

**Chelmsford Borough Council's  
Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Town Centre Area Action Plan**

**Statement of Common Ground on Strategic Transport Matters**

**June 2007**

**Between:** 1) Highways Agency,  
2) Essex County Council  
3) Chelmsford Borough Council

**1. Purpose of This Document**

This document has been produced to update the Inspector on the latest position between the three relevant parties on matters of strategic transport infrastructure and delivery, following an ongoing programme of work between the parties.

For clarity the comments contained with this document relate to all areas of the Trunk Road and Strategic Road Network where it is believed that the development proposals contained within the Core Strategy will have an impact. This includes the proposed NE Chelmsford Bypass, Boreham Interchange and connections into the A12.

All parties are confident that the planned programme of work will demonstrate the soundness of the proposals.

**2. Background**

During the formal consultation period on the Core Strategy (CS) and Chelmsford Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP), the Highways Agency (HA) submitted a representation on various aspects of the proposals. The HA has no objection in principal to the transport policies and issues covered by the CS and TCAAP, subject to appropriate mitigation measures being put in place. However, given the information available at the time, the HA had difficulty understanding the impacts of the CS and TCAAP on the trunk road network which proved difficult to give a robust view. Consequently the HA was unable to offer comment on the deliverability of mitigation measures required to delivery of the CS and TCAAP.

To allay these concerns a programme of work has been commenced that, when completed will give the Highways Agency the confidence that the required mitigation measures can be delivered. A large part of this work has been completed and is outlined below together with the ongoing programme to be completed before the Examination begins in September.

Essex County Council (ECC) supports the Core Strategy to ensure the provision of appropriate transportation infrastructure and alternative modes of transport to deliver sustainable development. ECC believe it is essential that new development and necessary infrastructure is delivered in a timely way.

Following on from these respective positions, a joint CBC/ECC document (Background Document Reference BD/CFD/075vi) has been prepared and submitted to the Inspector for a Preliminary Meeting on 16 May 2007. This document addresses strategic transportation issues and included an Infrastructure Trajectory. Also presented to the Inspector was a letter submitted by the Highways Agency (BD/CFD/075iv) via the LDF Programme Officer that

stated “the Highways Agency is confident in the approach that is being taken to support this work and fully expect that through joint working between Essex County Council, Chelmsford Borough Council and the Highways Agency, it will deliver appropriate clarity prior to the Examination in public in September.”

### **3. Key Transportation Infrastructure Principles**

As a result of this joint partnership working, the three Authorities have established common ground on a number of key themes which are listed below:-

#### **a. Boreham Interchange**

All parties agree that a long term solution for Boreham Interchange is integral to unlocking the proposed growth in NE Chelmsford. It is critical that this scheme is brought forward in the spirit of partnership between the parties and work continues to achieve this aim.

#### **b. North East Bypass and Cross Valley Link**

All parties support the long term objective of a North East Chelmsford Bypass to better manage the local traffic and provide a strategic route option for north south movements. To this end development work continues in partnership developing this scheme to a level where regional funding streams can be allocated to ensure delivery within the CS plan period. A decision on a Cross Valley Link is to be deferred for 12-24 months pending further investigations.

#### **c. A12 Widening and Management**

The Highways Agency, through its experience of managing the trunk road network regionally and nationally, believe that it is possible to develop transport solutions that would facilitate delivery of the CS without requiring specifically the widening of the A12 around Chelmsford as shown in the CS Key Diagram page 32.

#### **d. Proposed North East Railway Station**

All parties support the long term objective of a North East Chelmsford Railway Station to facilitate the proposed growth while reducing the need to make car borne trips and will continue to work in partnership to understand its implications on the wider road and rail networks.

#### **e. Area wide sustainable travel planning**

Following the publication of Government Circular 02/07 the HA have an increased responsibility to lead on issues of managing demand through the introduction of sustainable transport initiatives such as area wide travel plans.

ECC are taking a lead in developing a strategy to deliver a raft of measures in support of this objective and to minimise the additional travel demands associated with the growth proposed in the CS. Measures include Park and Ride, dedicated bus priority measures, walking and cycling improvements, public transport service enhancement and school/work/residential travel planning. All parties are supportive of delivering these initiatives.

#### **4. Programme of Work**

Essex County Council (ECC) working in partnership with the HA and Chelmsford Borough Council (CBC), are currently in the process of providing detailed information in a manner which will provide evidence to enable the HA to give a definitive view on the soundness of the proposals in advance of the Examination in Public (September 2007).

These include:

##### **a. Chelmsford North East Study**

Includes: Bypass, Rail Station, Cross Valley Link, Boreham Interchange, housing access road.

- Continue to work, in partnership with Highways Agency, towards an agreed preferred option for Boreham Interchange. (ECC/HA)
- Undertake further modelling to confirm phasing of infrastructure in relation to release of housing (ECC)
- Consider business case for a new rail station in North East Chelmsford. (ECC/CBC/HA)
- Undertake further technical work on Cross Valley Link (ECC)
- Consider business case for a new rail station in North East Chelmsford. (ECC/CBC/HA)

##### **b. Park and Ride**

Includes: Sites at Widford, Essex Regiment Way, Boreham Interchange

- Feasibility work on Park and Ride sites in North, North East and West of Chelmsford (ECC)

##### **c. Sustainable Travel**

- Includes: Walking and Cycling, high quality passenger transport connections to new developments (including bus based rapid transit), travel planning
- Development of Chelmsford Wide Sustainable Travel Planning Strategy (ECC/CBC/HA)

##### **d. Waterside Development**

Includes: Army and Navy Improvements (medium and long term), Chelmer Viaduct replacement, New Eastern Gateway link road.

- Highways Agency will select preferred option for replacement of Chelmer Viaduct. (ECC/HA)
- Provision of revised Army & Navy scheme details.

In addition to these work areas, a programme of modelling tests continues to be progressed, as outlined in the document submitted to the Inspector on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2007 (BD/CFD/075vi). This modelling programme tests all of the critical elements that compose the Core Strategy to ensure a robust examination of soundness from a transportation perspective. These will be complete by the Examination in September, at which time a further Statement of Common Ground will be prepared.