognised that there may be tension in achieving these aims. This is due to the potential tension between measures that improved transport efficiency and safety, in contrast with the need to promote and encourage sustainable modes.

26. New draft policy P8A was considered to have mainly neutral effects, with access to jobs (SA2), accessibility (SA19) and reducing greenhouse gases (SA5) resulting in moderately positive effects. The SA cautioned that there exists some uncertainty about the influence the policy could have on travel behaviours, and so greenhouse gas emissions may be lower or higher than 'moderate'. It is recommended to monitor travel patterns and emissions from transport as an indicator to determine the extent of effects.

Draft Local Plan Review - Representations to Consultation

27. The Summary of Representations to the Draft Local Plan were reported to Cabinet Members on 18th July 2017.[5] There were 1,750 respondents to the consultation, comprising over 6,300 representations. The consultation did not have a specific question for each policy, but responses were under the theme 'Improving Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel'.

28. In terms of representations on Policy P7, there were concerns that the accessibility criteria were unviable, and also too focused on bus routes. Conversely, it was expressed that policies needed

[4] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/InfoandIntelligence/Solihull-Local-Plan-Review.pdf
[5] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/Planning/LPR/DLP_-_Summary_of_Representations.pdf

to be stronger on sustainable transport, and should make provision for walking and cycling infrastructure, and denote cycling routes.

29. There was general support for Policy P8. In addition, it was considered there should be reference to freight, and should include more detail on parking policy, park and ride opportunities, key route networks, smart technology, bypass improvement lines and sustainable transport modes.

30. For Policy P8A there was support for extension of SPRINT services, but also calls for more detail on the proposals in the Plan and alternative Metro and SPRINT routes to be considered, such as Metro extension to Solihull Town Centre.

31. With regard to site allocations, almost all sites attracted concerns around traffic congestion, on-street parking issues, in particular close to schools and railway stations, air quality concerns and the need to alleviate existing transport issues.

Supplementary Consultation to the Draft Local Plan Review

32. A Supplementary Consultation was published in January 2019[6], which related specifically to proposed housing allocations and not policies. The Draft Local Plan had consulted on red line sites in 2016 and indicated estimated capacities based on the SHELAA (2016). Following further more detailed work on site constraints and deliverability issues, concept masterplans were drawn up for the proposed housing allocations and published in a separate document as part of the consultation.[7]

33. Promoting sustainable transport and prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists were key principles within the concept masterplans. As with the 2016 consultation, there were widespread concerns about traffic congestion, parking, highway safety and air quality, and communities sought reassurance that the proposed allocations would be supported by adequate infrastructure and would not exacerbate existing issues.

[6] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/Planning/LPR/Solihull-Local-Plan-Review-Draft-Concept-Materplans.pdf
[7] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/Planning/LPR/Solihull-Local-Plan-Review-Draft-Concept-Materplans.pdf

4. Strategic & Policy Context

34. Policy regarding and influencing transport and travel in Solihull is set by Government through Department for Transport and other aligned bodies, through the West Midlands Combined Authority, by stakeholders such as the National Exhibition Centre and by Solihull Council itself.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

35. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these policies should be applied. Since the consultation on the Draft Local Plan Review (December 2016 – February 2017) the National Planning Policy Framework was updated in July 2018 and then again to take into account the new standard methodology in February 2019.

36. Chapter 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework – Promoting Sustainable Transport – identifies the transport issues that should be considered from the earliest stages of plan making and development proposals. In accordance with this, the Local Plan has tried to place large developments in areas that are already well served by public transport and cycling and walking networks or have the potential to meet this requirement once complete. Providing a choice of mode of travel and reducing the need to travel by car will help to reduce the impact of the increase in car traffic generated by the new developments.

Planning Practice Guidance

37. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out how the borough should provide transport provision in future and how new developments need to mitigate the impact their development has on the environment and highway network. The National Planning Practice Guidance provides advice on how to include strategic transport needs when plan making or considering development proposals.

38. The Planning Practice Guidance sets out the requirements for a transport evidence base that sits in the wider Local Plan decision-making framework. This Topic Paper contains that transport evidence base for the 2021 Solihull Council Local Plan and follows the recommendations that are contained in the Planning Practice Guidance.

National Transport Strategic Context

39. Figures produced by the Office of National Statistics[8] indicate that during 2019 the economy of the United Kingdom, measured as the gross domestic product, grew by 1.4%, which was marginally higher that the 1.3% rate during 2018 but below that experienced across the whole European Union (1.5%) and below the global growth rate of 2.6%. Towards the end of 2019, manufacturing in the United Kingdom contracted for the third quarter in a row and the service sector slowed around the time of the election. The expectation was that the economy would continue to experience little or no growth during 2020 particularly as the consensus was that the impact of the Country leaving the European Union would be to harm the economy.

40. Fast forward to spring 2020 and it is clear that the future has changed. The short-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are immediately visible on the economy and society but the pandemic will have long-term impacts that will affect how people travel and how they live their lives. The following is a summary of the main national and international issues affecting the borough and how we expect these issues to affect our transport strategy in Solihull.

[8] https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp

41. To contain the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 there was an enforced restriction on movement for almost a quarter of 2020, leading to dramatic reductions in economic performance, traffic numbers, and passenger transport use and air pollution. The economy can be expected to take time to recover – having impacts on transport use, with the longer term legacy still emerging. For example, deliveries of food from supermarkets have risen significantly, many people are working from home for the first time and enjoying it and in future people may avoid events that attract large crowds reducing leisure travel. There is already an impact on how people can fly and this may continue for a period depressing the numbers using Birmingham Airport and reducing road traffic in the surrounding areas.

42. In addition to COVID-19, the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union was already creating some uncertainty in the markets around the United Kingdom economy that could reasonably have influenced travel patterns and the level of demand for national and international travel. In light of COVID-19, this appears less relevant; however, it may still influence how the United Kingdom is able to recover from COVID-19.

43. The Government's transport strategy includes investment in infrastructure and measures to reduce carbon use by transport. The largest piece of new transport infrastructure investment is High Speed Two, the new high-speed railway line for the United Kingdom. The line will provide much needed extra rail capacity and will deliver a lower journey time between the West Midlands and Greater London. Parliament approved plans for the first section in 2017, with a "notice to proceed" issued on 15th April 2020[9], marking formal approval for construction works to begin.

44. When High Speed Two opens, there will be a station on the line adjacent to Birmingham International, which will place Solihull at the focal point of the High Speed rail network. High Speed Two will have impacts on the economy of Solihull Borough and the opening of the new Birmingham Interchange station will bring new traffic onto the roads of Solihull Borough.

45. The United Kingdom has committed to cutting its carbon output to net zero but its own Committee on Climate Change[10] has warned that its current measures are far from adequate to meet its legal goal. The Covid-19 pandemic has given an indication of the scale of the challenge of meeting our climate change commitments. The reduction in greenhouse gas emissions due to the COVID-19 lockdowns is equivalent to around 5.5 per cent of the total global output, but scientists say a sustained 7.6 per cent reduction each year will be required to keep global warming below the crucial 1.5 degrees C, as accorded in the Paris Agreement.

