



# Stafford Western Access Route Planning Obligations Statement

**June 2015**



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 This Planning Obligations Statement has been produced by Staffordshire County Council to support a full planning application for the Stafford Western Access Route. The planning application is also supported by a suite of detailed and indicative drawings and documents including an Environmental Statement, non-technical summary of the Environmental Statement, Statement of Case, Statement of Community Involvement, Design and Access Statement, Utilities Statement and Planning Policy Statement.
- 1.1.2 The planning application is for development within the red line boundary (SWAR/PLANNING/02) and includes:
- Construction of new highway from Greyfriars Place to Doxey Road and Doxey Road to Martin Drive
  - Associated demolition of buildings at Saint Gobain
  - Associated flood compensatory storage within Doxey and Tillington Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest
- 1.1.3 The highway authority is permitted to carry out improvements within or adjacent to the existing local highway and therefore does not require planning permission for the areas within the blue line boundary (SWAR PLANNING/02). This is in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. This includes improvements and re-alignment of:
- Existing Doxey Road between West Coast Main Line and Castle Street, including provision of a new service road
  - Greyfriars Place to A34 Foregate Street and along A34 Foregate Street to Browning Street
- 1.1.4 Staffordshire County Council is the applicant and cannot enter into a legally enforceable agreement with itself under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. As an alternative the County Council can agree to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide a transparent commitment to fulfilling certain undertakings.
- 1.1.5 This Planning Obligations Statement proposes the draft Heads of Terms of undertakings that could be included in an MoU to be drawn up to make the Scheme acceptable in circumstances when it would otherwise be considered unacceptable in planning terms. It responds to matters that have arisen during the course of preparing the application. The final list of undertakings will be confirmed following consideration of the planning application.
- 1.1.6 Before confirming that the MoU should be signed, it will be necessary for the planning authority to determine whether or not the undertakings meet the tests set out in National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 204). The three tests (which apply to planning obligations pursuant to Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)) are that the undertakings should be:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development

## **2. PROPOSED UNDERTAKINGS**

2.1.1 For the purposes of the Scheme the County Council will reasonably endeavour to carry out the following undertakings.

### **2.2 Long Term Management of SSSI**

2.2.1 The Scheme has been designed to avoid or minimise impacts on ecological resources. It provides the opportunity to restore an area of car park to habitats that are complementary to the SSSI. The proposed flood compensation area will also provide habitat improvements to the SSSI as well as offsetting the loss of flood plain as a result of the new viaduct. With these measures in place it is anticipated that the Scheme will have a positive impact on SSSI habitats and an overall neutral effect on protected and priority species.

2.2.2 The County Council will ensure that there is successful long term management of the new habitats created by giving management responsibilities of these new areas to Staffordshire Wildlife Trust who already manages the existing SSSI.

### **2.3 Network changes within the Blue Line Boundary**

2.3.1 As part of the Scheme, the County Council will undertake to complete the following changes within or directly adjacent to the existing highway within the land edged blue on SWAR/PLANNING/02:

- Dedicated left-turn lane from the A34 into Browning Street and signal upgrade work incorporating improved pedestrian facilities
- Widening of Grey Friars' Place to provide three lanes out onto A34 Foregate Street and two lanes in from A34 Foregate Street, incorporating pedestrian crossing facilities
- Existing mini roundabout in Madford Retail Park replaced with a new traffic signal controlled junction with pedestrian facilities and linked to the traffic signal controlled junction on the A34
- A new roundabout on Doxey Road at the entrance to Sainsbury's supermarket, with pedestrian crossing facilities
- Re-alignment of Doxey Road to take the main carriageway away from existing properties with a separate access road serving Castletown properties
- A new toucan crossing located on Doxey Road in the vicinity of the Isabel Trail
- Re-alignment of Doxey Road, between Timberfield Road and the rail bridge
- Alterations to the existing Doxey Road/Rosewood Gardens and Doxey Road/Timberfield Road priority junctions to accommodate modifications to the main carriageway

- Minor works to the existing Doxey Road rail bridge in order to accommodate a realigned carriageway across the bridge to the south
- Reduced width of the southern footway over the rail bridge to a hard strip with no pedestrian access and create footway/cycleway on the north of at least 3m wide (with 7.3m carriageway)
- A new roundabout on Doxey Road at the junction with the new access route, including informal pedestrian crossing facilities
- Martin Drive/Rose Hill junction at Castlefields modified to incorporate a fourth arm and informal pedestrian crossing facilities

