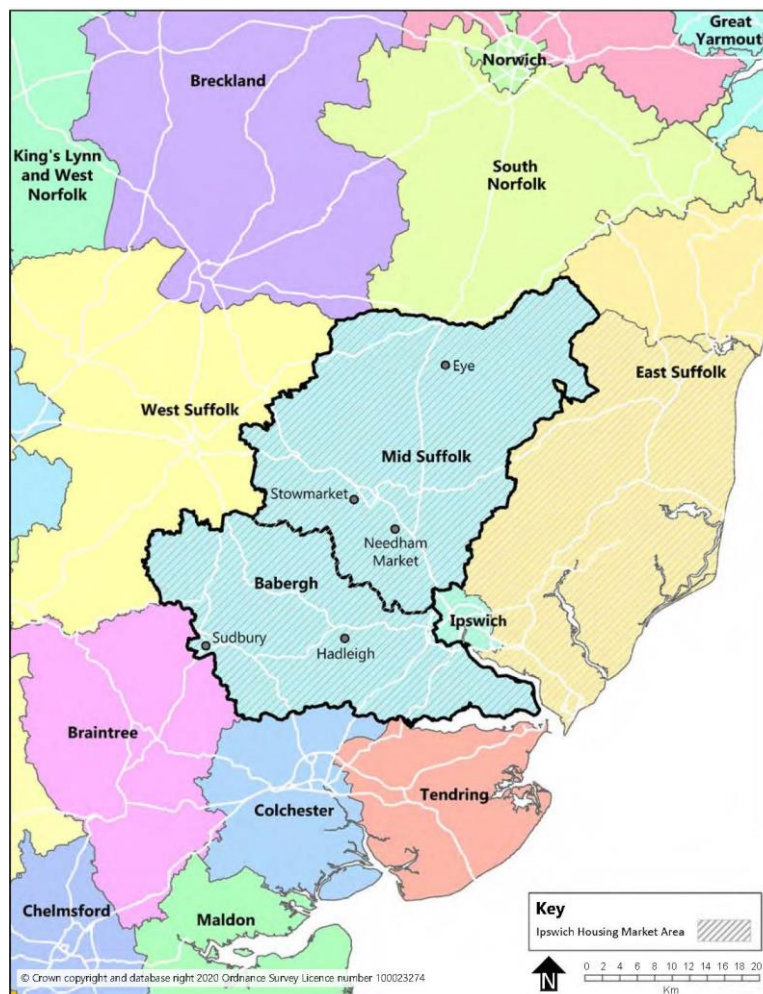


**Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan
Statement of Common Ground
Between
Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils
and
Network Rail,
Greater Anglia, and
Suffolk County Council**

March 2021

1. Areas covered by the Statement of Common Ground

The Statement of Common Ground relates to the area covered by the local planning authorities of Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council.



2. Signatories to this Statement of Common Ground

The signatories to this Statement of Common Ground are:

- Babergh District Council,
- Mid Suffolk District Council,
- Network Rail,
- Greater Anglia and
- Suffolk County Council.

3. Purpose and Scope of Statement of Common Ground

Local planning authorities have a statutory duty to co-operate with specified bodies in relation to strategic planning matters. Suffolk County Council and Network Rail are statutory consultees subject to the duty to co-operate as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and are required to be involved in the plan-making process.

No formal responses were received from Network Rail and Greater Anglia to the consultations on the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Preferred Options (Regulation 18) document (July 2019), and the Joint Local Plan Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Document (November 2020). However collaborative work has taken place between our organisations in relation to the delivery of mitigation required as a result of committed and planned growth within Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

Suffolk County Council is also signatory to this agreement as some of the railway station improvement projects listed in this agreement also involve the County Council as Highway Authority, particularly in relation to the mitigation measures also affecting the highway.

The scope of this Statement of Common Ground is for agreement to the approach taken within the Joint Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan, as a means to deliver the infrastructure required to enable sustainable growth emerging from the Joint Local Plan.

In 2019 Network Rail undertook rail capacity studies of Cambridgeshire and the Great Eastern Main Line (GEML) to consider long term demand and the likely capacity requirements. These studies consider the impact of expected population and employment growth in the Cambridge to Ipswich railway corridor but not at specific locations. Following on from these studies, Network Rail has continued to work closely with a number of local authorities in the area, including Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, to assess the scope and cost of schemes needed for long term growth. Network Rail remain committed to working closely with Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils and other stakeholders to accommodate aspirations for local growth and development, and to helping the Councils develop practical solutions that improve accessibility by rail for all existing and prospective rail passengers.

4. Strategic matters being addressed

- A) Rail infrastructure provision needs detailed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) (addressed in table 1 and appendix 1)
- B) Funding of projects and delivery

A) Rail infrastructure provision needs detailed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan

The table below shows the matters that have been the subject of collaborative work between the parties of this agreement. Appendix 1 below provides an extract of the IDP and relevant rail infrastructure projects.

Table 1. Recommendations and areas of common ground and potential amendments to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Topic	Collaborative work to date	Specific matters for amendments	Areas of Agreement	Areas of Disagreement (including reasons if applicable)
Rail	<p>Through the preparation of the July 2019 IDP, Network Rail and Greater Anglia have worked collaboratively with B&MSDC towards the required mitigation to improve access to railway stations, particularly in Mid Suffolk, with current live projects involved at three stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Stowmarket – Needham Market – Thurston <p>This collaborative work has taken place over the last 2 and half years, and is also reflected in the IDP of July 2019 and of September 2020.</p>	N/A	<p>Officers of Network Rail and Greater Anglia, and officers of the B&MSDC Infrastructure team continue to meet regularly to progress current projects such as the Thurston Railway Station Passenger Level Crossing improvement, and the Needham Market Station accessibility improvements. Both these current projects are the subject of current Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) bids. This collaborative approach has been mutually appreciated by B&MSDC and rail colleagues as proactive work around the delivery of rail infrastructure continues to be achieved in the light of growth coming forward.</p>	N/A

B) Funding of projects and delivery

The funding mechanisms referred to in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (Appendix 1 below) use cost multipliers which are provided by the infrastructure providers, such as SCC in terms of education, libraries and waste, and the health providers for health provision. Most cost multipliers are reviewed annually to take account of inflation and other legislative or government practice or local Guidance/ advice. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that the cost estimations based on cost multiplier may change over time and because when projects are finally designed and costed out, unforeseen cost may present themselves.

Infrastructure projects particularly those which are outside of the Districts' geographical boundaries but where growth within our Districts contribute to the need for this infrastructure require effective collaboration between all the parties concerned. This may involve infrastructure providers and local Parishes but will also involve working with other local

authorities. In order to deliver these projects both Districts would be seeking to resolve how the infrastructure can be jointly funded and delivered to timescales which are agreed. The information on these cross-boundary infrastructure projects provide estimates based on the use of current cost multipliers for our own Districts only. These figures cannot be relied on for total project costs or as guarantees that these monies will be forthcoming at these levels as CIL expenditure are decisions made by each Districts Cabinet subject to thorough assessment against the criteria in the CIL Expenditure Framework. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out infrastructure priorities for each District and has been worked on collaboratively with infrastructure providers to establish the type, nature, and estimated cost (using cost multipliers) of infrastructure projects. It will be important, with each infrastructure project, (particularly cross boundary projects) to fully scope and establish the opportunities for other funding sources and mechanisms to address any funding gaps. This will involve effective collaborative work between all the relevant organisations/parties to ensure that the infrastructure is delivered effectively and in a timely manner.

It is also important to note that to access CIL funds for infrastructure projects within Babergh and Mid Suffolk the infrastructure must be contained within the Councils Infrastructure Funding Statements (Infrastructure List). CIL bids are determined under the Councils' Expenditure Framework. This requires the submission of Bids in a prescribed format which would then be validated screened (for availability of other funding) before being prioritised (against agreed criteria). The CIL bids will be included in a CIL Expenditure Programme (undertaken at least twice a year) and determined by the relevant Council Cabinet (where spend is over £10,000). The agreed prioritisation criteria are set out in the CIL Expenditure Framework (April 2020). Affordability of the infrastructure, and whether there is a need (i.e. critical, essential, or desirable as contained within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and where appropriate included within other strategies of the Councils) are key components of the CIL expenditure scheme.