Regional and Local Transport Strategic Context

46. **Solihull Connected** is our overarching transport strategy that ensures major transport enables and manages economic growth in the Borough and brings about increased levels of cycling, public transport use and walking in the borough. To deliver this we are developing a series of strategies that sit below Solihull Connected and we will be working with partners to implement their own access strategies, business plans or master plans where these will have a material impact on travel and transport in the borough. As Solihull forms part of the West Midlands Combined Authority, the Combined Authority holds responsibility for several of these where it is the statutory authority rather than Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council. E.g. Public transport.

47. The West Midlands Combined Authority, as the statutory Local Transport Authority, has a duty to prepare and keep under review a Local Transport Plan (Transport Act 2000, as modified by the Local Transport Act 2008). The Local Transport Plan covering Solihull is the **Movement for**

[9] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-provides-construction-sector-certainty-by-confirming-notice-to-proceed-on-high-speed-2

[10] https://www.theccc.org.uk/

Growth[11]. The Plan sets out a vision for travel and transport across the West Midlands; it analyses travel problems and opportunities, and then sets clear objectives and policies, which will tackle these issues. The Plan also includes a programme of transport interventions that will help to achieve these.

48. Solihull Council's first Clean Air Strategy (**Solihull Clean Air Strategy 2019 – 2024**[12]) was launched during February 2019. The Strategy is clear that road traffic emissions are a major source of local air pollutants in Solihull. Locations with high traffic volumes and congestion are subject to the greatest amount of air pollution. As a consequence, those who live near these roads are at increased risk of ill health and early death. Congestion results in higher pollutant emissions, as emissions from vehicles are high when travelling at intermittent speeds.

49. Birmingham Airport is a major economic asset, employer and trip attractor in the borough. Recognising that an air transport journey begins and ends with surface access, the Airport maintains a **Birmingham Airport Surface Access Strategy**[13]. This strategy reviews current surface access arrangements, recent trends on modal shares and sets new challenging modal share targets for the future. Solihull Council needs to work with the Airport Company and its partners to develop excellent surface access for the Airport and to make journeys to and from Birmingham Airport part of a seamless travel experience.

Arriving at Birmingham Airport

50. The bus network in Solihull continues to be of utmost importance in providing accessibility to health, employment, leisure, education, retail and tourism particularly for areas of the borough

[11] https://www.tfwm.org.uk/strategy/movement-for-growth/
[12] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Pests-pollution-food-hygiene/Air-quality-monitoring-in-Solihull
[13] https://www.birminghamairport.co.uk/about-us/planning-and-development/airport-strategy/surface-access-strategy-2018-2023/

with social deprivation and for people living in the borough on lower incomes. However overall use of the bus network has fallen in recent years and a number of gaps have arisen in bus infrastructure and bus services. The challenge is to continue to make the bus network relevant for people living in the borough by providing bus services that suit their lifestyles and travel needs.

51. Launched in 2015 the **West Midlands Bus Alliance**[14] objective is to provide a bus network that enables excellent connectivity and supports the development of the West Midlands economy, with the relevant highways authorities, such as Solihull Council, supporting this by providing a road network that enables fast, punctual bus journeys to operate. Behind the Bus Alliance are a number of strategic documents that seek to improve the quality of the bus network in terms of vehicles, network performance, punctuality and visibility.

52. The **West Midlands Strategic Vision for Bus**[15] is to create a world class integrated, reliable, zero emission transport system providing inclusive travel for all across the West Midlands. The bus network will have excellent customer service and simple payment and ticketing options. Customers will be able to make easy and safe door-to-door journeys, benefiting from new innovative transport solutions that meet the needs of a modern and diverse 21st Century economy, reducing the reliance on private single occupancy car journeys.

Bus access to Birmingham Airport is limited to two routes (x1 and x12) and there are no bus routes to Resorts World

53. Solihull Council also produced a Supplementary Planning Document covering **Vehicle Parking Standards and Green Travel Plans**[16] in 2006. The Vehicle Parking Standard covers residential developments, town centre developments, employment land and accessible parking requirements. There is a separate standard covering the Airport and National Exhibition Centre. Car parking standards can assist in reducing car ownership encouraging greater use of sustainable travel modes and can influence the efficient use of land along with the density of developments.

[14] https://www.tfwm.org.uk/operations/bus-alliance/
[15] https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/38969/final-strategic-vision-for-bus.pdf
[16] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Planning/appealsenforcement/planmaking/ldf/OtherPlanningPolicyDocuments

54. To support our transport strategy, we are developing a **Cycling and Walking Strategy** for the borough. Cycling and walking are recognised as important components to reduce congestion, improve air quality and support better physical and mental health. Cycling and walking have the real potential to enhance the vibrancy and special character of our borough.

55. The Cycling and Walking Strategy presents the Council's overall approach to active travel in the borough. The strategy will set out our vision for how we will deliver cycling and walking infrastructure, how we will improve the capability and confidence of our residents to cycle and walk more often and how we will ensure new developments cater for cycling and walking.

56. As part of the strategy, we will also be producing a **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**, which are a new Government approach to identify cycling and walking improvements required at a local level. The Solihull Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan will provide a long-term approach to development of a cycling and walking network within the borough, the aim of which is to improve cycling and walking infrastructure across the borough over the next 10 years.

57. Efficient deliveries & distribution are an important issue to businesses and communities in the West Midlands and for this reason the authorities have produced the **West Midlands Freight Strategy**[17]. The objectives of the West Midlands Freight Strategy are:

- Improved access to the West Midlands by road and rail
- New ways of managing deliveries which provide businesses and residents with high quality access to goods and services
- A range of techniques to reduce emissions, noise, and congestion caused by goods vehicles
- Support for the introduction of very low emissions or zero emissions delivery systems
- Commitment to deliver these improvements through a partnership with businesses and government.

58. Challenges to manage in future will include the need for the freight sector to reduce its carbon footprint and take serious steps to switch to alternative fuels. In addition, there needs to be the capacity to expand to accommodate additional freight flows especially on the rail lines in the area but also the motorways in the West Midlands are at capacity at certain times of day. Challenges that are specific to the borough include:

- Improving freight vehicle road safety with vulnerable road users
- Maintaining and improving current levels of air quality
- Management of deliveries to businesses, homes and town centres
- Providing a road network that is reliable and resilient
- Safe and secure overnight parking for goods vehicles

59. Solihull Council is aware of research into **future mobility trends** and has funding for a trial of future low carbon mobility means in the near future. Solihull Council has been leading research into ultra – low emission vehicles and published an **Electric Vehicle Strategy**[18] in summer 2020. Solihull Council is keen to consider how mobility will develop in future and how the built environment of the borough will need to change to accommodate these trends.