## **2.4 Off-Site Highway Works outside the Blue Line Boundary**

### ***Pedestrian and Cycle Crossing Facilities***

2.4.1 The assessment described in the Pedestrian, Cyclists, Equestrians and Community Effects Chapter of the Environmental Statement identifies locations outside the red and blue line boundary plan (SWAR/PLANNING/02) of the planning application that will require mitigation in terms of pedestrian and cycle severance, journey length, travel time and amenity. The County Council will undertake to complete the following improvements prior to opening of the Scheme:

- A new toucan crossing for pedestrians and cyclists to be able to cross Kingsway in the vicinity of the walk/ cycle route to Castle Street
- A new toucan crossing for pedestrians and cyclists to cross Kingsway adjacent to the A518 Newport Road/ Kingsway roundabout
- New signalised pedestrian crossing facilities at the junction of the A518 Newport Road and West Way

### ***Parking Provision***

2.4.2 Parking provision is discussed in the Traffic and Transport section of the Environmental Statement. It recognises the importance of the provision of adequate car parking to the success of businesses and growth of the town centre. The Scheme strikes a balance between minimising the permanent loss of car parking and providing a highway design to current standards. Each affected land owner/tenant will be left with a functional car park that minimises permanent land-take and loss of car parking.

2.4.3 There are a number of new developments currently under construction within the town centre that will provide car parking provision for the town, however much of this will be short stay. The County Council therefore undertakes to continue to work with the Borough Council and other key stakeholders to bring forward a potential site(s) within the town that could be suitable for long stay car parking. This could include provision of land, a financial contribution, and transport assessments and detailed design to support the preferred option. It is intended that such a site(s) would mitigate the loss of parking at Doxey Road, as well as provide additional capacity.

2.4.5 The completion of Section C will require the installation of parking restrictions on Martin Drive and Kingsway. Concerns have been raised by the residents

of Castlefields regarding the relocation of these parked cars to other roads within Castlefields once these parking restrictions commence. The County Council will therefore continue to work with the Residents' Association to develop the optimal solution for the area if evidence shows that on-street parking continues to cause an obstruction to traffic flows or an amenity issue.

### ***Traffic Management and Safety Measures***

- 2.4.6 Appropriate traffic management and safety measures will be implemented on the existing local network if considered necessary in the opinion of Staffordshire County Council, as highway authority, following post scheme monitoring of the actual impact of changes in traffic flows and speeds. Town centre traffic management measures will be reviewed and strengthened following completion of the Scheme. All additional schemes on the wider transport network will be delivered in line with the Stafford Borough Integrated Transport Strategy and agreed with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure.

## **2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation of the Scheme**

- 2.5.1 A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework has been developed for the Stafford Western Access Route as part of the Major Scheme Business Case. The County Council will report on a standard set of measures in line with Department for Transport's guidance on a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Local Authority Major Schemes, September 2012.
- 2.5.2 Department for Transport advice requires that benefits in terms of travel demand, travel times, reliability, carbon and impact on the economy should be included as standard measures within monitoring and evaluation reports. Target dates for achieving these benefits will be finalised in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.
- 2.5.3 Travel data will be collected one year and five years after opening to enable the following to be measured on key routes in Stafford. This data will be compared to the evidence provided in the business case:
- Peak hour traffic flows on key routes including Newport Road, Foregate Street, Chell Road, Station Road and Doxey Road
  - Peak hour journey times on the routes assessed in the Traffic Forecast Report provided as an Appendix to the Environmental Statement
  - An assessment of peak hour delays and reliability on key routes. This is currently calculated using Department for Transport GPS Trafficmaster data
  - Traffic volume and speed characteristics will be used as appropriate to assess the change in greenhouse gas emissions as a result of the scheme
  - Accident data will be regularly reviewed and any potential issues will be reported
- 2.5.4 Constructing the Stafford Western Access Route will allow the opportunity to provide complementary sustainable transport measures within and to the

town centre as part of the wider Transport Strategy for Stafford. The monitoring and evaluation reports will therefore report, where possible, on the growth in use of walking, cycling and public transport. It will focus on reporting the outcome of consultation exercises and customer satisfaction surveys and will also make use of available data from public transport operators and the completion of pedestrian and cycling counts as appropriate. A baseline will also be established prior to the start of construction. Further details will be provided in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.



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