



MID SUSSEX
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Memorandum of Understanding

**Mid Sussex District Council and
National Highways**

July 2024

Parties to the Agreement

- National Highways (NH)
- Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC)

Signatories

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ann Biggs', written in a cursive style.

Date: 22 July 2024

Mid Sussex District Council

Ann Biggs – Assistant Director for Planning and Sustainable Economy

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Matt Lewis', written in a cursive style.

Date: 15 July 2024

National Highways

Matt Lewis – Assistant Spatial Planner

MSDC and National Highways Position Statement July 2024 - Transport

National Highways (NH) and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) have informed and validated development of the Mid Sussex Strategic Transport Model, the subsequent strategic and local junction modelling and Merge/ Diverge Assessment on the A23/ M23, in line with standard good practice as set out in the Department for Transport's (DfT) Circular 01/2022 and transport analysis guidance (TAG).

Regulation 19:

Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) have modelled a series of scenarios:

- Scenario 5 – Local Plan Development Scenario
- Scenario 5m1 – with car mode share reductions
- Scenario 5m2 - plus distance based car trip reductions
- Scenario 5m3 – Existing public transport and Local Cycling, Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) schemes
- Scenario 5m4 – Promoter sustainable travel mitigation measures (combined with Scenario 5m3 to a single run in the modelling).
- Scenario 5m5 – physical highway mitigation

Results:

- Mode shift and sustainable mitigation Scenarios (Scenario 5, mitigation options m1 – m4) – resulted in severe residual cumulative impacts at 3 junctions on WSCC highway network.
- Physical highway mitigation (Scen m5) – focused on County Council's Strategic Road Network (SRN) to encourage traffic away from severely impacted locations including the Hickstead junction which interacts with the NH strategic network – results showed improvement on the southbound off-slip at Hickstead however the flow changes have pushed additional traffic onto the A23 which has brought the northbound on-slip at Sayers Common A23 junction with the A2118 into severe (as defined by WSCC interpretation of the NPPF paragraph 115) category. None of the severe impacts were removed on the WSCC network.

Transport work is ongoing and NH representation at Regulation 19 raised:

- Eight matters to resolve.

- Two required changes – regarding National Cycle Network (NCN) route 20 not longer being an official cycle route and updating reference to Circular 01/2022.
- Various comments on the rest of the plan policies.

Ongoing work:

Scenario 6 ('core' Scenario):

- In Scenario 5, the growth assumptions modelled for outside the district represent a 'worst case', above what national guidance allows for and used TEMPro 8 High. In addition, working from home assumptions applied to the proposed medium and small housing allocations was lower (5%) than that of the significant sites (20%). As such, to ensure the severe impacts were not a result of overestimated growth and understated home working assumptions, Scenario 6 uses TEMPro Core which represents more reasonable projections for background traffic growth, and the working from home assumption of 20% has been applied to the remainder of the housing allocations as well.
- Three severe impacts remain on the WSCC network under Scenario 5, however the extent of the exceedance of the agreed threshold for severe, is not great and there is a reasonable prospect of a solution emerging.
- **Solution** – Mitigation will focus on reducing traffic passing through the severely impacted locations, rather than increasing junction capacity due to a combination of physical / environmental constraints and the position of the roads passing through these junctions in the County Council's network hierarchy i.e. not on the county's SRN.
- Mitigation will be through either a reduction of overall vehicular traffic or by encouraging diversion of longer trips onto more strategic highway routes, or a combination of the two.
- Work with the three significant site promoters (1000+ homes) on development of their mobility strategies / sustainable travel measures is a key element of the mitigation.

Other work

- **Merge and Diverge Assessment** is being undertaken along a section of the A23 / M23 between junction 9 of the M23 and A23/ A273 at Pyecombe junction to the south, covering a total of 19 junctions.
- NH are content that Scenario 6m2 compared to the reference case will be used to inform the assessment and identify in accordance with DMRB CD122 where mitigation is required based on additional impacts associated with the local plan development.

- NH have agreed that 3 of the 19 junctions can be discounted from the assessment at:
 - A23 Handcross BP Fuel Service Station
 - A23/ Littleworth Farms access
 - Robins of Herstmonceux access
- **Covid related changes** to trip patterns and forecasts are recommended to be considered in line with 2023 TAG guidance updates to Unit M4 'Forecasting and Uncertainty', which is likely to reduce background growth in forecasts and reduce the risk of securing unnecessary mitigation. Further modelling is therefore recommended which takes this into account.
- **Further information is sought** (in addition to absolute reductions) in the form of relative reductions or revised vehicle trip rates for reduced commuter trips to reflect working from home rates and internalisation for education trips to allow for direct comparison with the housing trip rates, and;
 - Further detail regarding education-based linked trips and how / whether reductions have been applied in the modelling.
 - Benchmarking against the Sustainable Travel Town measures and distance-based reductions – this will include sharing updated (since Reg18) sustainable travel mitigation schemes proposed by the significant site promoters. In addition, a key policy driver embedded in the Plan and various policies throughout support sustainable development, 20 minute neighbourhoods, mixed use communities/ site allocations, reducing the need to travel by car and providing genuine options for sustainable travel.
- **Further modelling** the final mitigation (sustainable and physical highway) Scenario (6m5) 'do something' model run to assess the effectiveness of the mitigation and along with identifying reassignment / rerouting effects.
- All mitigation will be designed and costed and an apportionment exercise undertaken to inform the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and to demonstrate no viability barriers to deliverability.