60. **High Speed Two** will be felt in a number of ways in the borough. The line and HS2 Interchange station are due to be operational in the later part of the plan period, and construction works will be taking place throughout the earlier part of plan period towards that opening date. As the first station outside of London, located east of the NEC, it will serve a wide area in the sub-region. A

[17] https://www.tfwm.org.uk/strategy/freight/

[18] http://eservices.solihull.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s74138/SMBC%20Electric%20Vehicle%20Draft%20Strategy%202.pdf

high capacity people mover is planned to connect the Interchange to the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham International station and the Airport. The journey from the Interchange station to the Airport should take approximately six minutes. Multi-modal Facilities for buses, coaches, taxis and kiss-and-ride are to be provided around the station entrance. The High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017[19] provides authorisation for up to 7,500 car parking spaces and alterations to a number of highway junctions on the approach roads to the station.

61. The construction works for the High Speed Two will run across the borough. Preparatory works commenced during 2019 and construction works will run until scheme opening – currently forecast to be 2031. The construction works cover the railway line, the Birmingham Interchange station and access roads to the station. Impacts include changes to bridges, rights of way, roads and junctions along the line of the route. During this time there will be temporary changes to the road layout, short term traffic signals and other transitory traffic arrangements such as diversions to rights of way.

62. For people living in the borough the very long term impact of High Speed Two will be one of change to the layout of roads, public rights of way and services along with sound and visual impacts. However, there are likely to be some improvements to junctions and improved accessibility, locally, regionally and nationally, as a result of new transport links both on the High Speed Two line and within the borough itself.

63. The National Exhibition Centre and its sister venue, the Genting Arena, form the United Kingdom's most successful live events facility. Each year they host over 600 shows, and more than 6 million visitors visit the site, which now includes Resorts World leisure and entertainment attraction. The **National Exhibition Centre Masterplan[20]** identifies 75 hectares of land for redevelopment with a new theatre district, residential and commercial opportunities under the banner "NEC city". Targets include 10,000 jobs and delivering up to 2,500 new homes.

64. The transport proposals within the National Exhibition Centre Masterplan include a rapid transit loop that will run through the site. A service is to operate on the loop providing for movement between destinations within "NEC city" and integrating the area with bus and rail services at Birmingham International. The rapid transit loop will also be shared by Metro and Sprint services to maximise integration between modes and to maximise accessibility. Opportunities to utilise autonomous vehicles to maximise connectivity within the loop are to be welcomed.

65. Solihull Council is an active member of the West Midlands Rail Executive, the devolved body that manages the West Midlands Trains franchise jointly with the Department for Transport. The West Midlands Rail Executive also sets rail transport policy for the region and has produced the **West Midlands Rail Executive Rail Investment Strategy[21]**. The Strategy has seven components that when combined set out ambitious plans to expand the rail services and stations in the West Midlands enabling more frequent services to be operated across the West Midlands.

66. The aim of the **Road Safety Strategy for Solihull 2017 – 2030[22]** is to make the borough a safer place to walk, cycle and drive. However, many of the quick wins have now been achieved and it is becoming more difficult to find patterns in collisions that can be addressed through engineering measures. Our future challenges will be:

[19] https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2013-14/highspeedraillondonwestmidlands.html
[20] https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/news/article/324/ambitious_plans_unveiled_for_nec_campus
[21] http://www.westmidlandsrail.com/strategy/
[22] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/road-safety-strategy

- Reducing the number of collisions due to the 'Fatal four': (excess speed; use of mobile phones electronic devices; failure to wear a seatbelt and driving under the influence of drink or drugs.)
- Reducing the number of collisions involving child pedestrians aged between 10 and 15.
- Reducing the number of collisions involving male cyclists aged between 30 and 60.
- Reducing the number of collisions involving young male motorcyclists aged between 16 and 29.
- Reducing the number of collisions involving young male drivers aged between 17 and 29.

67. There is a general duty placed on local authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport to and from school as required by the Education and Inspections Act and to produce a **Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy[23],** which links into a variety of work programmes to improve children's health and well-being, especially with regard to childhood obesity. By working with Children's Services through the Home to School Travel Assistance Policy, the Strategy supports an integrated approach to addressing common issues in a consistent way.

68. The **Solihull Highway Network Management Plan 2020 – 2026[24]** sets out the Council's approach to managing the Highway to enable people to travel safely and to facilitate the reliable movement of traffic on the network. This will come through:

- Collaborative partnership working to enable delivery of managed growth projects.
- Making green travel choices a viable and attractive alternative.
- Through the effective co-ordination and direction of highway works.
- Innovation to improve safety, reduce congestion and connect people.
- A 40% reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured on the roads of the borough by 2030.
- Promotion of sustainable transport modes.

69. Finally, the **Midland Metro Alliance[25]** is planning to extend the West Midlands Metro east to serve Chelmsley Wood and terminate at the High Speed Two Birmingham Interchange station by 2028. This will create passenger access by West Midlands Metro to the Airport, National Exhibition Centre and Genting Arena when the line opens for passenger service, encouraging more of the general public to choose green transport options for their day-to-day travel. When the route is open, it will also increase employment opportunities for the residents of Chelmsley Wood by reducing journey times between this area and other areas in the West Midlands.

[23] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/About-the-Council/Strategies-policies/transporttraffic
[24] https://www.solihull.gov.uk/About-the-Council/Strategies-policies/transporttraffic
[25] https://westmidlandsmetro.com/about/expansion-programme/

There are eleven railway stations in the borough

5. Summary of Evidence

70. The National Planning Policy Framework requires us to develop policies based on up-to-date evidence. Our evidence base comprises documents that have helped inform past and current stages of our Local Plan policy development.

