

Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground on strategic highways issues associated with the Maldon District Local Development Plan

Statement of Common Ground between:

- 1) Braintree District Council
- 2) Essex County Council (Highways Authority)
- 3) Maldon District Council

1. Background and context

- 1.1 In relation to the production of the Maldon District Local Development Plan (LDP), and to meet the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate, a large amount of cooperative work has been undertaken with Essex County Council (ECC), neighbouring local authorities, and other relevant bodies to identify strategic and cross boundary issues related to proposed growth in the LDP.
- 1.2 At a Sub-Regional Duty to Cooperate meeting in April 2013, representatives from Braintree District Council (BDC) and ECC raised concerns that that the level of growth at North Heybridge and Maldon proposed in the LDP may have a detrimental impact on the B1019 / B1137 junction at Hatfield Peverel. This is a key transport route going north of the District providing access to the A12 and a mainline railway station at Hatfield Peverel.
- 1.3 To support the production of the Draft LDP, Essex Highways has produced the following studies which assessed the impact of planned growth on the local and wider highways network.
 - Impact of Potential Core Strategy Sites on Existing Junctions Report (2010)
 - Assessment of Impact of Proposed Development Sites in Heybridge, South Maldon and Burnham-on-Crouch (May, 2013)
 - Further assessment of the impact of proposed development sites in Heybridge and South Maldon on Highways Network (November, 2013)
 - Technical Note - Impact of Proposed Development Sites in Heybridge and South Maldon on Wider Highway Network (December, 2013)
 - Reallocation of 335 Dwellings from South Maldon to Heybridge (January, 2014)
- 1.4 In response to the specific concerns raised through the Sub-Regional Duty to Cooperate meetings, additional assessment has been undertaken by ECC regarding the impact of growth on the wider strategic network. The highways modelling report has identified that the B1019 / B1137 junction at Hatfield Peverel is already a concern during peak periods, and the planned development will exacerbate the situation. ECC has considered the signalisation at the junction, however this does not offer a viable solution primarily due to a lack of physical space. ECC will continue to investigate potential solutions in the short term.

- 1.5 A longer term solution would involve a potential new junction connecting the B1019 to the A12, and therefore removing the need for traffic going to the A12 to use the B1019 / B1137 junction. Strategic agreement to promote the project between MDC, BDC, and ECC will be required at a strategic level to take the proposal forward.
- 1.6 Given the limited mitigation options in the short term identification and implementation of appropriate projects which encourage the use of sustainable transport options at the developments at Heybridge and Maldon will be required. ECC will work with MDC, BDC and developers to identify appropriate options.
- 1.7 MDC will work with ECC to raise the profile of the requirement for a new junction on the A12 with neighbouring authorities, the Highways Agency, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), and Central Government. MDC has already sought to raise the profile of growth in the LDP in this area through ECC and the SELEP in order to attract funding which could ultimately help to facilitate strategic improvements to infrastructure. A bid is being made to SELEP for £10m of funding towards strategic highway improvements in the District. In addition, the Council is seeking to ensure that the emerging Strategic Economic Plan for SELEP reflects the need for significant future investment in strategic infrastructure in and around Maldon District to support planned strategic growth identified within the emerging LDP, and to address historic infrastructure deficits which exist.
- 1.8 Due to the significant costs associated with the implementation of a new junction, strategic improvements to the A12 are beyond the scope of the LDP at this current time. However, further investigation of a solution is required and it is considered appropriate for developer contributions to be sought to fund a study of options for a new link road and junction with the A12 at this location. Maldon District Council will seek to work with Braintree District Council, Essex County Council and the Highways Agency to complete this feasibility study and to identify funding opportunities for the completion of this scheme alongside the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, and Central Government. MDC will continue to work with BDC and ECC to promote future strategic highways improvements which will seek to provide an effective long term solution to congestion at the B1019 / B1137 junction. The importance of highways improvements in this area are identified within Policy S4 of the LDP and through the Maldon District Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This will enable MDC to continue to promote strategic highways improvements in this area as a corporate priority. Text included within the LDP to highlight the required improvements is as follows:

In relation to the strategic highways network, Essex Highways has identified that growth at Maldon and Heybridge will increase congestion on the A414 between Maldon and Chelmsford and at the B1019 / B1137 junction at Hatfield Peverel. Essex County Council is committed to identifying and implementing appropriate improvements on the A414 and B1019 / B1137 junction to relieve congestion.

Physical space surrounding the B1019 / B1137 junction at Hatfield Peverel has restricted the identification of a viable immediate solution to relieve congestion by Essex Highways. A new junction connecting the B1019 to the A12 would provide the most effective solution, however this would come at a significant cost. Further investigation of a solution is

required and it is considered appropriate for developer contributions to be sought to fund a study of options for a new link road and junction with the A12 at this location. Maldon District Council will seek to work with Braintree District Council, Essex County Council and the Highways Agency to complete this feasibility study and to identify funding opportunities for the completion of this scheme alongside the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, and Central Government. Maldon District Council will seek to work with Braintree District Council, Essex County Council, the Highways Authority to complete this feasibility study and to identify funding opportunities for the completion of this scheme alongside the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, and Central Government.

In the short term, Maldon District Council will work with Essex County Council and Braintree District Council to seek to reduce the amount of traffic using the B1019 through the identification and implementation of appropriate projects which encourage the use of sustainable transport options.

2. Matters of agreement in principle

2.1 MDC, BDC, and ECC have been working together in a constructive manner throughout the production of the LDP. Through the Duty to Cooperate, the following matters of agreement in principle have been reached:

2.1.1 Essex CC and Maldon DC recognised that proposed growth in the LDP will exacerbate existing levels of congestion at the B1019 / B1137 junction at Hatfield Peverel. As the Highways Authority, Essex CC will continue to undertake further assessment and review of the impact of growth allocated in the LDP and funding will be sought through developer contributions to support this work. Essex CC will continue to work closely with Maldon DC and Braintree DC to seek to identify appropriate highways solutions to reduce congestion on the B1019 / B1137 junction at Hatfield Peverel.

2.1.2 Braintree DC recognise that Maldon DC are seeking to meet the Districts objectively assessed needs for housing. However, Braintree DC has serious concerns regarding the impact of growth allocated in the LDP on congestion at the B1019 / B1137 junction at Hatfield Peverel.

2.1.3 All parties support the approach proposed by MDC in paragraph 1.6 above, and will actively work together to reduce the amount of traffic using the B1019 through the identification and implementation of appropriate projects which encourage the use of sustainable transport options.

2.1.4 All parties support the approach proposed by MDC in paragraphs 1.7 and 1.8 above, and will actively work together to promote future strategic highways improvements which will seek to provide an effective long term solution to congestion at the B1019 / B1137 junction at Hatfield Peverel.

3. Signatures

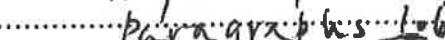
3.1 Braintree District Council

Name  P. NEWTON

Title / Role Portfolio holder Planning & Property

3.2 Essex County Council

Essex CC as Highways Authority will be the 'lead authority for all strategic Highway issues such as contained in paragraphs 1.6-1.8


Name 

Title / Role ~~Essex County Council~~ R L BASS
CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

3.3 Maldon District Council

Name 

Title / Role CHIEF EXECUTIVE

 LEADER OF MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL