

PostS002

Essex County Council Cabinet

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Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH

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Report: Design and Delivery of the Beaulieu Access Package, Chelmsford (FP/105/05/26)

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Forward Plan reference number: FP/105/05/26

Report title: Design and Delivery of the Beaulieu Access Package, Chelmsford	
Report to: Cabinet	
Report author: Councillor Russell Quirk, Deputy Leader of the Council	
Date: 31 July 2026	For: Decision
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County Divisions affected: Chelmer	

1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 The Chelmsford Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) projects support the aim of creating a strong, inclusive and sustainable economy and achieve shared outcomes to develop our county sustainably, connect us to each other and the world and share prosperity with everyone. These improvements to the transport network will support people travelling for business or pleasure, which in turn helps the economy of greater Essex.
- 1.2 Beaulieu Park Station (BPS) was opened in October 2025. Section 1a of the new Chelmsford North East Bypass (CNEB) is nearing completion.
- 1.3 Together the creation of CNEB 1a – which provides a link to a new distributor road which will be delivered by developers – and Beaulieu Park Station will help provide the conditions needed to support the delivery of 6,250 new homes. The Chelmsford Garden Community has the potential to deliver over 10,600 homes in total, land for employment uses, a new country park and other community and leisure facilities north of Chelmsford.
- 1.4 The further improvements recommended in this report will deliver key work necessary to unlock the full potential of the Garden Community. By committing to the timely delivery of infrastructure to unlock growth and development opportunities, ECC helps enable the development of high quality, sustainable new communities such as those being planned at Chelmsford Garden Community. Importantly, ECC's delivery of this infrastructure facilitates the delivery of Chelmsford City Council's adopted Local Plan.
- 1.5 The Beaulieu Access Package comprises improvements to Junction 19 of the A12 (Boreham Interchange) and the Beaulieu Park Station Access Roundabout (Radial Distributor Road Roundabout 5). Plans showing the proposed improvements are included in Appendix A and B together with a location map in Appendix F. Working with Chelmsford City Council, Homes England, National Highways and the developer consortium taking forward the Garden Community, these improvements have been identified as necessary to improve access to and support the continued delivery of Chelmsford Garden Community. The improvement to Junction 19 is particularly important to allowing development to

proceed following the cancellation of the A12 widening scheme by Government last year. ECC applied to Homes England (as a material amendment to the existing funding agreement for Chelmsford Garden Community infrastructure) last year and National Highways (through their Growth and Housing Accelerator Fund - GHF) earlier this year for funding to deliver these improvements, to supplement developer funding and a proposed funding contribution from ECC to enable the design and delivery of the improvements. Conditional offers of funding from both Homes England and National Highways have now been received and this report seeks approval to accept this funding; the terms and conditions associated with the two funding streams and therefore progress the delivery of the package.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree to accept £14m of grant funding from Homes England to deliver the Beaulieu Access Package and agree to enter into a Deed of Variation to the HIF Grant Determination Agreement with Homes England to accept the terms of the funding.
- 2.2 Agree that, if offered, ECC will accept £8m of grant funding from National Highways as part of the Growth and Housing Accelerator Fund and agree to enter into a Grant Agreement with National Highways for this funding.
- 2.3 Note that the Head of Planning will enter into the Planning Framework Agreement with Chelmsford City Council and the Developer Consortium for the Chelmsford Garden Community which will secure £8m of developer contributions towards the costs of Roundabout 5.
- 2.4 Agree to fund £8m towards the costs of delivering the Beaulieu Access Package from ECC resources.
- 2.5 Agree to add £16m to the capital programme for the Beaulieu Access Package funded by £8m National Highways grant and £8m developer contributions. To note that the remaining £22m of funding (£14m of HIF grant and £8m of ECC resources), is included within the existing capital programme.
- 2.6 Agree that the construction contracts for the construction of the Beaulieu Access Package will be procured using the Eastern Highways Alliance 4 Framework Agreement and that the high-level evaluation criteria will be 60% quality and 40% price.
- 2.7 Agree that the Director of Property, Investment and Delivery, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the s151 Officer, is authorised to agree the terms of the Grant Agreement with National Highways.
- 2.8 Agree that the Director, Property, Investment and Delivery is authorised to:
 - 2.8.1 agree the detailed design for the Beaulieu Access Package; and

