

Matter 10 – Infrastructure and Hearings Overflow

Little Baddow Parish Council Statement regarding Eves Corner – Essex County Council/Essex Highways Response

Little Baddow Parish Council (LBPC) assert that a number of issues raised by them have not been addressed. Essex County Council (ECC)/Essex Highways (EH) would contest that a variety of points raised by Chelmsford City Council (CCC), as the local authority, have been considered and, as has been indicated in CCC and ECC's A414 Danbury Position Statement, been addressed to the satisfaction of CCC.

LBPC raise a number of issues with regard to the proposed design of pre-signals at Eves Corner. Whilst they are valid points, these are issues that will be addressed at the detailed design stage. "The South East Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Deal includes an allocation of Local Growth Fund (LGF) monies for the A414 Maldon to Chelmsford Route Based Strategy Package. This package includes the works required in Danbury at Eves Corner and Well Lane. This allocation of £2m is matched by a commitment from ECC for £2m to give £4m of funding in total, split equally between 2015/16 and 2016/17. The funding allocation is specifically awarded to this project and is not subject to any further bid process or competition with other schemes. SELEP LGF money will be released following SELEP Board approval of the detailed business case (the principal of the scheme having already been established and approved) which expected in May 2015. ECC's own contribution is in its approved budget and resources have already been committed to work up the detail of the scheme. In a highly unlikely and worst case scenario where the LGF money is for some reason held up, ECC's own contribution to this scheme is more than enough to cover the cost of the required mitigation at the junctions named above if required."

The pre-signals layout has been drawn up and assessed for road capacity as part of the Maldon LDP highway impact assessment. ECC/EH and CCC agree that the proposed mitigation measure of pre-signals at Eves Corner junction is the only option for reducing potential traffic impacts post-LDP development in the short term, and will provide an improvement on the operation of the junction over its existing layout.

LBPC questioned some of the modelling outputs and suggested that queue lengths will extend to 36 vehicles as a result of the pre-signals. ECC/EH does not consider such queue lengths will occur. The pre-signals will control the throughput of traffic and whilst the timing of the signals will ultimately determine the queue lengths, the modelling undertaken to date has demonstrated that they are not expected to

exceed 10 passenger car units¹ (PCUs) at the end of the Plan period. ECC/EH does not consider this is excessive.

The issue of no growth in peak traffic through Danbury between 2000 and 2013 was questioned. Essex Highways has applied background traffic growth to the highway modelling, in addition to the expected trips generated from the LDP allocations. The background traffic growth has been applied to ensure that a robust assessment could be achieved. This is despite the fact that a comparison of turn count data at Eves Corner in 2004 and 2013 showed that there had been no material increase in flows at the junction.

LBPC also expressed concern about the level of rat-running that could occur through Little Baddow as a result of the Maldon LDP development. The only apparent rat-running on the north side of the A414 is by vehicles using residential roads in Danbury and egressing Butts Lane onto Little Baddow Road in order to access Eves Corner. The installation of pre-signals is designed to dissuade these movements and allow greater priority to A414 through traffic. LBPC's suggested possible rat-run (Exhibit C) is considered to be extremely unlikely given the length of route and narrowness of the roads. Accessing the A414 from Riffhams Lane would also be difficult as there would be no interruption to traffic flows at Well Lane (LBPC seem to be under the impression that this junction is being signalised when this is not the case).

Lastly, LBPC have raised the subject of delays shown in the modelling on the A414. This issue was discussed during the course of the Examination and ECC would refer back to the A414 Danbury Position Statement (pages 9/10), prepared and agreed with CCC in response to the Inspectors questions at the examination. ECC would reiterate its comments in the Statement that, whilst some delay is expected at the end of the Plan period, an additional 5 minutes over what could be expected without development on a primary strategic route is not considered a severe impact.

¹ PCU is a general term used to quantify all vehicles on the road; a car or van = 1.0 PCUs, a medium goods vehicle = 1.5 PCUs and a heavy goods vehicle = 2.0 PCUs.