



Your ref:

Planning Policy
Middlesbrough Council
PO Box 504
First Floor, Civic Centre
TS1 9FY

Highways England
Great North House
20 Allington Way
Darlington
DL1 4QB

FAO: Planning Policy Team

6th July 2021

Dear Sir / Madam,

Stainton and Thornton Draft Neighbourhood Plan – Stakeholder Consultation

Highways England welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on the Stainton and Thornton Draft Neighbourhood Plan and has undertaken a high-level review of the supplied consultation documents. Should the Neighbourhood Plan be adopted, the policies of the plan will be used in consideration of development proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan alongside national and local policy (including the Middlesbrough Local Plan) and it is in this context that the comments are provided. This letter provides a summary of our response to the aforementioned consultation.

This response provides an overview of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan policies and outlines the following:

- a) Whether Highways England need to comment on a policy;
- b) Whether Highways England support a policy; and
- c) Whether Highways England do not need to comment on a policy.

The SRN in Middlesbrough

The Strategic Road Network [SRN] close to Middlesbrough comprises the A174 to the south and the A19 to the west. With respect to the operation of the SRN within the region, Highways England is aware of capacity issues at elements in the vicinity of the area covered by the neighbourhood plan.

Impact of the Neighbourhood Plan on the SRN

Highways England is aware of the development aspirations in the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and is keen to work with the Stainton & Thornton Neighbourhood Plan Group [Neighbourhood Group], Middlesbrough Council and developers to ensure that the plan vision can be delivered without detriment to the SRN. Highways England would therefore need to understand the SRN impact of any traffic generated as a result of development proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area, particularly in the weekday network peak hours when operational issues are most prevalent.

Plan Vision and Objectives

The proposed Neighbourhood Plan vision is as follows:

“The Parish will develop appropriately, but also retain its rural village character, along with green spaces both within, and surrounding the parish. It will maintain its community spirit and historical connections and remain distinct in its character from the urban town of Middlesbrough”.

Highways England support the vision of the Neighbourhood Plan in line with the proposals for ‘appropriate’ development. Highways England would understand ‘appropriate’ development as that which does not incur a material impact upon the functionality or operation of the SRN.

Policies Requiring Highways England Comment

As part of the development and refinement of the Neighbourhood Plan, Highways England will seek to specifically comment on the following policies:

Policy ST6 – Traffic / Parking / Public Transport and Roads

In line with the content of the Neighbourhood Plan, Highways England do not currently have any specific comments to provide on Policy ST6, however, the sustainable aims of this policy are supported. Similarly, Highways England would support development which does not incur a material impact upon the functionality and operation of the SRN as a result of development traffic.

Policy ST7 – Infrastructure and Rights of Way

Highways England support the proposals that necessary road infrastructure must be put in place as part of any future strategic development to prevent further congestion at the A19 / A174 junction, which already experiences capacity issues at peak hour periods. Moving forward, Highways England would welcome early consultation on any proposed infrastructure interventions at the SRN, should junction mitigation be required as a result of any proposed development traffic impact. The policy provisions of the Middlesbrough Local Plan support this ambition in seeking to ensure the reliability of the SRN and is something which Highways England would seek to ensure in any forthcoming Local Plan updates.

Policy ST10 – New Developments on Green Field Sites

In line with Policy ST10, Highways England recognise that any new housing development on green field sites within the parish should be delivered in a way that mitigates any significant impacts arising at the SRN as a result of increased traffic. Moving forward, Highways England will support and engage with the Local and Neighbourhood Plan process, in addition to any formal planning application to ensure that the impact of any development at the SRN within the region is appropriately assessed and controlled.

Policy ST11 – Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations

In line with Policy ST11, Highways England acknowledge that developer contributions towards active travel or improved highway infrastructure will be necessary where detailed planning assessments show that an obligation is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. Highways England would wish to work with Middlesbrough Council and the requirements of the Local and Neighbourhood Plans to ensure that any contributions are correctly calculated and apportioned.

Policies that Highways England Support

Highways England do not consider it necessary to make any comment on the following policies, however, their inclusion within the Neighbourhood Plan is supported:

- **Policy ST1 – Green Infrastructure;**
- **Policy ST 2 – Green Spaces;**
- **Policy ST 3 – Natural Environment; and**
- **Policy ST12 – Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency.**

Policies Not Requiring Highways England Comment

Highways England do not consider it necessary to make any comment on the following policies:

- **Policy ST4 – Heritage;**
- **Policy ST5 – Community Assets;**
- **Policy ST8 – Services / Schools / Shops / Unicorn Centre / Larchfield; and**
- **Policy ST9 – Design Principles.**

Low Grange Farm Documentation

It is noted by Highways England that alongside the Neighbourhood Plan, documents pertaining to the Taylor Wimpey Low Grange Farm development have been provided. It is assumed by Highways England that this documentation is applicable to the specific consultation being undertaken by Taylor Wimpey on behalf of the development, considering that the Low Grange Farm site is not currently allocated within the Middlesbrough Local Plan or being promoted as part of the Neighbourhood Plan. Clarity in this regard would be welcome to avoid any confusion in relation to the intentions of providing this document as part of the consultation.

Moving forward, Highways England would undertake the necessary consultation review for this site should the proposed development proceed through the typical planning process, i.e., as a result of a Middlesbrough Local Plan update, or as a dedicated planning application.

I trust this response is helpful, but should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Sunny Ali
Regional Spatial Planning Manager
Yorkshire Humberside & North East

