

**Ref 5 Highways England
11 May 2020**

For the attention of: Neighbourhood Planning Officer

Consultation: Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031 (Regulation 16 Consultation)

Highways England Reference: #9997

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for inviting Highways England to comment on this consultation.

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). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such Highways England works to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity. We will therefore be concerned with proposals and policies that have the potential to impact the safe and efficient operation of the SRN, in the case of Cowfold parish, particularly the A23 trunk road.

We note that the Housing Needs report identifies that 40 to 70 new homes are required in Cowfold parish up to 2031. The Neighbourhood Plan allocates two sites providing a total for 70 homes. In addition, 55 homes have been granted planning permission since 2011 and the Neighbourhood Plan classifies this as windfall provision. The Parish has committed to an early review in 2021 and will reconsider housing numbers, if necessary, to bring the Neighbourhood Plan into line with the Horsham District Council Local Plan review to 2036.

The Regulation 18 consultation Draft Horsham District Local Plan 2019-2036 document identifies potential development for 75 dwellings in Cowfold Parish, including those in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. For the whole Horsham District, it gives a range of housing targets, all of which exceed the current target of 800 homes per year, ranging from 1000 to 1400 homes per year. Therefore the level of housing required to be delivered through Neighbourhood Plans across the District could increase from the current requirement.

Highways England is working with Horsham District Council to agree the transport modelling and assessment of the development proposals within the emerging Horsham District Local Plan review to 2036. We wish to ensure the impacts on the SRN of future development in the emerging Local Plan to 2036, and associated Neighbourhood Plans, are assessed and mitigated appropriately.

Any development that comes forward in Cowfold parish would potentially add to the cumulative impacts of the development within the Local Plan across the District upon the SRN. Consequently, there may be a need for developments across the whole District, including within Cowfold parish, to make a proportional contribution towards the SRN improvements required to deliver the full quantum of development in Horsham District. This approach has been adopted by other local authorities in the southeast region. In order to manage expectations, we recommend that developers are made aware of this potential contribution requirement towards cumulative impacts upon the SRN for sites that may not have a serious impact upon the SRN if considered in isolation.

We recommend that the Neighbourhood Plan includes a requirement for any housing development proposal to provide a Transport Assessment/Statement and a note that a proportionate contribution towards SRN improvements may be required to deliver all the

development in the Horsham Local Plan due to the cumulative impacts of individual developments.

Please continue to consult Highways England at our inbox: PlanningSE@highwaysengland.co.uk.

Kind regards,

[Redacted signature]

Web: <http://highwaysengland.co.uk/>

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