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Area Transport Strategy for Horsham

Spatial Context

- 7.82 Horsham District sits between Gatwick Airport to the north and Brighton and Worthing to the south. The District is largely rural in nature and has a range of market towns and villages, and good rail links to the coast and the capital.
- 7.83 Horsham town is the largest settlement in the District by some margin, with a population of over 50,000, which is more than the population of the next 6 largest settlements of Southwater, Billingshurst, Storrington, Steyning, Henfield and Pulborough which have a combined population of over 40,000. Horsham is a market town on the upper reaches of the River Arun on the fringe of the Weald. It is the administrative centre of the Horsham district. It is in the centre of the Weald in the Low Weald, at the western edge of the High Weald, with the Surrey Hills of the North Downs to the north and the Sussex Downs of the South Downs to the south.
- 7.84 Horsham has developed beyond its original boundaries to incorporate some of the smaller hamlets which now form part of its outer area.
- 7.85 Significant industries now are financial services, electronics, and technology. Horsham is also a commuter town serving London, Gatwick Airport, Crawley and the South Coast.
- 7.86 Horsham District's population is estimated to grow by 19.2% to 169,500 by 2043 from 142,200 in 2018. For the 65+ age group the forecast population is expected to increase from 32,000 in 2018 to 51,400 (60.6%) over the period 2018-2043²⁸. There are a large number of affluent areas in the district with very limited areas of deprivation.
- 7.87 The Horsham District Planning Framework allocates sites for at least 16,000 dwellings to come forward between 2011 and 2031. The emerging

²⁸ WSCC: [West Sussex Life](#) (accessed May 2021)

Horsham Local Plan is proposing to allocate additional sites for new homes and commercial development that are expected to come forward in the period up to 2038 alongside infrastructure improvements.

Transport Context

- 7.88 The A24 is the main north-south route that passes through the district. It is largely dual carriageway with a mix of junction types, some of which are grade separated and some of which are being signal controlled. Crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists on this section of A24 are mainly provided at grade and are very limited due to the low level of demand to cross the A24 by those modes. The A272 cuts through the centre of the district east to west providing connections to the A3 at Petersfield in the west and Haywards Heath and beyond to Uckfield in the east. The A264 connects the A29 and A24 south of Horsham to the M23/A23 south of Crawley. The A283 connects the A24 at Washington to the A27 at Shoreham. In addition, the A29 connects the smaller settlements in the west of the District including Pulborough and Billingshurst. The A281 runs from northwest to southeast, connecting Horsham to Guildford and towards Brighton.
- 7.89 The Arun Valley Line provides rail connections to the north (destinations such as Crawley, Gatwick, London and Peterborough), and the south (destinations such as Chichester, Bognor Regis and Southampton). The Sutton & Mole Valley Line provides an alternative route to London via Dorking and Sutton.
- 7.90 There are eight railway stations in Horsham District, 7 of which are on the Arun Valley Line. The stations have varying levels of service and usage with Horsham station being the most well served and used with over 2.5 million passengers per annum, which is around the total passenger numbers for the other 7 stations in the district combined. On the opposite end of the scale is Faygate station with very limited services and under 10,000 passengers per year. Horsham Railway Station is well served by buses both locally and onto destinations such as Haywards Heath, Southwater and Worthing.
- 7.91 The local bus network is fairly comprehensive in Horsham town but lacks higher frequency services that could be considered as 'turn up and go'. The current bus usage would not support additional investment in services by the commercial operator. The bus network is largely operated on a commercial basis by Metrobus with a smaller number of Stagecoach services in the District. Some services, particularly those that connect the surrounding rural areas are operated under tender by the County Council. The 100 service is the most notable which provides services between Horsham and Burgess Hill via Henfield, Pulborough and Billingshurst and many villages in between. Buses have limited bus priority in Horsham town centre. Buses have in the main little to no priority over other traffic in other towns. Smaller settlements in the District have limited bus services with rural areas having in the main no bus service or a very limited service.
- 7.92 The cycle network in Horsham is comprised of a mix of off-carriageway, typically shared use routes and signed routes on quieter roads. National Cycle Network route 223, the Downs Link provides a connection from the

North Downs and Guildford to the South Downs and Shoreham and is primarily a leisure route.