- 2.8.2 invite tenders for the construction of Beaulieu Access Package, including where necessary, advance works. This may be progressed as separate contracts at the discretion of the Director, Property, Investment and Delivery.
- 2.9 Note that the award of construction contracts will be subject to a separate executive decision by the Deputy Leader of the Council once the required land has been secured, valid tender/s have been received and there is certainty of funding.
- 2.10 Note that we will not be able to proceed with the recommendations in this report unless National Highways agrees to pay the £8m referred to in this report.

3 Background and Proposal

- 3.1 Over a number of years significant investment has been made to bring forward the infrastructure needed to facilitate a high-quality development at Chelmsford Garden Community (CGC). The development of the Garden Community is a priority for both ECC and Chelmsford City Council (CCC) and is supported by a dedicated planning policy framework comprising a comprehensive site-wide masterplan in the form of a Development Plan Document (DPD) and an Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 3.2 ECC was successful in securing £218m of HIF grant funding from Homes England for the delivery of a new railway station at Beaulieu Park, Chelmsford, and the delivery of a new north-eastern bypass, running from the A12 in Chelmsford to Great Leighs. Additional funding for the projects has been provided from developers and the (former) South East Local Enterprise Partnership. A Grant Funding Agreement was entered into with Homes England in March 2021 for this purpose.
- 3.3 Over the course of 2022 and into 2023 it became apparent that, mainly due to high cost inflation in the construction sector, the funding allocated for CNEB would not be sufficient to deliver the entirety of the bypass. Following engagement with Homes England, a Deed of Variation was entered into in December 2023 which agreed that only section 1a of the CNEB scheme would be delivered using the funding available.
- 3.4 CNEB section 1a – which is nearing completion – is a new 1.6km single carriageway which will connect an existing roundabout on Beaulieu Parkway with a new east-west road that is due to be delivered by the developers (technically known as the Northern Radial Distributor Road (NRDR)), which will connect at its western end with Essex Regiment Way. CNEB section 1a is in construction and due to be completed in the Autumn of 2026. Beaulieu Park Station has been delivered and was opened in October 2025. Both projects have been managed by ECC and were funded primarily with Housing Infrastructure Funding secured from Homes England.

- 3.5 Whilst 3,600 homes have been consented at Beaulieu and Channels and are currently being built out, planning applications for 6,250 further new homes cannot be approved by the Local Planning Authority, Chelmsford City Council, until a means of addressing the impacts of the development on Junction 19 of the A12 (Boreham Interchange) has been agreed. The A12 widening scheme was due to deliver a major upgrade of this junction but its cancellation by Government in July 2025 means an alternative solution is needed. As things stand, the 6,250 new homes cannot progress to approval. Chelmsford City Council's Planning Committee has resolved to grant permission for these homes subject to s106 agreements being signed; ECC will be party to these agreements. Without further improvements to Junction 19, ECC is not able to support the approval of the homes because of the significant adverse impact the additional traffic would have on the existing highway network.
- 3.6 The further 6,250 new homes and other uses planned at Chelmsford Garden Community are expected to generate significant community and economic benefits. The further development will include three primary schools, an All-Through School, new open space and parkland, healthcare facilities, shops and a range of transport and highway improvements. By the time the new homes are fully built out, it is conservatively estimated that they would generate in excess of £12m Council Tax income per annum.