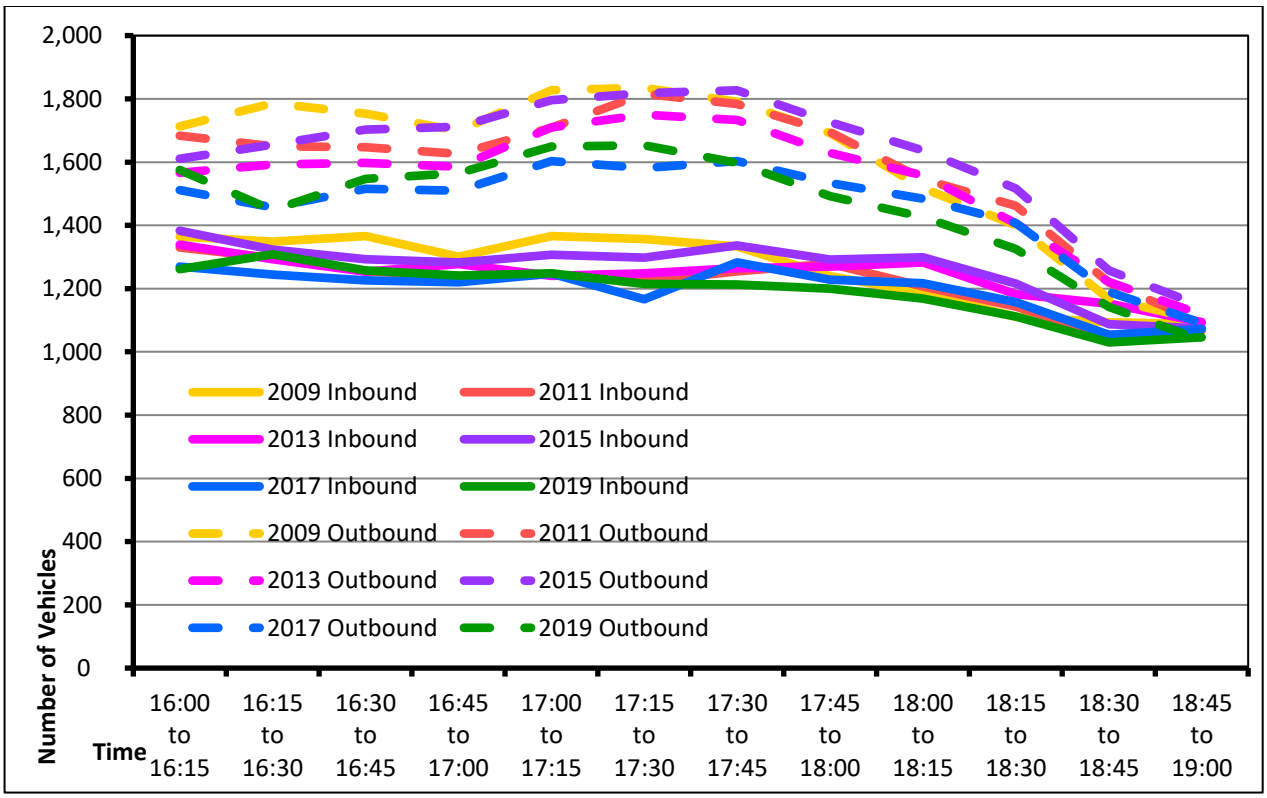
71. The following organisations and documentation record the scope and patronage of networks that we have called on in producing our Local Plan and continuing to give strategic direction to travel and transport within Solihull Borough.

Wider Evidence Base

72. When **Solihull Connected** was prepared during 2016, changes were considered at the time in both population and employment trends, as well as average distance travelled to work, recognising the differences that exist across the borough. Solihull Connected was informed by data from the 2011 Census relating to households and travel to work information; the Birmingham Mobility Action Plan; the UK Central Masterplan; the Strategic Economic Plan for the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership; the United Kingdom index of multiple deprivation; and a number of transport related surveys and studies carried out by either the Council or Transport for West Midlands (or their predecessor, Centro).

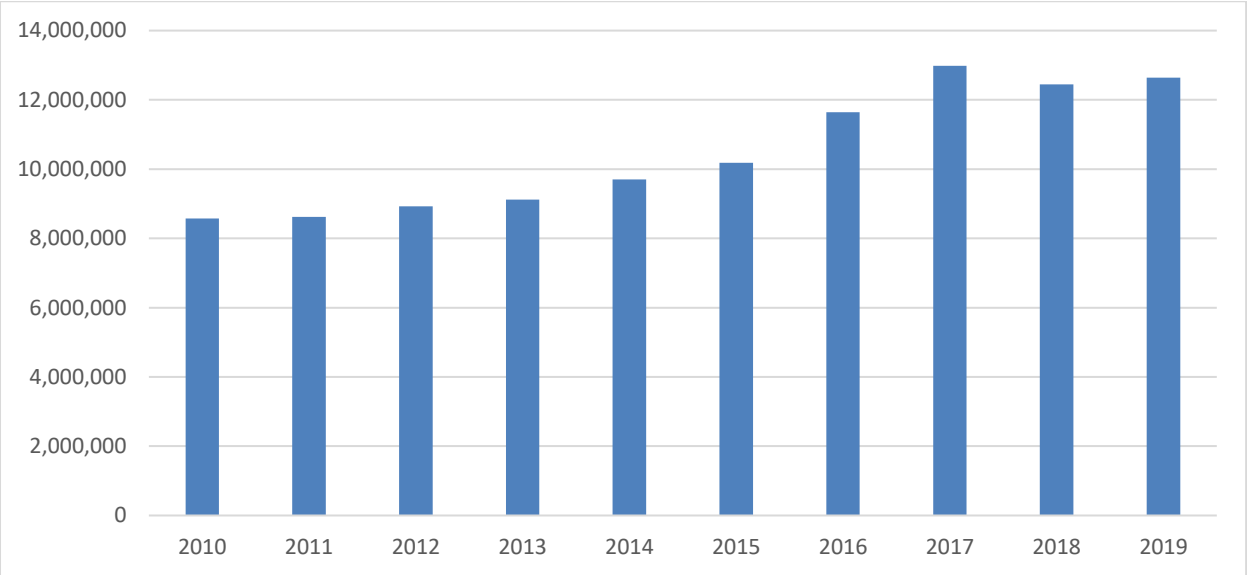
73. Transport for West Midlands took a similar approach with **Movement for Growth**. This takes data from across the seven metropolitan authorities, level and provides a deeper analysis as Transport for West Midlands were able to draw on research from a wider number of sources. For example, Transport for West Midlands carry out cordon surveys at eight major centres across the West Midlands over a two-year cycle. The most recent cordon for Solihull was carried out over two days during September 2019.

74. The data for the September 2019 cordon allows us to see what travel patterns are like in central Solihull and we can also compare with surveys from previous years. For example, the chart below shows the number of vehicles entering and leaving Solihull from 4pm to 7pm suggesting an overall fall in traffic entering and leaving central Solihull during this time of day.



75. Our **Clean Air Strategy 2019 – 2024** provides information on the cleanliness of the air in the borough and the impact this is having on our health. Since July 2017, diffusion tubes have been used across a number of sites to measure Nitrogen Dioxide levels within the borough. This has provided robust baseline data from which to determine areas of the borough where more targeted action may be needed to reduce levels of pollution. The strategy also draws on data from the Department of Health and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which produced its own Clean Air Strategy during 2019.

76. The Birmingham **Airport Surface Access Strategy** gives an indication of the number of flights taken each year from Birmingham Airport. These are set out below. As the Airport is associated with summer holiday destinations this demand is not spread evenly across the year. There are peaks associated with the summer months. As all flights involve travel to and from the Airport this growing level of demand for air travel was creating increased use of the railway line to the Airport and the roads surrounding the Airport. Prior to COVID-19 the Airport's strategy projected growth to increase to 18 million passenger annual flights by 2033.



77. However, the lockdown imposed by the United Kingdom Government to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic put an end to flights for the Spring of 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic and an associated global economic recession could have other lasting impacts on demand for air travel and the Airport's forecasts of the number of flights in future years may need to be reconsidered.