Key Issues

7.93 Travel behaviour in the District is currently dominated by car travel and public transport while active travel modes are not seen as viable options for many journeys which leads to a number of issues. The current key transport issues in Horsham district are:

- Congestion on the A24 during peak periods;
- Congestion on the A264 during peak periods;
- Congestion on the A272 during peak periods;
- Rat-running on less suitable routes to avoid congestion;
- Traffic-related air quality management areas in Storrington and Cowfold;
- Unreliable rail service to London;
- Poor access to the railway from settlements away from rail lines;
- Bus journey times are slow, and punctuality is affected at peak times due to congestion;
- Cycle network is primarily on highway, is discontinuous and indirect and does not meet user needs; and
- Severance caused by the A24 and the Arun Valley and Mole Valley lines.

7.94 In the future, once Horsham Local Plan development takes place, it is anticipated that some of the current transport issues will worsen if background traffic also grows as forecast. Therefore, ambitious sustainable transport and demand management interventions are needed in Horsham and the surrounding area that will reduce car travel, particularly at peak times. If such interventions are not delivered or are not successful, then the following locations on the highway network are likely to require capacity improvement in the future to mitigate the impacts of development:

- A24 / A272 Buckbarn junction
- Hop Oast Roundabout – A24 / B2237
- Washington Roundabout - A24 / A283
- Robin Hood Roundabout - A24 / B2237
- Great Daux Roundabout – A24 / A264
- Moorhead roundabout – A264/B2195

Transport Strategy for Horsham

7.95 Our transport strategy for Horsham in the short term is to deliver improvements within existing highway land to provide bus priority at signal-controlled junctions and deliver small scale 'tactical' highway improvements on A24 and A264 as development comes forward.

- 7.96 We will facilitate the shift to electric vehicles initially by facilitating the introduction of on-street electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Horsham, Billingshurst, Pulborough, Storrington Southwater, Colgate and Rusper where communities rely on on-street parking.
- 7.97 We will also prioritise active travel modes where development takes place and deliver priority cycle routes such as the Horsham to Crawley cycle route.
- 7.98 In the medium term we will improve public transport services by giving them greater priority where possible on strategically important corridors in parallel with improvements to the A24 and pedestrian and cycle facilities as well as bus stop infrastructure improvements.
- 7.99 We will investigate an integrated approach to resolving capacity issues on the A264 and the inappropriate use of parallel rural routes which result from this, seeking an appropriate balance between improved public transport and use of private transport.
- 7.100 In the long term we will support the rail industry to provide an improved service on the Arun Valley Line.

Short term (2022-27) priorities for the Horsham area

- Bus Priority at signal-controlled junctions
- Bus and rail interchange improvements
- Flexible shared transport services / Rural Mobility
- Mobility Hubs
- Active travel infrastructure 'quick wins'
- On-street electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Horsham, Billingshurst, Colgate, Pulborough, Rusper, Storrington and Southwater
- Small scale 'tactical' highway improvements
- Horsham to Crawley cycle route
- Air Quality Action Plan measures in Storrington and Cowfold

Medium term (2027-32) priorities for the Horsham area

- Enhanced bus priority in Horsham
- A24 junction improvements
- A264 study to develop integrated transport scheme
- North – south sustainable transport corridor connecting key settlements such as Worthing, Horsham and Crawley
- LCWIP priorities
- Pedestrian and cycle crossings infrastructure on the A24
- On-street electric vehicle charging infrastructure in remaining areas

Long term (2032-36) priorities for the Horsham area

- Potentially local highway capacity enhancements (subject to need)
- LCWIP priorities

- Implement scheme for A264 from study recommendations

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