

MALDON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLANMatter 4 – Strategic Housing Growth – South Maldon Garden Suburb and Park Drive and Heybridge SwiftsOutstanding Task

The Inspector requested an update be provided with regards the funding of mitigation identified in the Maldon Local Development Plan, with particular reference to that proposed at Eves Corner and Well Lane through the SELEP Local Growth Fund.

'Council to write to the Inspector around March 2015 to confirm SELEP and Essex funding for the stated highway improvements. If not confirmed, the Inspector will want to know how these works will be funded – letter to be received by the Inspector by no later than 31st March 2015.'

ECC/MDC Policy Position

Essex County Council (ECC) and Maldon District Council (MDC) outlined its position in relation to highway mitigation, and its funding, at the Hearing Sessions held in January/February 2015. The joint position is outlined in the following documents submitted to the examination:

Position Statements:

- Updated duty to co-operate Position Statement on strategic highways issues associated with the Maldon District Local Development Plan
- Traffic – A414 Danbury between Essex Highways and Chelmsford City Council

Statements of Common Ground

- Transport for Matter 3 – North Heybridge Garden Suburb (Doc 116)
- Matter 4 – South Maldon Garden Suburb (DOC 118)

In summary these outlined the following position:

A route based strategy for the A414 between Chelmsford and Maldon has been allocated £4m (£2m of SELEP funding matched by £2m from Essex County Council). The prioritised schemes below have been approved by the ECC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, and specific designs are being progressed at the relevant junctions. Funding is allocated within the 2015/16 and 2016/17 financial years. The package includes improvements to the following junctions, in order of priority:

(i) A414 / B1018 Limebrook Way (est £1.47m)

The widening of Limebrook Way and A414 west approaches to the junction and widening of the A414 North exit arm, as identified as a requirement to support early delivery of development in the LDP. Widening will provide two entry lanes on all four approaches to the junction.

Further investigation is being progressed into providing left turn slip options for both the A414 eastbound to A414 northbound (the higher priority), and Limebrook Way to A414 westbound. Left turn slip lane options are yet to be costed, but there is some funding available within SELEP monies.

(ii) A414 / Little Baddow Road / Mayes Lane (Eves Corner) (est £0.28m)

Providing pre-signals on the minor approaches to the junction to provide additional capacity and improve peak time traffic operations on the A414.

(iii) A414 / Well Lane (est £0.235m)

Provide a priority junction including eastbound right turn lane to replace the current mini-roundabout, to improve traffic flow along the A414, and in combination with improvements at Eves Corner to deter 'rat running'.

(iv) A414 / Spital Road (est £0.94m)

Widening to provide a dedicated northbound lane at the roundabout and widening of the north and southbound approaches to the junction.

Junctions, i, ii, and iv listed above were identified by ECC as requiring mitigation to support the growth identified in the submitted LDP, and are identified in the IDP, Appendix 13 as being funded through pooled contributions (i and iv) and CIL (ii). The commitment to fund these schemes under the Local Growth Fund will ease the viability on these developments, and ensure early delivery of key highway infrastructure to deliver the LDP (ie by 2016/17).

The approved package of measures will assist in reducing congestion and improve journey times along the A414 between Maldon and Chelmsford; primarily consisting of four junction improvement schemes, to provide additional capacity to ease current traffic flows, and to provide for future demand (as foreseen in the submitted LDP).

All reasonable options have been considered at Eves Corner to help mitigate the potential impact of the LDP at Eves Corner. In so doing some additional mitigation has been identified at Well Lane, which in tandem with mitigation at Eves Corner will assist the flow of traffic on the A414, and prioritise such movements. Both schemes have been prioritised by ECC for funding and delivery, as part of the SELEP Local Growth Fund, and business cases are well in progress to commence schemes by 2016/17.

SELEP Business Case Update

Funding for the A414 Chelmsford to Maldon Route Based Strategy has been allocated by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to SELEP, a copy of the formal funding award letter (6th February 2015) is attached. This funding will be released to ECC following the approval of a satisfactory business case by the SELEP Board. The A414 Chelmsford to Maldon business case, based upon the proposals listed above, is in preparation for discussion with the SELEP Independent Technical Evaluator (ITE), which is expected in the coming weeks. It is expected that the ITE will recommend SELEP Board approves funding for the scheme at its May 2015 Board meeting. ECC has requested a meeting with the ITE to discuss the draft business case to ensure that the approval process is as smooth as possible. The ECC funding component (£2m) has been set aside for inclusion within the 2015/16 and 2016/17 capital programmes.