78. The **bus network** in the Borough is made up of 59 bus services operated by seven bus companies. Additional Park & Ride services operate to the Airport both from within and beyond its site and there is also a Park & Ride service for the National Exhibition Centre tailored to meet its own needs. As might be expected, the bus network is far denser in the areas of the borough with higher population density. The network tapers off during the evening and is more restricted on Sundays. There are also long distance coach services operated from Birmingham Airport by National Express. Figures for use of the bus network in Solihull Borough is not available, although the Department for Transport produces annual figures on bus use for the West Midlands as a whole.[26]

79. As with air travel the lockdown imposed by the Government to fight COVID-19 reduced use of the bus network and revenues similarly fell. To maintain a network of sorts particularly for essential travel the Department for Transport made emergency funding available for the continuation of bus services during the period of the lockdown.

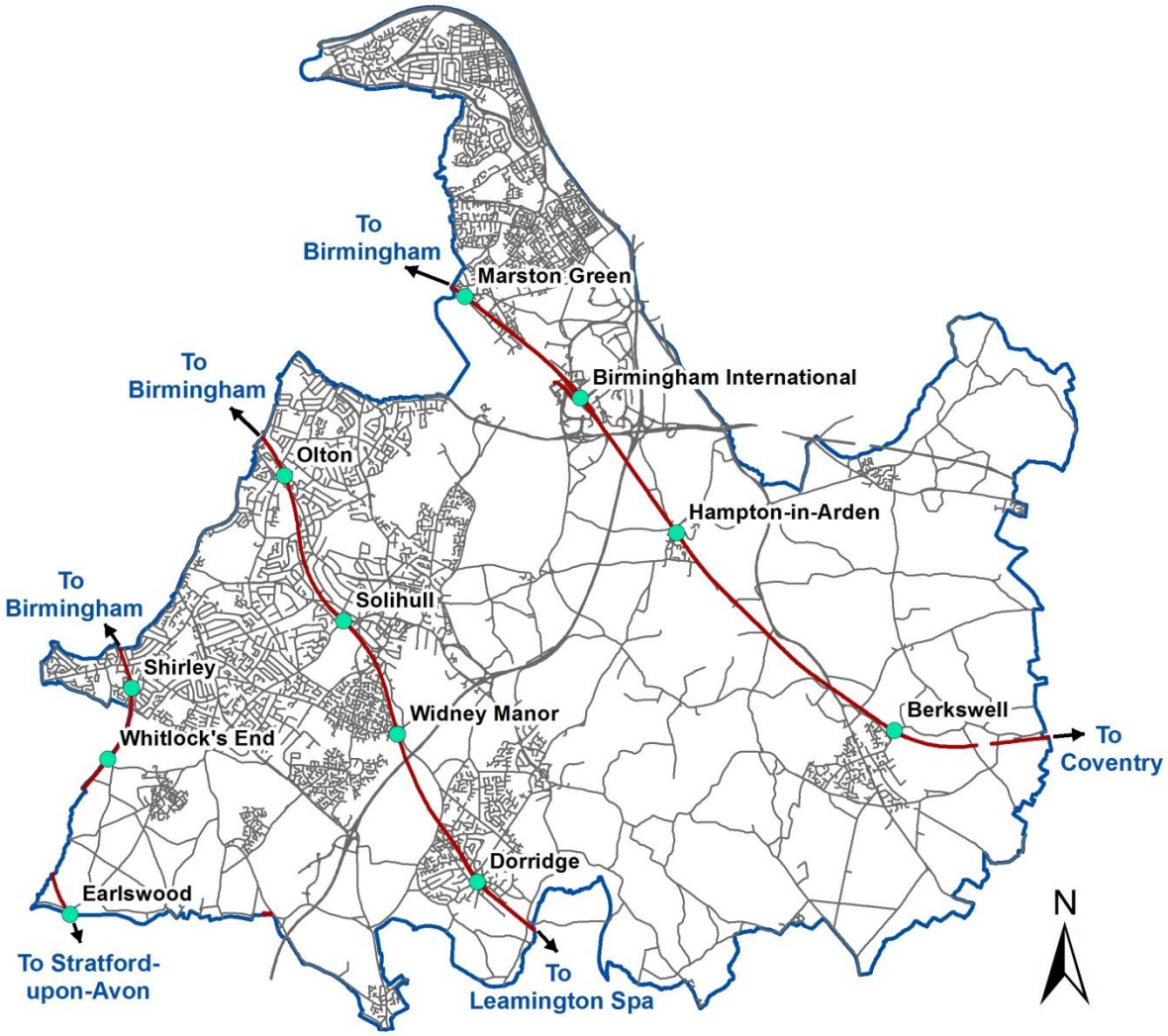
[26] https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/bus01-local-bus-passenger-journeys

80. **Car parking** is provided across the Solihull Borough both by the Council and independent providers, either as stand-alone car parks or as part of larger retail parks – e.g. Chelmsley Wood shopping centre operates a large multi-storey car park with circa 750 spaces. Supermarkets also provide significant car parks that can link with retail areas – such as the ASDA car park in Chelmsley Wood. Much of the car parking supports retail centres and is well used and valued. There are over 8,600 car parking spaces in and around the central area of Solihull.

81. Further significant parking is provided at both Birmingham Airport and the National Exhibition Centre. N.B. A lot of the airport parking is provided off site in neighbouring authorities.

82. The **West Midlands Freight Strategy** provides evidence on the number of people employed by the sector and its value to the economy (pre COVID-19) along with evidence on the level of emissions from freight vehicles although much of the data is presented at a national level and no attempt is made to make this information relevant to Solihull Borough or the West Midlands.

83. The **rail network** in the Borough provided by five rail franchises operating from eleven rail stations. A number of long distance rail services serve the borough particularly from Birmingham International. The network tapers off during the evening and is more restricted on Sundays. The map below sets out the rail network in the Borough.



84. Annual estimates of rail travel can be derived from the number of entries, exits and interchanges at railway stations. Estimates of this are produced by the Office of Rail & Road[27].The statistics on usage are estimates based on data on ticket sales. This is then

[27] https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/statistics/usage/estimates-of-station-usage/

supplemented with other data and adjusted to more appropriately represent passenger movements across the national rail network. The table below shows growth in rail use from the stations in the borough.

	2018/2019 Annual usage	Annual rate of growth	Bus links	Car park size	Cycle park size	Inclusive access
Berkswell	355,928	10.07%	Yes	93	8	No
Birmingham International	6,975,002	4.66%	Yes	2,124	24	Yes
Dorridge	803,190	11.67%	Yes	204	81	Yes
Earlswood	36,372	2.78%	No	13	Nil	No
Hampton in Arden	196,678	13.89%	Yes	134	14	No
Marston Green	876,234	14.08%	Yes	140	15	Yes
Olton	555,852	14.70%	Yes	104	30	Yes
Shirley	406,290	11.08%	Yes	63	18	Yes
Solihull	2,039,998	7.16%	Yes	454	60	Yes
Whitlocks End	161,494	3.53%	Yes	324	20	No
Widney Manor	455,546	18.16%	Yes	303	24	No
Borough total	12,862,584	7.38%	-	3,956	294	-

85. The levels of rail use from April 2019 to March 2020 may not be heavily affected by the lockdown imposed by the Government to fight COVID-19. However, the reduced usage of the rail networks will be felt in the 2020/2021 figures, which will not be available until December 2021. However, it is safe to say that rail use in the 2020/2021 will not be 12.9million passenger journeys. To maintain a network, the rail franchises have been replaced by Emergency Measures Agreements management contracts for a period of six months with revenue and cost risks taken on by the Department for Transport but all performance regimes covering service quality and future investment planned for the rail network in the West Midlands no longer apply. It is not known how the rail network will be managed beyond September 2020.