In the case of the rail projects outlined in this Statement of Common Ground, the use of cost multipliers is unlikely, and the cost of projects will be costed out based on feasibility studies, scope and construction costs.

Outcomes



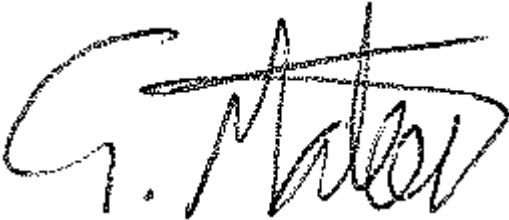
The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is agreed in principle to address the current delivery of the required rail station mitigation measures to sustainably deliver the planned growth proposed in the Joint Local Plan, subject to the action below with further matters to be worked on collaboratively:

- **Continued collaborative work between B&MSDC and all parties mentioned in this Statement of Common Ground.**
- **Ongoing feasibility study for Thurston Station improvements is likely to extend to May 2021 (previously understood to be completed by March 2021).**

5. Process for reviewing the Statement of Common Ground

This Statement of Common Ground consists of the final position prior to Submission of the Joint Local Plan for Examination.

6. Signatories

<p>Signed on behalf of Babergh District Council</p>  <p>Name: Tom Barker Position: Assistant Director, Sustainable Communities</p>	<p>Date: 30/03/2021</p>
<p>Signed on behalf of Mid Suffolk District Council</p>  <p>Name: Tom Barker Position: Assistant Director, Sustainable Communities</p>	<p>Date: 30/03/2021</p>
<p>Signed on behalf of Network Rail</p>  <p>Name: Stephen Hind Position: Head of Business Development</p>	<p>Date:</p> <p>31.3.21</p>
<p>Signed on behalf of Greater Anglia</p>  <p>Name: Simone Bailey Position: Asset Management Director</p>	<p>Date: 26/03/2021</p>
<p>Signed on behalf of Suffolk County Council</p>  <p>Name: Graeme Mateer Position: Head of Transport Strategy</p>	<p>Date: 26th March 2021</p>

APPENDIX 1 – Data from Infrastructure Delivery Plan (September 2020) – With updates for the next iteration of the IDP 2021

Strategic Rail Station Improvements

IDP Project Unique Reference	Anticipated mitigation / Infrastructure Project	Settlement	Priority (Critical, Essential, Desirable)	Lead Provider	Estimated project cost where known/ unknown	Potential Funding Sources	Identified Funding	Estimated Developer Contribution	Type of Developer Contribution	Potential Funding Gap	Potential Funding Sources to Fill Gap	Timescale (Short, Medium, Long Term)
IDP098	Needham Market Railway Station improvements (Feasibility Study being carried out Autumn 2020. Two CIL bids submitted October 2019. Two stages: 1- estimated cost of £400,000; 2- estimated cost of 780,000)	Needham Market	Essential	Network Rail and Greater Anglian	Unknown	'Department for Transport' (DfT) 'Access for All' (AfA) fund; MSDC/SCC; developer contributions from committed growth and from JLP growth.	Unknown (£380,000 from DfT 'AfA')	Unknown (Current CIL bids total for £390,000)	CIL	TBC	M&SDC/ SCC	Short-medium term
IDP099	Stowmarket Railway Station – Step-free access to include bridge built to contain lifts either side. Delivery by 2024.	Stowmarket	Essential	Network Rail and Greater Anglian	TBC	Department for Transport 'Access for All' fund	£1.9m from DfT "AfA"	£1.9m	Section 106	n/a	n/a	Short-medium term
IDP100	Thurston Railway Station – passenger level crossing improvements (CIL bid for £100,000 agreed September 2020 for feasibility study. Feasibility Study being carried out September 2020 to March 2021.)	Thurston	Critical	Network Rail	TBC (Further investigation required by Network Rail and SCC regarding mitigation scheme)	Developer contributions from committed growth and from JLP growth.	Unknown	TBC	CIL	TBC	Network Rail/ SCC	Short-medium term