

## Comments

### Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan - Main Modifications Consultation (19/03/21 to 30/04/21)

<b>Comment ID</b>	18
<b>Response Date</b>	23/04/21 11:27
<b>Status</b>	Processed
<b>Submission Type</b>	Email
<b>Version</b>	0.2

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#### Representation

Highways England welcomes the opportunity to comment on the main modifications to the Kettering Borough SSP2 Local Plan, which covers the period of 2011 to 2031. We understand that the SSP2, when adopted, will form part of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy – Part 1 Local Plan (JCS) and will include local planning policies specific for Kettering Borough.

Highways England has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). It is our role to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the SRN whilst acting as a delivery partner to national economic growth. In relation to this consultation, our principal interest is safeguarding the operation of the A14 which routes through the Plan area.

Highways England responded to the Kettering Borough Site Specific Part 2 (SSP2) Local Plan – Draft Plan in August 2018. We noted that based on the JCS housing allocations (10,400 dwellings) and a 10% buffer, a residual requirement of 1,186 dwellings remained to be allocated across the borough within the SSP2. A total of 344 dwellings were allocated to Kettering and Barton Seagrave, 18 to Burton Latimer, 400 to Desborough, 284 to Rothwell and 140 across Rural Areas.

However, the proposed housing allocations set out in the SSP2 were higher than the JCS allocations. For Kettering and Barton Seagrave the housing allocation proposed was between 916 – 947 dwellings, for Burton Latimer 22, for Desborough 439, for Rothwell 300 and for Rural Areas between 171-179, providing an upper limit of 1,887 dwellings. We note, that the Kettering and Barton Seagrave allocation is more than double the JCS allocation.

We considered that larger sites within Kettering (KE/011 for 350 and KE/184a allocated for up to 217 dwellings and an unspecified quantity of B1c-B2), cumulatively and alongside other smaller development were likely to have an impact on the A14 at Junctions 7 and 8.

We also noted that the growth from DE/212 for 135 dwellings, DE/210 for up to 304 dwellings within Desborough and RO/088a for 300 dwellings within Rothwell would have a cumulative impact on the A14 at Junctions 3 and 4. We note that both sites within Desborough now have planning permission. There were minimal employment allocations however, Policy DES6 was for an 8.1ha B2/B8 employment site in Desborough. We note that this exceeds the JCS threshold by 3ha.

We highlighted that it would be important to understand the cumulative impact of growth on the A14 as significant growth is also planned to come forward in the vicinity including sites at Kettering North, Kettering East, West Corby and Desborough North which could impact on the A14. We advised that

the cumulative impact of growth should be assessed through the development management process. Furthermore, Transport Assessments should be provided for larger sites to establish the impacts and potential mitigation required.

With regard infrastructure improvements a new grade separated junction is planned on the A14 at J10a to support the East Kettering SUE. This will help to ease some of the implications of growth in Kettering although it is not considered that the new junction alone would provide full mitigation to accommodate the full extent of the growth planned to come forward. There are also existing capacity issues at A14 Junctions 4 to 7 eastbound which could be exacerbated by the growth proposed.

Given this Highways England is currently considering improvements at A14 Junctions 7 to 9. Northamptonshire County Council (now referred to as North Northamptonshire Council) also commissioned a study for A14 Junction 7/A43 to understand the impacts of growth at this location. We consider that the wider impacts of growth on the A14 should be considered in detail and would therefore welcome engagement with the Local Planning Authority and the Local Highway Authority to develop a proportionate transport evidence base. This could be through a series of workshops involving all parties to discuss issues and opportunities. We would welcome the Local Planning Authority's views on this approach.