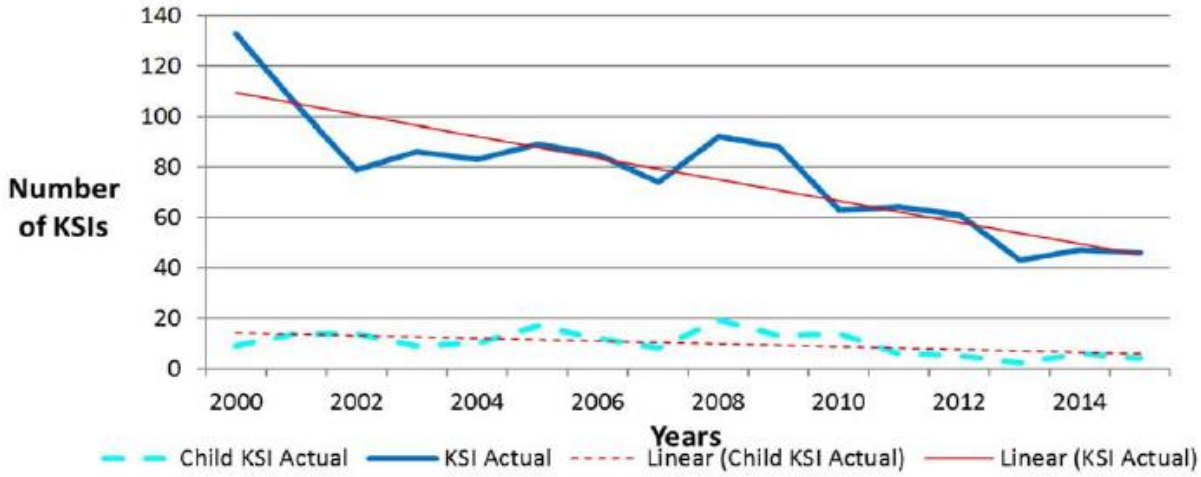
86. The **Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan** contains evidence on the extent and quality of the cycle network in the borough and the numbers of people travelling by bike in the borough. Adopting this Infrastructure Plan is part of our approach to encouraging a shift in future to transport use that is more sustainable. As with our other strategies the Infrastructure Plan also highlights the infrastructure requirements needed for inclusion in infrastructure spending plans.

87. Our **Electric Vehicle Strategy** uses data produced by the Office for Low Emission Vehicles that records the number of electric vehicle registered to each local authority area[28]. Solihull has high potential for electric vehicle adoption, with a significant proportion of residents with above average earnings and many properties having off-street parking provision, which is suited to electric vehicle charging. This potential is reflected in the relatively high levels of electric vehicle uptake across the borough to date. At the end of the March 2020 there were 2,664 ultra-low emission vehicles registered to addresses in Solihull, the 11th highest local authority area in the United Kingdom. This compares with around 132,000 cars registered in the borough overall. The data is broken down by Local Authority area based on the location of the registered keeper so does not necessarily reflect where the vehicle is kept.

88. Our **Road Safety Strategy** for 2017 to 2030 captures the reductions in road traffic collisions that has been achieved already in Solihull with detailed evidence of the impact on different groups of people (e.g. children) and road user types (e.g. motorbike riders) along with the areas where the most road traffic collisions take place (not surprisingly, the areas with the highest traffic). The

[28] https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/all-vehicles-veh01

chart below sets out the number of people that have been killed or seriously injured on the roads of Solihull Borough during the period from 2000 to 2015.



Specific Evidence Base

Accessibility Study

89. Accessibility analysis was undertaken in 2016 to identify areas across the borough where access on foot to local services (e.g. primary schools, doctor's surgeries and fresh food shops) and public transport nodes is considered to be low, medium or high, based on current service provision. This analysis was used in the initial stages of Plan development to identify the broad locations in which housing sites could be accommodated in a manner that reduces the need to travel, particularly by private vehicle. The criteria were tested on subsequent Call for Sites submissions, first in 2016, then 2018 and finally in 2020.

PRISM

90. To fully understand the impacts of the new housing, employment and retail sites proposed in the Solihull Local Plan, Mott MacDonald was commissioned to update, calibrate and validate a base multi-modal transport model of the Solihull area using PRISM 5.2. At the time, PRISM 5.2 was the strategic transport model for the whole of the West Midlands.

91. PRISM models an average hour within the weekday peak periods of travel demand (i.e. 0700 to 0930 and 1530 to 1900). The calibrated and validated base model has then been used to forecast transport network performance in 2026 and 2036, compared to a baseline in 2016, for scenarios both with and without travel demand associated with the Local Plan preferred site allocations. Having identified the resultant impact associated with Local Plan growth, the variable demand element of the model has been used to identify a range of multi-modal interventions capable of mitigating those impacts.

92. The above approach provides a strategic view on the potential impacts of the Local Plan Review sites coming forward, and identifies mitigation requirements accordingly. However, PRISM is very much a strategic tool, and the highway network included in the model is of a scale that it is too coarse to enable detailed consideration of the more localised impacts of Local Plan sites on the borough's highway network. The work undertaken in PRISM has therefore been complemented by a series of additional studies, as outlined below.

Cluster Sites Study

93. Solihull Council has been aware that the proposed housing sites in the Draft Local Plan are not unique, isolated plots and instead are a series of closely located clusters of development sites.

The traffic generated from these new housing sites is likely to overlap on the highway network and coalesce at certain places such as schools, health centres and retail centres. To understand this more Mott MacDonald was commissioned to undertake a Traffic Impact Assessment of two clusters of development sites; Cluster 1 covering the Bentley Heath, Dorridge and Knowle area and Cluster 2 covering the Dickens Heath and Shirley area. The objective of the study was to determine the likely impact of the sites' associated development traffic on the surrounding highway network. The Traffic Impact Assessment study does not seek to provide a detailed highways modelling analysis for each site, nor to identify detailed mitigation measures – it is intended as a piece of evidence to understand potential impacts and broadly identify applicable mitigation measures, to inform considerations regarding individual and cumulative site viability.

94. To undertake the study, traffic data was collected at a number of junctions around each cluster to establish a baseline for existing and future traffic flow scenarios. The traffic generation for each site was forecast using TRICS and was then distributed and assigned to the highway network based on Census data information. TRICS (Trip Rate Information Computer System) is a database of trip rates for residential, retail and other developments used for transport planning purposes, specifically to quantify the number of new car and other vehicle trips that are generated by new developments.

