Runnymede Local Plan 2030 Examination

Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) between
Runnymede Borough Council (RBC) and Crest Nicholson and CGNU

20th September 2019
Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) between Crest Nicholson & CGNU (hereafter referred to as Crest & CGNU), as the promoters of Longcross Garden Village (LGV), and Runnymede Borough Council (RBC) has been prepared to assist the Inspector in carrying out the Examination in Public (EIP) of the Runnymede Local Plan 2030.

1.2 This SoCG addresses matters pertaining to Stage 3 of the EIP (Matter 10: Infrastructure Provision). All other matters relating to Longcross Garden Village have been considered through the earlier stages of the EIP and are not, therefore, addressed through this SoCG.

1.3 Where relevant, this SoCG cross-refers to RBC's evidence base including any documents published since the conclusion of the Stage 2 hearings in February 2019 including the A320 Update Paper (September 2019) (RBCLP_52).
Background

2.1 Following the Stage 2 examination hearings, further transport modelling has been commissioned by RBC to re-assess the impacts of the draft Local Plan upon the local and strategic highway networks, in particular upon the A320 and Junctions 11 and 13 of the M25. This work has now been completed by RBC, working closely with SCC and Highways England and is summarised in more detail in the Council’s A320 Update Paper 2019 (RBCLP_52) and associated Statements of Common Ground.

2.2 During the period following the Stage 2 hearings, SCC has also submitted its Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bid (April 2019) which seeks advance funding for necessary improvements to the A320 (the ‘A320 North of Woking scheme’) comprising a number of junction- and link-based improvements. This bid (RBCLP_44) supports the delivery of 3,687 homes which are said to be ‘dependent’ on the infrastructure improvements along the corridor. In total, this concerns 11 dependent developments of which LGV is the most significant in terms of scale and overall housing delivery numbers within the plan period.

2.3 The HIF Bid submitted by SCC indicates that the occupation of new residential development within the A320 ‘area of influence’ should be restricted prior to the completion of the A320 works, if necessary through the use of Grampian condition or similar mechanism. The HIF Bid anticipates that the A320 North of Woking works are not due to be completed until 2023/24 (i.e. by end of March 2024). On that basis, the delivery of first occupations of homes at LGV which have yet to receive planning permission (totalling approximately 1,550 homes) could be delayed by a period of 3 years.

2.4 RBC and Crest & CGNU agree that LGV’s important contribution to the delivery of housing to meet the overall requirement in the Local Plan justifies exploring the means of securing the continued delivery of housing, provided that the transport outcomes remain consistent with and do not contradict RBC’s and SCC’s priorities for the delivery of the A320 North of Woking scheme and maintain acceptable conditions of highway safety on the local road network.

2.5 Taking this into account, a revised housing trajectory prepared by Crest & CGNU identifies the anticipated delivery of homes at LGV, taking account the latest assessment of likely housing mix on Longcross North and South, the likely delivery timetable for commercial redevelopment on Longcross North and the timetable for
bringing forward the A320 improvement works by March 2024. This is presented in Figure 2.1 below.

**Figure 2.1 – Revised Housing Trajectory for Longcross Garden Village**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Longcross North</th>
<th>Longcross South</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017/2018</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018/2019</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2020/2021</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021/2022</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022/2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>2023/2024</td>
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<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>2024/2025</td>
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<td>170</td>
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<td>2025/2026</td>
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<td>175</td>
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<td>2029/2030</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>426</strong></td>
<td><strong>1320</strong></td>
<td><strong>1746</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6 The trajectory presented in Figure 2.1 is based upon the submission of an outline planning application for a residential-led development on Longcross South by spring 2020 and a full planning application for a PRS (Private Rental Sector) phase of development on Longcross North in the first half of 2020. By comparison with the trajectory previously submitted on behalf of Crest & CGNU, the revised trajectory in Figure 2.1 includes an accelerated build-out in the early phases of delivery and an increased peak rate of completions during the middle phases of delivery. The trajectory has been produced by Crest & CGNU and is considered reasonable and achievable in the context of current and ongoing discussions between Crest & CGNU and RBC.

2.7 In order to deliver the trajectory presented in Figure 2.1 above, prior to the anticipated completion of the A320 North of Woking scheme, RBC and Crest & CGNU have identified further studies to support the continuing delivery of housing at LGV without unacceptably impacting upon the A320 corridor and, thereby avoiding a suspension of house-building operations on this strategically-significant housing allocation site which could potentially delay some housing delivery (circa. 450 dwellings) to beyond the plan period.
DELIVERY OF HOUSING AT LGV

3.1 Discussions between RBC and Crest & CGNU have considered whether any additional traffic generated by the development could be accommodated on the local highway network without materially affecting the A320 corridor, under an ‘interim’ scenario or scenarios and where the A320 North of Woking scheme has not yet been completed. RBC and Crest & CGNU acknowledge and agree that these interim scenarios will need to be subject to the conclusions of detailed transport assessments produced in advance or alongside individual planning applications (where required) with appropriate modelling assumptions agreed in advance with SCC as the local highway authority.

3.2 In considering these potential effects, transport assessment(s), mitigation strategies and associated travel plans will also reflect Crest & CGNU’s commitment to strongly promoting modal shift in line with the draft Local Plan policies and NPPF, in particular measures to maximise use of the enhanced rail service now secured for at Longcross station.

3.3 The following further studies have been agreed between RBC and Crest & CGNU to determine how the delivery of development at LGV can progress in advance of and in parallel to the A320 works being completed.

