

**Q
QUALITY
PARISH
COUNCIL**

Chairman; Dr. Nic Cooper



Please address any reply to:
Little Baddow Parish Council
C/o Cllr K. Ferguson
Iona
North Hill
Little Baddow
Essex CM3 4TB

20th February 2015

D. Vickery DipT&CP MRTPI
C/O Ms A. Copsey, Programme Officer,
Examination Office,
Longcroft Cottage,
Bentley Road,
Clacton-on-Sea,
Essex CO16 9BX.

Dear Sir,

Maldon Local Plan Examination

Thank you for your invitation to Little Baddow Parish Council to respond to comments from Essex Highways (EH) on our recent submission to you at the Examination Hearings. Nothing in their document gives us any comfort that the issues we have raised regarding the impact of the Maldon LDP upon Danbury and Little Baddow can be effectively ameliorated.

Little Baddow Parish Councillors have all been consulted before submitting this letter, with the exception of one who is in hospital and another who is away. What follows is necessarily not based on a formal Council meeting due to the time constraints, but nevertheless represents the considered unanimous view of the remainder of the Council.

We consider that the impact of the proposed Maldon LDP upon Danbury and Little Baddow will be severe and unsustainable. This is for the following reasons:

1. We consider that the model figures offered by EH are self-evidently flawed. EH themselves admit that –
 - 1.1. the model is based upon limited experience with pre-signalling
 - 1.2. the model is unreliable when 100% capacity is exceeded

Page 1.

Little Baddow Parish Council
1 Popes Leeze, East Street, Coggeshall CO6 1SE
Parish Clerk Mr Roger A Upward

Tele/Fax: 01376-619506

E-mail: littlebaddow@yahoo.co.uk
www.littlebaddow.org.uk

Q QUALITY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman; Dr. Nic Cooper

- 1.3. it delivers results that are illogical (for example, that when the Maldon/Heybridge development is added to the 2026 background traffic level the traffic delays reduce on Little Baddow Road); and
- 1.4. the data used in the model is inconsistent with observational data provided by Highways whose observed data for October 2013 on this road was 5 times that in the model for the base layout. *EH has not addressed this inconsistency in its latest document.*
2. In any event, it is not realistic for such a model to take account of the complexity of the area immediately to the North of Eves Corner, including Eves Corner (the road) and Little Baddow Road as far as St John's School. We consider that the congestion in that area will cause much more substantial delays than the model suggests for those attempting to access the Eves Corner area from the north or those exiting the A414 at Eves Corner heading northwards. *In the latest document, EH has not responded regarding the gridlock potential at Eves Corner, saying merely that we have raised valid issues but that these will be addressed at the detailed design stage.* If, as we expect, the gridlock problem cannot be solved at that stage, then the absence of a solution will leave residents without peak time access to schools, shops, public transport and medical facilities; and buses & emergency vehicles will have no realistic access to the A414. In addition, if there is no effective solution to the gridlock issue, then traffic trying to *exit* the A414 will back up, affecting traffic flows along that main road. We can genuinely envisage no effective solution.
3. We do not believe that drivers will accept the increased queueing that the model predicts without radical increase in rat-running, and argue that the evidence available suggests there will be a major impact in years to come upon the minor roads and Protected Lanes between the A414 East of Danbury and the A12. *In the latest submission, EH suggests that "the only apparent rat-running on the North side of the A414 is by vehicles ...egressing Butts Lane onto Little Baddow Road in order to access Eves Corner".* EH's model indicates that by 2026 the average delay per pcu will be 12 minutes. EH fails to consider that –
 - 3.1. The travel time from the A414 along Runsell Lane and then down Little Baddow Road to Eves Corner is approximately 2 mins 30 seconds. A car taking this route will then according to EH's model encounter a queue of 7.7 vehicles and a delay of 54 seconds – thus a rat-run of a total time of under three and a half minutes compares well with a delay of 12 minutes on the A414

Page 2.

Little Baddow Parish Council
1 Popes Leeze, East Street, Coggeshall CO6 1SE
 Parish Clerk Mr Roger A Upward

Tele/Fax: 01376-619506

E-mail: littlebaddow@yahoo.co.uk
www.littlebaddow.org.uk

Q QUALITY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman; Dr. Nic Cooper

3.2. It is possible for a car to travel from the junction of the A414 and Runsell Lane (i) to the A414 at Riffhams Lane, or (ii) to the A414 at its junction with the A12 via Colam Lane, Church Road and Hammonds Road, or (iii) to the Boreham Interchange (where the proposed new rail station will be accessed) all of which can be completed within 12 minutes.

3.3. For cars travelling to the Boreham Interchange or to the A414 junction with the A12, an alternative route is from Maldon Road up Tom Tit Lane, through Woodham Walter, along Spring Elms Lane, Holybread Lane and Hammonds Road. To reach either of these destinations the time needed is less than the time EH's model predicts it will take to reach either of these locations using the A414 through Danbury.

We submit, therefore, that there are multiple effective opportunities for rat-running that EH has failed to consider. Each of the routes listed above except for that to Eves Corner involves travel along sections of Protected Lanes. Chelmsford City Council's adopted LDP contains a Policy (DC15) which states that any proposals which would give rise to a material increase in the amount of traffic using Protected Lanes will not be permitted.

4. However, even if the model's predictions are accepted and the impact on residents and roads in Little Baddow is discounted, we consider that the increase that the model predicts in A414 traffic queueing in peak times is clearly severe: an increase in the model's queues from today's 126 vehicles eastbound in the AM peak to 341 (a 3 times multiple in the predicted delay times) and an increase from 26 vehicles to 232 in the evening peak (an 8 times multiple) cannot be described as *other than* severe.
5. In their latest submission, *EH state in passing that "the timing of the signals will ultimately determine the queue lengths"*. In other words, the model is questionable in yet another respect, in that there is no hard-and-fast determination of the timing of the signals, and accordingly of queue lengths. As a consequence of the severity of the impact on the A414 which EH's model reflects, the pressure to adjust the timing to favour A414 flows will be immense, to the detriment of local traffic from Little Baddow Road.

Accordingly, we are of the view that ***the Maldon LDP should be declared as unsound because of the severe and unsustainable impact that it will have on the A414 at Danbury and adjacent minor roads in Little Baddow.***

Page 3.

Little Baddow Parish Council
1 Popes Leeze, East Street, Coggeshall CO6 1SE
Parish Clerk Mr Roger A Upward

Tele/Fax: 01376-619506

E-mail: littlebaddow@yahoo.co.uk
www.littlebaddow.org.uk

Q
QUALITY
PARISH
COUNCIL

Chairman; Dr. Nic Cooper

In expressing this view, we take into account both the unsustainable situation for Maldon residents seeking to access Chelmsford or beyond and the unsustainable adverse impact on the c.8000 residents of Danbury and Little Baddow.

We recognise that if the Maldon LDP is ruled as unsound there will be significant development nonetheless at Maldon. We appreciate that the situation in Danbury is going to deteriorate badly whatever your decision. However, once that deterioration arises, we believe that the severity will be anyway so great and notorious – with or without the proposed mitigation - that a radical, albeit expensive, alternative solution will eventually have to be found.

Cllr Keith Ferguson
For Little Baddow Parish Council

Page 4.

Little Baddow Parish Council
1 Popes Leeze, East Street, Coggeshall CO6 1SE
Parish Clerk Mr Roger A Upward

Tele/Fax: 01376-619506

E-mail: littlebaddow@yahoo.co.uk
www.littlebaddow.org.uk