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Sent: 10 December 2024 08:54

To: NeighbourhoodPlanning <NeighbourhoodPlanning@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>

Subject: Knightsford Neighbourhood Plan - National Highways comments

Dear Neighbourhood Planning team

Thank you for providing National Highways with the opportunity to comment on the submission version of the Knightsford Neighbourhood Plan. We understand that the plan area covers the four parishes of Tincleton, West Knighton, West Stafford and Woodsford. As you are aware, National Highways is a statutory consultee in the planning process and is the strategic highway authority responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network (SRN). In this location the SRN comprises the A35 trunk road which passes to the north and west of the plan area, with connections via the local road network primarily to the A352 Max Gate and Stinsford junctions. It is acknowledged that the A35 junctions around Dorchester currently experience congestion and delay, particularly during network peak periods, and the Max Gate junction has already been identified as requiring works to mitigate for the impact of committed development at Warmwell.

Having reviewed the draft plan we consider that in general terms the plan's proposed policies are unlikely in themselves to result in a scale of development which will adversely impact the SRN, and policies 13 and 14 are noted. However, given the proximity of the plan area to the A35 and associated junctions, any large scale development that may come forward in the plan area will need to be supported by an appropriate assessment of traffic impacts which should consider the operation of the SRN in line with national planning practice guidance and DfT Circular 01/2022 *The strategic road network and the delivery of sustainable development*. Where proposals would result in a severe congestion or unacceptable safety impact, mitigation will be required in line with current policy. We therefore also look forward to continuing to work with Dorset Council in the preparation of their transport evidence base for the emerging Local Plan.

Please note that these comments do not prejudice any responses National Highways may make on site specific applications as they come forward through the planning process, which will be considered by us on their merits under the prevailing policy at the time.

Kind regards

Gaynor

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