Study 1: Project-specific assessment of A320 tolerance for early Longcross delivery (pre-A320 improvements)

3.4 RBC and Crest & CGNU agree that, to ensure the continued timely delivery of new homes and jobs, there will be a need to consider the detailed impacts of remaining, unconsented development at LGV prior to the delivery of the main A320 works. In consultation with SCC, such an assessment would consider what changes in traffic would occur as a result of the first phase(s) of development at LGV (above the development already benefiting from planning permission) to establish what tolerances exist (if any) that would be acceptable to RBC in advance of the A320 North of Woking works being completed. This assessment would concern only the residual consequence on car trips once all other forms of sustainable travel had been taken into account, including the enhanced rail service as noted above.

3.5 The revised SHAR Report (RBCLP_47) reports on the sensitivity of the transport modelling assignment in reflecting changes in travel demand and proposed new infrastructure. The revised SHAR indicates (Para 7.2.3/3) how an early release of
housing at LGV would lead to some re-routing of traffic, which could serve to reduce the net transport effects on the A320 corridor.

3.6 The parameters and outcome of this assessment will be the subject of on-going discussions with SCC, in its role as custodian of the revised SHAR model, which RBC and Crest & CGNU agree offers a means of informing such interim scenarios. This will form part of the Longcross South planning application anticipated to be submitted in Spring 2020.

**Study 2: Commercial development trip rate 'credits'**

3.7 Crest & CGNU agrees to work with RBC and SCC to quantify the potential for continued delivery of housing at Longcross Garden Village through deferral of the implementation and occupation of consented B1 Office development at Longcross North (Planning Ref. RU13/0856 (amended by RU.16/0584)). This permission, which is undergoing a phased implementation programme, has been assessed to generate a significant quantum of net trips on the local highway network including the A320. In practice, the timetable for bringing forward a significant element of further permitted B1 development prior to March 2024 is limited in any event and therefore those permitted trips can reasonably be ‘deferred’ to beyond the anticipated completion date of A320 improvements, being March 2024. This effectively provides a ‘trip credit’ that can be applied in favour of continuing housing development at Longcross until the A320 improvement works are completed.

3.8 The principle of a deferral would relate to the remaining implementation of B1 office land-uses on Longcross North (62,260 sqm) to the latest date permitted under the existing Hybrid permission (Condition 5 specifies 12.8.2022 for submission of reserved matters and, pursuant to condition 6(ii), latest commencement of 12.8.2023). Such deferral would therefore be permissible under the existing planning permission framework for Longcross North, whilst not precluding the early delivery of 16,765 sqm of B1 and a mixed use Discovery Centre already benefiting from reserved matters consent.

3.9 RBC and Crest & CGNU agree that this approach has previously been accepted by RBC, in consultation with SCC, in connection with the granting of permission for up to 200 homes at Longcross North (the hybrid planning permission ref: RU.13/0856, amended by RU.16/0584) at the expense of approximately 20,000sqm of B1 office space previously approved (under permission RU.05/0538) and that this is considered to be an acceptable way of managing the net impact of developments where the applicants are
able to demonstrate, with the agreement of SCC as highway authority, no net direct
direct impact on the highway network. The existing planning permission and approved site-
wide phasing strategy for Longcross North will be reviewed and if necessary, amended
through formal application to RBC.

3.10 It is also agreed that the approach would have equal merit in the event of an alternative
land-use schedule for Longcross North, whereby any changes to land use quantum under
the existing consent or through variations to it, would create a 'headroom' of
vehicular trips which could be used to off-set the travel demand associated with
housing.

3.11 In summary, RBC and Crest & CGNU agree that undertaking the above transport studies
would provide a means of securing the continued delivery of housing units at LGV, prior
to the full completion of the A320 works. This principle has also been agreed between
RBC and SCC (RBCLP_054).

3.12 RBC and Crest & CGNU are satisfied in principle that the combined effect of the studies
outlined above, subject to detailed transport assessment and agreement with SCC,
provide a route by which Crest & CGNU are able to deliver the revised housing
trajectory put forward with this Statement (Figure 2.1) and as set out in the A320
Update Paper (RBCLP_52).

POTENTIAL EARLY FUNDING MECHANISMS

4.1 A detailed explanation of the strategic funding mechanisms for delivery of the A320
North of Woking scheme, including the approach to securing developer contributions, is
set out in the RBC Update Paper.

4.2 Crest & CGNU agree to contribute proportionately towards the A320 North of Woking
corridor improvements relative to the impact of development at LGV.

4.3 In order to maintain the stated housing delivery rates at LGV (see Figure 2.1 above),
Crest & CGNU and RBC also agree, where necessary and in consultation with SCC as
Highway Authority, to identify mitigation that could support continued delivery of
housing. In this vein, consideration would be given to prioritising or delivering aspects
of the A320 infrastructure so that they can be provided in a timely fashion to support
development.
4.4 It is acknowledged that SCC will be the lead authority for delivering the A320 North of Woking scheme, and Crest & CGNU and RBC commit to working together with SCC if alternative forms of direct intervention offer means of minimising the risk of an implementation delay. Where this is achieved through the procurement of design activities or construction works to meet these priorities, RBC agrees that such relevant advance costs as may be incurred by Crest & CGNU would be appropriately compensated by way of potential discount or exemption for Crest & CGNU through SPD tariff-informed S106 and/or CIL mechanisms as relevant to the A320 North of Woking scheme.

Signatories

[Signature]

Dated 20th September 2019
Ref:7935

Paul Turrell, Chief Executive, Runnymede Borough Council

[Signature]

Samantha Bryans, Development Director, Crest Nicholson and CGNU