The Beaulieu Access Package

- 3.7 Since August 2025, work has been undertaken to determine what improvements are needed to enable the new homes to come forward. This has identified a need to deliver the 'Beaulieu Access Package' – being an upgrade to the junction immediately to the north of Junction 19 (Station Access Roundabout – 'Roundabout 5') as well as improvements to Junction 19 itself. The improvements to Junction 19 will require the consent of National Highways. Officers are in discussion with National Highways to secure this and further detail is set out in paragraph 3.13.
- 3.8 The proposed Beaulieu Access Package will complement and build on the infrastructure that has already been delivered and planned for the Chelmsford Garden Community. It comprises upgrades to the two key junctions that provide access between the new development, the A12 and Beaulieu Park Station. It will enable these junctions to accommodate future traffic from the CGC and Chelmsford North East Bypass and avoid significant delays to vehicles accessing the new station in future.
- 3.9 The highway network in the area has been delivered and/or adapted over several years in response to development proposals. Since 2021, a series of improvements have been made to Junction 19 (also known as Boreham Interchange) by the developer to support the Beaulieu development. Most notably this has included the reconstruction of Generals Lane bridge which links the junction with the Beaulieu development. The improvements that are now planned to the junction to enable the further 6,250 new homes will build on the recent improvements that have already been delivered.

- 3.10 As part of the assessment that was undertaken to look at the improvements needed at Junction 19 in lieu of the A12 widening scheme, a need to upgrade Roundabout 5 was also identified. This is partly because, without improvement, queuing traffic on the approach to Roundabout 5 would affect the operation of Junction 19 in future and could in turn affect the operation of the A12.
- 3.11 The original planning application for Roundabout 5 was submitted in 2017 and approved in 2018. The roundabout was constructed in 2021 by the developer. The roundabout capacity provided at that time was based on the plans submitted in 2009 for the Beaulieu development. It did not take into account plans for the wider CGC development – which were not set out within Chelmsford's Local Plan at the time – and nor was it possible to require the developer to do so.
- 3.12 The Beaulieu Access Package proposals will provide necessary improvements to infrastructure to enable the continued delivery of new housing and employment at the Chelmsford Garden Community. Appendix A and B to this report include a location plan and designs for the two proposed improvements. Whilst the detailed design is still being progressed and is subject to change and technical approvals, the changes proposed at A12 Junction 19 will improve capacity and the improvement to the existing Roundabout 5 at the Beaulieu Park Station access will provide additional capacity and reduce congestion that is currently being experienced at this junction.
- 3.13 The A12 is part of the Strategic Road Network that is managed by National Highways. The proposed improvements at the A12 Junction 19 have been developed in discussion with National Highways and the detailed design is progressing to ensure it complies with appropriate standards for this location and interaction with the National Highways network. As a result of the proximity of the improvements to the National Highways network, technical approvals and agreements will need to be secured and entered into between ECC and National Highways and engagement is underway to progress this. This is expected to take the form of consents and agreements with National Highways under Section 6 and Section 8 of the Highways Act 1980 which would give permission for ECC to undertake works on the trunk road. Given the close working relationships that have been established and that the scheme is being designed to the required standards, it is expected that these will be secured and be subject to a separate Officer Decision at the relevant time. There is a risk however that National Highways do not provide this consent and the works to Junction 19 cannot progress.
- 3.14 The improvements to the existing Roundabout 5 junction are at preliminary design stage and have been based on the provision of a split junction as shown in Appendix B. Work is currently looking at potential alternative designs for achieving the same or better transport benefits and which may offer better value for money. The detailed design for both elements of the package will be completed over the coming months and are subject to agreement with National Highways and Homes England. It is recommended that the approval of the detailed design for both elements are delegated to the Director of Property, Investment and Delivery to determine once these proposals have been worked up in detail.

- 3.15 Early discussions have taken place with the local planning authority regarding the improvements. It is anticipated that the improvements could be delivered under Highway Authority permitted development rights depending upon the detailed design. As the design is progressed, there will be ongoing discussions with the LPA to confirm this and, if required, planning permission would be sought.