Department for Communities and Local Government

Ms Margaret Lee
Executive Director for Corporate Services
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6 February 2015

Dear Ms Lee,

Local Growth Fund

Following the agreement of the Growth Deal between South East LEP (“the LEP”) and Government I am writing to confirm the arrangements for Local Growth Fund grant payments to be made in 2015-16 by the Department for Communities and Local Government (“DCLG”) to Essex County Council (“the Council”) as the accountable body for the LEP.

DCLG will release a Local Growth Fund capital grant payment of **£69.45m in four equal quarterly instalments on the: 1st April 2015; 1st July 2015; 1st October 2015; and 4th January 2016**. This covers funding for projects that start in 2015-16 as set out in the Growth Deal. This figure also includes £15.8m of pre-allocated Local Growth Fund (known as the Local Transport Body allocation). Payments will be made under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003.

Project ‘Tail’ Funding for 2015-16 project starts

As set out in the Growth Deal, 2015-16 project starts also come with a tail of future years’ funding where investment is needed over more than one year. For 2015-16 project starts the total associated tail funding to be paid to the Council in future years is £96.1m (this figure is rounded to one decimal place).

This means that Government is committed to continuing to fund these projects in future years. If projects are not taken forward, for whatever reason, the LEP will not be entitled to receive the associated tail funding.

Future Years Budget Profiles

The announcement of expanded Growth Deals on 29 January means that further conversations will be needed to finalise the overall annual Growth Deal budget profiles for 2016-17 onwards. These conversations will build on the recent discussions Government has been having with LEPs on annual profiles for the original Growth Deal.

Once these budgets have been finalised, in future years the annual grant letter and grant determination will reflect any changes to that year's overall budget as a result of spending performance in the previous year, and the discussions with Government on that performance.

Local Growth Funding paid by DfT

You should also note that DfT will continue to hold and manage two elements of the Local Growth Fund. Separate arrangements will apply to that funding, as follows:

1. Funding for specific schemes which are still subject to business case sign off by DfT: DfT will pay the grant directly to the accountable body under arrangements to be advised by them.
2. The approved tail of existing major schemes included in the pre-committed element of the Local Growth Fund: DfT will continue to pay this funding directly to the scheme promoter.

Funding Requirements

We expect that all funding paid pursuant to the Growth Deal, irrespective of whether paid by DCLG or DfT will fulfil the following requirements:

- 1) It will be used to support the Growth Deal agreed between the Government and the LEP and will be used to secure the outcomes set out in the Growth Deal.
- 2) It will be deployed solely in accordance with decisions made through a local assurance framework agreed between the LEP and the Council as the accountable body. This framework must be consistent with the standards set out in the national assurance framework. In the case of specific schemes which are still subject to business case sign off by DfT, the DfT business case sign-off process may mean that the local assurance framework process is not required in full. This will be agreed on a scheme by scheme basis.
- 3) That you will track progress against agreed core metrics and outcomes, in line with the national monitoring and evaluation framework.

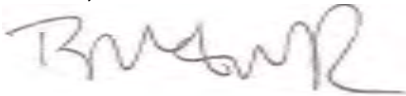
The Council as the accountable body and the LEP will be expected to manage the implementation of the Growth Deal in order to deliver the outcomes agreed. If the LEP wishes to make changes to projects that have been agreed as part of the Growth Deal, they must agree these changes with Government in advance of the next quarterly payment. The first point of contact, if the LEP wishes to make changes to projects, should be the LEP's Cities and Local Growth Unit relationship manager who will be able to advise on next steps.

The Council is reminded that as the accountable body for the LEP it is responsible for ensuring that expenditure is spent in accordance with all applicable legal requirements. This includes, for example, state aid and public procurement law. The Council is reminded that any development decisions for specific proposals must go through the normal planning process and be guided by local plans, taking into account all material considerations. The Council will, of course, be subject to their normal internal and external audit controls.

The LEP and the Council are also reminded of their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and should have regard to these requirements when apportioning Local Growth funding.

Finally, as set out in the Growth Deal, the expectation is that the Council and the LEP will comply with any current publicity requirements (including any branding guidelines) for Growth Deals.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Walker', is written over a faint, light blue rectangular background.

Tom Walker
Director, Cities and Local Growth Unit