

Examination into the Reading Borough Local Plan Partial Update

Statement of Common Ground between National Highways and Reading Borough Council

January 2026

Introduction and Background

1. This Statement of Common Ground between National Highways (NH) and Reading Borough Council (RBC) (“the parties”) relates to the Reading Borough Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU).

Strategic Road Network

2. National Highways is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving England's Strategic Road Network, consisting of motorways and major A roads.
3. The only road within or in close proximity to Reading that is part of the Strategic Road Network is the M4 motorway. Junction 11 of the M4 is within Reading Borough. Junctions 10 and 12 lie outside Reading Borough, but are in close proximity and are used to access Reading.

Background

4. A Pre-Submission Draft LPPU was subject to consultation under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 during November and December 2024. National Highways made representations on 17 December 2024.
5. At the point that the Regulation 19 consultation was undertaken, the Transport Modelling Report (EV018) was not available to inform NH's representations. A draft version of the report was sent to NH for comment on 14 April 2025. NH provided initial comments on 30 April and these informed the version that was part of the evidence base at submission.
6. The LPPU was submitted on 9 May 2025.

Agreed matters

Junction 10 of the M4

7. Based on the results of the Transport Modelling Report (EV018), the parties agree that there are no concerns with impacts on Junction 10 of the M4.

Junction 11 of the M4

8. NH's review of the Transport Modelling Report (EV018) following the initial comments was provided on 22 May 2025 and highlighted a potential issue with Junction 11 of the M4 relating to the westbound on-slip and eastbound off-slip at or towards the end of the plan period that may require design changes.
9. In response, RBC commissioned Stantec to provide additional evidence relating to impacts on Junction 11 to address NH's concerns. Stantec provided a short Technical

Note to NH on 9 September to agree the methodology. NH agreed the methodology on 24 September, subject to the comment that assessments should use demand flows rather than assigned flows from the WBC VISSIM model unless there are good reasons not to.

10. A Technical Note entitled M4 J11 Merge Diverge Assessment was produced by Stantec on 10 November and provided to NH. This is on the Examination documents list as EX035.
11. The results of the assessment were that the current layouts are sufficient to accommodate the forecast flows with the exception of the Westbound Merge in the AM of the Local Plan scenario. The situation with the Westbound Merge was borderline and is therefore likely to arise towards the end of the plan period, and is in only one peak period.
12. NH reviewed the assessment and provided comments on 1 December. These were addressed in a revised version of the Technical Note M4 J11 Merge Diverge Assessment which was produced on 7 January 2026 and which is on the Examination documents list as EX044. This identified that current layouts are sufficient to accommodate the assumed forecast flows.
12. The parties agree that these conclusions are a robust assessment of the expected impacts on Junction 11. They demonstrate that M4 Junction 11 is sufficient to accommodate Reading BC's Local Plan development.
13. RBC commits to reviewing the situation with the Westbound Merge in particular as this is the most borderline situation at a review of the Local Plan within five years of the adoption of the updated Local Plan based on the most up to date monitoring data. Subject to this commitment, NH is satisfied that the LPPU as drafted is sound in terms of its impacts on Junction 11.

Junction 12 of the M4

14. Based on the results of the Transport Modelling Report (EV018), the parties agree that there are no concerns with impacts on Junction 12 of the M4.

Outstanding matters

15. There are no outstanding matters of disagreement between the parties relating to soundness.
16. At paragraph 4.7.26 of the LPPU, 'Highways England' should be replaced with 'National Highways'. The Council will make this change as a minor modification.

Signatures

Signed for Reading Borough Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping, fluid strokes that form an illegible name.

Name: Matthew Golledge

Position: Acting Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Public Protection

Date: 08.01.2026

Signed for National Highways

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping, sweeping strokes that form a stylized, somewhat abstract shape.

Name: Patrick Blake

Position: Spatial Planner

Date: 26 January 2026