Funding of the BAP

- 3.16 The total estimated cost of the BAP is £38m, including a 30% contingency. This cost hadn't been factored into the infrastructure cost to the public and private sector of bringing forward the CGC development as it was understood the National Highways A12 widening scheme would provide the additional capacity needed at Junction 19. However, when the A12 widening scheme was cancelled by Government in July 2025, it became clear that additional infrastructure improvements were necessary to bring forward the CGC development which have now been identified as the two schemes contained in the BAP.
- 3.17 It has been established that no single party can fund the entirety of the cost of delivering these additional improvements. Based on discussions held in late 2025, a proposed funding package has therefore been developed, which comprises contributions from Homes England (£14m), National Highways (£8m), the developers (£8m) and ECC (£8m). Chelmsford City Council's Planning Committee has resolved to grant permission for the new homes, subject to the s106 agreements being signed on the basis that this joint funding package is being progressed.

Homes England Funding

- 3.18 Homes England have agreed to provide funding of £14m for BAP. ECC will be required to contractually commit to delivery of the scheme by 31 March 2030 and meet various milestones before that date in order to be able to claim this funding.
- 3.19 ECC will be required to enter into a Deed of Variation to the existing Grant Determination Agreement (GDA) between Homes England and ECC that includes the delivery of Beaulieu Park Station and construction of CNEB section 1a. By varying the GDA, delivery of CNEB and BAP will be contractually linked. It also means that delivery of all of the BAP will be tied into the Homes England conditions set out in the GDA. These are multiple and detailed and carry significant risks as set out in this report.
- 3.20 Homes England have confirmed that ECC must enter the Deed of Variation in August to secure the £14m contribution in addition to meeting a number of conditions precedent before that date. Payment of any funding by Homes England is in arrears and only by claiming expenditure that ECC has incurred and meeting significant conditions.
- 3.21 The Deed of Variation confirms availability of Homes England Funding of £14m for BAP. It introduces a conditional and tightly controlled funding regime that

wasn't in the GDA previously, particularly through a Gateway Review process. While this funding will support the CGC and housing delivery, it increases delivery, financial and termination risks for ECC, particularly where meeting such milestones is dependent on land assembly, planning and affordability confirmation. Robust programme management, financial monitoring and risk mitigation by ECC will therefore be critical to securing and retaining funding.

3.22 The key terms in the draft Deed of Variation are as follows:

3.22.1 Delivery of BAP in two stages, Junction 19 by 31 March 2029 and Roundabout 5 by 31 March 2030.

3.22.2 Funding draw down is conditional on ECC providing evidence to support claims for funding such as certificates of title for land ownership and rights, evidence of construction contracts, land assembly and viability proposals, all of which must be to the satisfaction of Homes England before it will pay a claim. A decision on whether this evidence is satisfactory is at the absolute discretion of Homes England.

3.22.3 Funding is conditional on ECC satisfying gateway stages. These are as follows:

- Sufficient funding has been secured for the carrying out of the BAP Works
- ECC has secured all of the land required for the BAP
- Planning permission has been secured, where necessary
- BAP is confirmed as affordable by ECC's s151 officer, once a valid tender/s have been received

3.23 If ECC fails to meet these for any reason it could delay or prevent funding being claimed which could lead to abortive costs and capital programme pressure and ultimately to Homes England terminating the GDA, removing ECC's ability to access funding for BAP and CNEB.

3.24 The funding is conditional on ECC meeting the longstop dates for the gateways set out in 3.22.3. These dependencies are reliant on factors outside of ECC's control. Should ECC fail to meet a dependency by its longstop date there is an ultimate right for Homes England to terminate the GDA in its entirety. Satisfaction of the dependencies by their longstop dates are at the absolute discretion of Homes England. Termination by Homes England would cancel the funding and leave ECC unable to claim costs that it had incurred. This is the case for outstanding funding for CNEB although nearly all of ECC's expenditure should have been claimed for CNEB at the date of the first BAP Gateway with approximately £300k remaining to be claimed. Termination would have a wider impact on delivery of the garden community and delivery of homes.