95. The impact of each site, individually and cumulatively for each cluster, was undertaken based on applying Design Manual for Roads & Bridges road link capacities (factored appropriately to represent capacity levels at specific junctions) and then considering the proportional impact upon highway capacity associated with Local Plan site traffic. This impact was then considered against the existing and forecast congestion levels across the network to identify junctions that are likely to require mitigation.

96. Where junctions were identified to require mitigation, a potential improvement option has been identified. The Traffic Impact Assessment does not seek to replicate the level or type of assessment that would be required as and when a planning application may come forward in relation to Local Plan preferred site allocations, or to prescriptively define specific mitigation measures associated with each. It is likely that network conditions will change over the 15 year lifespan of the Local Plan, therefore due consideration would need to be given by prospective applicants to the impacts of any sites being promoted, with mitigation measures considered appropriate at the time of application put forward for consideration by the Council's Planning Committee.

Balsall Common, Dickens Heath and Knowle Parking Study

97. Mott MacDonald was commissioned by SMBC to undertake a car parking study across the three centres of Balsall Common, Dickens Heath and Knowle. In a similar vein to the traffic impact assessment, the intent of the study was to understand the individual and cumulative impacts of Local Plan site proposals on local centre parking supply, and to identify any need for additional mitigation measures, to inform considerations regarding site viability. The Study also followed requests for such an assessment that were received as part of consultation on the 2016 Draft Local Plan.

98. The parking study considers both on-street and off-street parking supply and capacity, relative to forecast future demand. In Balsall Common and Dickens Heath, the biggest impact from the Draft Local Plan allocations is at the respective rail station carparks and extensions to these are recommended. Within the village centres, the Study concludes that by 2036 all three will be near capacity at peak hours, however, the Draft Local Plan is only a slight increase over and above background growth. Mitigation is recommended in the form of measures to better

manage and enforce parking provision, including, in some locations, the installation of variable message signs to direct potential users to locations in which parking is available.

Knowle Transport Study

99. Building upon the Cluster Sites 'Traffic Impact Assessment', the Knowle Transport Study was commissioned to further understand the scale of impact of Local Plan site proposals in and around Knowle, and to identify an appropriate approach to mitigation / accommodating additional demand for travel. As is the case for the Traffic Impact Assessment and the Parking Study work, the main intent of the Transport Study was to iteratively test development options to inform considerations regarding individual and cumulative site viability.

100. The Transport Study considers impacts on a number of junctions in and around Knowle, with a particular focus in Knowle High Street and Station Road. The Study promotes an approach that seeks to minimise the need to travel from Local Plan sites into the village by car, through a series of interventions aimed at providing improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, and through enhanced public realm along the High Street.

101. Active travel links to Dorridge Railway Station are also proposed, so as to minimise the need to travel by car for journeys farther afield, with modest improvements to key junctions considered necessary to mitigate residual highways impacts.

Balsall Common Transport Study

102. Mott MacDonald was appointed to analyse existing traffic movements within Balsall Common, to forecast the impacts of potential Local Plan site proposals (to inform site viability considerations) and to develop an approach to mitigating those impacts.

103. Balsall Common is bisected by the A452 Kenilworth Road, a strategic corridor identified within the national Major Road Network. Initial analysis identified that a significant proportion of traffic within the village during AM and PM periods of peak demand is purely passing through – 84% of all traffic in the AM peak and 71% in the PM peak. As a result, roads within the village centre become congested during peak periods, becoming even more so in 2026 and 2036.

104. The addition of traffic generated in association with Local Plan site proposals will serve to exacerbate congestion and severance issues, potentially loading more traffic into the centre of the village.

105. A balanced package of interventions is therefore proposed, comprising the implementation of a relief road to the east of the village, complemented by a range of pedestrian, cycle and public realm improvements to enable access from new development sites to, from and throughout the village centre. The proposed relief road will provide access to the Barratt's Farm site, as well as catering for a proportion of traffic that would otherwise pass through the centre of the village.

A34 and A452 Corridor Studies

106. Following the need established by the Solihull Connected Delivery Plan, two studies were commissioned, and delivered by Atkins in 2017, that considered the current and forecast future operational performance of the A452 Chester Road corridor through North Solihull, and the A34 Stratford corridor between the M42 and the borough boundary with Birmingham.

107. The A34 and A452 both form part of the national Major Road Network and the regional Key Route Network, and cater for a number of different transport demands and functions, ranging from more strategic through-movements as well as local journeys. The two studies therefore considered the current performance of each corridor, analysed the impacts of future growth in

travel demand (i.e. not just associated with Local Plan growth) and identified a series of potential interventions to manage those demands.

Solihull Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (Draft)

108. Solihull Connected identified the need to develop a borough-wide Cycling and Walking Strategy and associated Infrastructure Plan. The process in developing an infrastructure plan is now well-defined by the Department for Transport through its Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) process.

109. Through application of the DfT's Propensity to Cycle tool, analysis has been undertaken to identify the key corridors where there is currently latent demand for cycling, as well as areas where there is likely to be an increased demand in the future (including as a result of Local Plan site proposals). The culmination of this process is the establishment of a Strategic Cycle Network for Solihull; a network that highlights the need for high quality infrastructure to be implemented in areas that will be the subject of Local Plan growth.

110. In addition, the pedestrian environment has been audited for a number of key locations, as part of 'Core Walking Zones'. The intent of the Core Walking Zone (CWZ) strand of the LCWIP is to identify a range of interventions that reduce potential severance issues and improve public realm to as to make conditions more conducive to walking. Audits were duly conducted of conditions within Balsall Common and Knowle / Dorridge, the recommendations from which have been considered by Mott MacDonald as part of their respective Transport Studies.

West Midlands Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan

111. As a precursor to an LCWIP being developed for Solihull, Transport for West Midlands conducted a similar exercise to identify core cycle routes that were considered to have region-wide significance. Developed throughout 2018/19, the West Midlands LCWIP identified the need for a number of strategic connections across the region, including links between Dickens Heath and Solihull Town Centre, Balsall Common and the UKC Hub area, and Birmingham City Centre and Birmingham Airport.

Future Mobility

112. It should be noted that the Transport Evidence Base developed in association with the Draft Local Plan has not sought to consider, in detail, the effect that future technological advancements and / or concepts such as Mobility as a Service (MaaS) will have on travel behaviour. It is widely accepted that, by the end of the Plan period (2036) people may well make different choices to those the currently made when considering how to travel.

113. Mobility as a Service is an emerging concept that will likely lead to lower levels of car ownership and increased uptake of public and private transport modes on a more 'demand responsive' basis, particularly when combined with the implementation of new technology such as automated vehicles.

114. However, the extent to which such changes will influence travel behaviour over the next 15 years is difficult to predict and model (not just in Solihull, but in transport planning terms in general). Therefore, in order to ensure a robust assessment of the impact of the Draft Local Plan, a more conventional approach has been adopted, based on current understanding. That doesn't mean to say, however, that proposals to develop and deliver MaaS-type interventions in association with development will not be supported, and the Draft Local Plan IDP will be updated as and when a greater understanding of such advancements is gained.

