First of all, may I welcome you Madam and everyone else back to the Examination in Public for this second round of hearings on the Runnymede Local Plan.

Since the stage 1 hearings concluded at the end of November, the Council has been working hard with partners to prepare the second stage Housing Infrastructure Fund bid for the A320 corridor improvements, and significant progress has been made. The bid is on track for submission on 22nd March—the new deadline for the submissions set by the Government.

You will be pleased to know that we have developed a very positive way forward with Highways England on matters relating to the A320 and the M25. The Council is confident that it will be in a position to work through the outstanding matters with Highways England to enable the final part of the Examination to take place no later than the end of May and possibly sooner. This will be facilitated by our ongoing work to resolve the concerns of Highways England and the agreement and inclusion of any necessary mitigation to Junction 11 of the M25 as part of the finalised proposed works on the A320, before the end of March to feed into the Housing Infrastructure Fund bid.

For now, in relation to the Council’s ongoing engagement with Highways England, I can advise that the following key milestones have been achieved since the Examination in Public was adjourned last November.

- Arcadis has concluded that based on their step 1 assessment, the non-committed developments which form part of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan will not impact the M25 mainline;

- Arcadis has also concluded that based on their step 1 assessment, the non-committed developments which form part of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan will not impact on Junction 13 of the M25;

- Mitigation at Junction 11 of the M25 will be required. Work continues to establish the most appropriate form of mitigation for this junction.

We remain confident that on the resolution of this outstanding matter, the Plan submitted can be demonstrated to be Sound, Legally Compliant and to represent the best solution for Runnymede.