3.25 Homes England have asked ECC to confirm the longstop dates for the dependencies. These will set out within the final Deed of Variation. These are in line with the current programme with sufficient contingency allowed to try to mitigate the risk of ECC not meeting the longstop dates. There is however a risk

that dependencies have factors outside of ECC's control and for that reason a risk remains that they will not be met.

National Highways Funding

- 3.26 National Highways have written to ECC to confirm that an in-principle decision was taken by their Targeted Funds Investment Delivery Committee on 16 July 2026 to allocate £8m from their new Growth and Housing Accelerator fund programme. However, a formal decision still needs to be taken (expected on 14 August 2026) and ECC have not yet received details of the terms of this funding. The final terms of the funding have not yet been confirmed but will include that the contribution will be capped at £8m and payment will be in arrears. It is proposed that agreement to the terms of this funding is delegated to the Director of Property, Investment and Delivery in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer.
- 3.27 It may not be possible to understand the funding terms and enter into the funding agreement with National Highways ahead of Homes England's deadline for entering into the Deed of Variation for the GDA. If ECC do not enter into the Homes England Deed of Variation in August 2026, Homes England have confirmed that it cannot guarantee the £14m funding will remain available.
- 3.28 It is therefore proposed that ECC enters into the Deed of Variation with Homes England in August 2026 prior to the funding agreement with National Highways. There is a risk that the final National Highways funding terms are unacceptable to ECC or delayed. While this risk is deemed to be low, the practical implications are that Homes England can terminate the GDA and ECC will not have access to funding for BAP and CNEB to cover the expenditure it has incurred (which is likely to be circa £300,000). Termination would have a wider impact on delivery of the Garden Community and delivery of homes. The implications for CNEB are set out in paragraphs 3.23 to 3.25.

Developer Funding

- 3.29 The developer funding will be provided via a site wide s106 agreement (known as the Planning Framework Agreement). This has been developed following extensive discussions between ECC, CCC and the developer consortium and includes contributions towards a wide range of essential infrastructure. Subject to ECC entering into the Deed of Variation, the Head of Planning will enter into the Planning Framework Agreement with Chelmsford City Council and the Developer Consortium for Chelmsford Garden Community which will secure £8m of developer contributions towards the costs of Roundabout Five. These contributions will be paid in tranches between 2028 and 2030 as indicatively set out in Table 1 of the Financial Implications.
- 3.30 The PFA provides a number of commitments on ECC that will commence at the date of completion including that it will use all reasonable endeavours to practically complete the Roundabout Five scheme. Should the Deed of Variation with Homes England be terminated, ECC's obligations under the PFA will

remain. The PFA will only be entered into once the Deed of Variation with Homes England has been entered into.

- 3.31 If the PFA is not signed before the gateway longstop date within the Deed of Variation for funding being in place, this could have the implications set out in 3.23 to 3.25.

Contribution from ECC

- 3.32 It is proposed that ECC will fund £8m of the cost of BAP from its own resources. Both the Homes England and the prospective National Highways funding contributions are conditional on ECC making this contribution. It is planned that ECC's contribution is funded from borrowing and further details are set out in the financial implications of this report.
- 3.33 It should be noted that whilst the funding commitment is required as a condition of grant funding from Homes England and National Highways, the ECC contribution is not currently expected to be required to be spent until 2029/30 due to the proposed funding profile for the external grant funding. Consequently, if the scheme can be delivered under budget, ECC or the future Unitary Authority may benefit from any saving achieved.

