

Statement of Common Ground

Between: Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) and Network Rail

Relating to: Rail infrastructure requirements to support the Sevenoaks District Local Plan and supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan

1. Purpose of this Statement

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground records the shared understanding between Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) and Network Rail in relation to the Sevenoaks District Local Plan and the rail-related infrastructure requirements arising from planned growth across the District. It provides evidence of ongoing engagement and collaboration and supports the Infrastructure Delivery Plan by confirming areas of agreement and identifying any matters where further work is required.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 SDC is responsible for preparing the Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan, identifying infrastructure needs arising from growth, and securing delivery through planning policy and developer contributions.
- 2.2 Network Rail is responsible for the safe, efficient and sustainable operation, maintenance and enhancement of the rail network, including stations, track, signalling and associated assets. Network Rail also provides technical advice on development impacts, asset protection, capacity pressures and required infrastructure improvements.

3. Evidence Considered

- 3.1 Both parties have considered the following evidence in forming this Statement:
- The scale and distribution of growth set out in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan;
 - The Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2026;
 - Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan – Southern Region (Control Period 7);
 - Network Rail South East Route: Kent Area Route Study 2018;
 - Station capacity and usage data;
 - National and local policy, including Department for Transport (DfT) guidance on developer contributions for rail; and
 - Site-specific assessments and discussions between SDC and Network Rail.

4. Areas of Agreement

- 4.1 SDC and Network Rail agree that:

1. The level and distribution of growth proposed in the Sevenoaks District Local Plan has been reviewed and understood, and its implications for the rail network have been assessed.
2. The rail projects identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan are necessary, proportionate and based on the best available evidence, including demand forecasting undertaken with Network Rail to understand future passenger growth, station capacity pressures and operational impacts arising from Local Plan development. This ensures that the proposed interventions are targeted, deliverable in principle, and aligned with both local growth expectations and Network Rail's strategic planning framework.
3. Network Rail has reviewed the rail projects listed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and agrees that they represent an appropriate and proportionate response to the impacts of planned growth.
4. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan correctly identifies where additional capacity and station enhancements are required, including:
 - Station accessibility improvements;
 - Station safety improvements;
 - Improvements to station passenger facilities;
 - Station entrance and public realm enhancements;
 - Increased car parking capacity;
 - Consideration of where additional rolling stock is required; and
 - Upgrades to railway crossings.
5. Delivery of rail infrastructure will require Section 106 contributions on relevant planning permissions in line with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This ensures that development directly mitigates its impacts on the rail network and that necessary capacity and station improvements can be delivered at the right time, in partnership with Network Rail and in accordance with Local Plan policies.
6. Both SDC and Network Rail are committed to ongoing engagement throughout the plan period, including regular review and updating of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan to ensure it remains accurate, up to date and reflective of emerging evidence.
7. The projects identified are deliverable in principle, subject to detailed design, feasibility, land availability, operational safety requirements and funding. Both parties agree that no fundamental constraints have been identified that would prevent rail infrastructure from being delivered in principle.

8. SDC and Network Rail will continue to work collaboratively on planning applications to secure appropriate developer contributions and ensure timely delivery of required rail infrastructure.

5. Areas of Ongoing Work / Matters Not Yet Agreed

5.1 The following matters require further work or clarification:

1. Detailed feasibility and costings for the specific rail infrastructure projects listed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
2. Clarifying the expected commencement of each project, recognising that delivery timing is dependent on when associated development comes forward and when Network Rail is able to progress design and implementation.

5.2 Both parties are committed to resolving these matters through continued engagement.

6. Delivery and Phasing

6.1 SDC and Network Rail acknowledge that the delivery of rail infrastructure will depend on:

- The timing and phasing of development;
- The availability of operational rail land and any required consents;
- The completion of detailed feasibility, design and asset-protection assessments; and
- Coordination with wider infrastructure programmes.

6.2 Indicative delivery timescales are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and will be refined as further information becomes available in due course.

7. Signatures

Signed on behalf of Sevenoaks District Council	
Name:	
Role:	
Date:	

Signed on behalf of Network Rail	
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Name:	
Role:	
Date:	

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