6. How the Evidence has been used?

Challenges and Objectives

115. In response to the evidence base and consultation responses described above, the Challenges under 'H – Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel' were amended to include reference to poor public transport links to key economic assets, managing transport demand and access to Solihull Town centre, the need to increase the sustainable transport mode share of journeys to school and college, and maintaining the long-term viability of public transport options.

116. Since the 2013 Local Plan a new Challenge 'M' has been included on 'Maximising the economic and social benefits of the High Speed 2 rail link and the UKC Hub Area'; including objectives to ensure high connectivity to the HS2 Interchange station and wider UKC Hub Area, and prioritisation of sustainable travel options over the private car.

117. Since the draft 2016 Draft Local Plan consultation a new Challenge 'O' on providing infrastructure and securing developer contributions has been included, in recognition of communities' concerns that adequate and timely infrastructure, including transport, is provided on site allocations.

Spatial Strategy and Site Allocations

118. In accordance with Planning Practice Guidance, the transport evidence base has been developed in an incremental manner, proportionate to the various stages of development of the Local Plan. Solihull Connected sets out the scale of the transport challenge being faced in accommodating growth, and highlights the need for a multi-modal approach to accommodating travel demands, and the need to better integrate land use planning with transport planning.

119. Accessibility Analysis was therefore undertaken during the early stages of Plan development to inform the Spatial Strategy, by identifying the broad locations in which development would be best placed so as to minimise the need to travel by private car. Access on foot, or by bicycle, to local services and key public transport nodes subsequently formed one of the key priorities in considering specific site selection, balanced against the need to meet local housing need, and many other criteria.

120. The intent of the Spatial Strategy, i.e. to minimise the need to travel and to encourage more sustainable transport modes when doing so, has been further reinforced by the subsequent publication of the Council's Climate Change Strategy, and national, regional and local aims regarding the reduction of carbon emissions and air quality issues.

121. Subsequent stages of assessment in developing the Plan focused on understanding in detail the localised implications of various specific sites, along with the cumulative impact of the plan as a whole. The primary purpose of doing so was to inform considerations regarding site viability, and therefore selection.

122. Informal consultation has been undertaken with Transport for West Midlands in considering the site options and advice on a 'cluster approach' in assessing and mitigating cumulative impacts, as well as incorporating measures to prioritise walking and cycling in concept masterplans, and making space for bus routes.

123. An iterative approach was adopted in assessing and testing the transport implications of various sites, both in terms of location and potential capacity. In doing so, assessment was undertaken at both macro- and micro-levels, with both strategic multi-modal transport modelling and localised traffic / parking impact assessments carried out (as described above).

124. Mitigation measures have been identified, where considered necessary, with the primary focus being towards the delivery of active travel interventions, and better accommodating access to public transport.

Policy Changes

125. The transport-related policies (P7, P8 and P8a) focus primarily on managing demand for travel and enabling sustainable travel patterns to be developed, through the locating of development in accessible locations, and supporting the implementation of strategic public transport initiatives.

126. In line with the various national, regional and local strategies, policies and ambitions, adoption of these policies is considered, from a transport perspective, to provide the optimum means by which development in Solihull can be managed in a way that does not add to latent congestion issues, further increase carbon emissions and detrimentally impact upon air quality.

127. Draft Submission Policy P7 has been updated with accessibility criteria that are considered to be feasible and viable in most circumstances, and in accordance with the implementation of the Solihull Connected Transport Strategy. Since the 2016 draft policy version, reference is made to both bus and rail connectivity In line with updated NPPF guidance, the policy is now explicit that prioritisation should be given first to pedestrian and cycle movements. The policy recognises that there are different ways to promote ease of access and enhance accessibility levels, and is not overly prescriptive in its approach.

128. Draft Submission Policy P8 has been updated since the 2013 Plan to make explicit reference to the basis for Transport Assessments and Travel Plans and refers to an evidence-based approach to demonstrate appropriate car parking provision, rather than reference to future SPDs. This is more in accordance with the NPPF than the previous policy and provides for a flexible approach in meeting the objectives of the policy. Support is given to Park and Ride at appropriate railway stations, subject to accordance with other policies in the Plan. Emphasis is also given on locating development in accordance with the spatial strategy, and supporting sustainable transport modes for essential travel over the private car.

129. Draft Submission Policy P8A has been updated since the draft 2016 version to include an fourth SPRINT route on the Warwick Road corridor. The draft policy also makes provision for developments along the SPRINT or METRO corridor to contribute towards their delivery, as appropriate, and to ensure connectivity to Rapid Transit infrastructure.

130. The supporting text has been updated to reference the emerging Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan, and the need for developments to connect to the routes where possible.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

131. The Infrastructure Delivery is being updated to include strategic and more local transport schemes, as referred to in this Topic Paper, that will support growth in the Borough over the plan period. A Draft version will be consulted upon as part of the evidence base for the Draft Submission Plan and a finalised version submitted for Examination.

7. Conclusion

132. This Topic Paper provides context relating to the development of transport-related policies within the Local Plan, and summarises the development and approach taken to locating, and managing the impacts of, development.

133. Managing demand for travel, and enabling and encouraging sustainable forms of transport, have been key drivers throughout development of the Local Plan. The transport-related policies within the Plan are intended to guide development to the most accessible locations, and a clear priority is placed upon mitigating the transport impacts of development through the implementation of active travel and public transport interventions / infrastructure.

134. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out the various needs for intervention, and highlights the need for developers to contribute towards the funding and / or delivery of specific interventions, where relevant.

135. The transport evidence base is considered to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the transport implications and impacts associated with Local Plan proposals can be managed in a manner that does not call into question the viability of the Plan. However, it should be noted that towards the end of the Local Plan period, highway network conditions are poor across the borough as a whole, with congestion prevalent in many areas; particularly in the more urban parts of Solihull.

136. The Local Plan cannot reasonably be expected to resolve existing / background transport network issues. Through its UK Central Infrastructure Programme, the Council is already developing a number of interventions that seek to not only accommodate Local Plan growth, but also to resolve existing issues, encourage modal shift and enable longer-term growth. The Council is in the process of developing schemes for improvement to:

- Solihull Railway Station
- Multi-modal access to Solihull Town Centre, including strategic cycle links with Knowle and Dickens Heath
- Multi-modal bridges over the M42 and West Coast Main Line (linking Birmingham Airport with the NEC and the HS2 Interchange Station).
- A45 / Damson Parkway Junction
- A452 Chester Road Corridor
- A34 Stratford Road Corridor

137. The Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan is a live document, and includes the above interventions based on current understanding of their development. As and when these schemes become more defined, the IDP will be updated accordingly. Therefore, whilst the Local Plan evidence base is considered to demonstrate an approach to dealing with travel demands that results in a viable plan, the measures taken to mitigate specific impacts associated with development proposals, as and when they come forward, may well be different to those identified within the transport evidence base, and financial contribution from development may vary accordingly.

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