Land Requirements

- 3.34 It is a condition of Homes England that ECC will have completed its land assembly for these schemes by dates still to be agreed. Officers are considering the most appropriate date based on programme and contingency. If land assembly is not completed and certificates of title are not provided to Homes England by the agreed dates, Homes England can terminate the GDA. This could delay or prevent funding being claimed which could lead to abortive costs, capital programme pressure and affect delivery of the wider garden community. Any spend that has been incurred by the Council at this point would not be recovered.
- 3.35 The land required for the Junction 19 scheme is shown on the plan in Appendix C. The land needed for the scheme comprises land owned and dedicated as highway by National Highways (edged orange) and land owned and dedicated as highway by ECC (edged blue). ECC will need to secure the consent of National Highways to construct the improvements to Junction 19 and will need to enter into an agreement to govern the same, using provisions set out in the Highways Act 1980. Discussion on this consent is in progress and details are set out in paragraph 3.13 of this report.
- 3.36 ECC will require temporary access to three other parcels of land for the purposes of site compound and facilitating the works. These are shown coloured green on the plan at Appendix C to this report. This land is owned by National Highways or Countryside Zest (Beaulieu Park) LLP. Access to the temporary National Highways land is included in the discussions set out in paragraph 3.13. The land owned by Countryside Zest (Beaulieu Park) LLP is subject to the Planning Framework Agreement. Under the terms of this, Countryside Zest (Beaulieu Park) LLP are expected to licence this land at no cost to the Council.

- 3.37 The permanent land requirements for the Roundabout 5 scheme are currently shown on the plan in Appendix D. ECC will need to acquire the parcels of land shown on the Plan at Appendix D from Countryside L&Q (Beaulieu) Limited. The Planning Framework Agreement that will be entered into to secure developer funding for the Beaulieu Access Package requires Countryside L&Q (Beaulieu) Ltd to transfer the land to ECC for the Beaulieu Access Package scheme at no cost to the Council.
- 3.38 Whilst there is a risk that land assembly takes longer than expected, early discussions have already taken place with National Highways and the developers and provision is included within the Planning Framework Agreement for this land to be provided to ECC at no cost except for the associated legal costs for the transfer. It is important to note however that there are conditions to the transfer of this land to ECC; if works have not commenced or been contractually committed within 10 years of the land being made available or transferred to ECC, then such land will need to be transferred back to the relevant party.
- 3.39 It is therefore expected that the necessary land will be secured by agreement in advance of the Homes England deadlines. This will be monitored closely. If necessary, a decision may be sought to utilise CPO powers as a back-up although, in this scenario, it would not be possible to achieve the milestone for assembling the land or the milestone for completion of the scheme. The Council would seek to renegotiate these dates with Homes England however, if this is not possible, the implications would be as set out in section 3.24.

Proposed delivery approach, procurement and programme

- 3.40 The package of improvements is being designed and managed by ECC's contractor, Jacobs. As detailed in paragraph 3.14, the detailed design is currently being progressed and the programme involves engagement with National Highways to ensure compliance with their required standards. It is recommended that the approval of detailed designs is delegated to the Director of Property Investment and Delivery. Once detailed design has been completed for each element a contractor will need to be procured in line with the Procurement Act 2023 to implement the improvements.
- 3.41 It is proposed that ECC will procure via the Eastern Highways Alliance 4 Framework (EHA) using an NEC4 form of contract. The NEC (New Engineering Contract) form of contract is published by the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) and has been used by ECC in recent years for the procurement of all major highways infrastructure projects. The quality:price evaluation criteria is proposed as 60:40. This split should ensure that potential contractors are evaluated on their ability and experience to effectively deliver projects of this scale whilst also providing a sufficient weighting in relation to price to ensure value for money. This report recommends that the Director: Property, Investment and Delivery is authorised to invite tenders for the construction contract/s and agree the detailed evaluation criteria.

- 3.42 As the detailed design progresses, the need for advance works, such as to divert utilities, may be identified which it may be advantageous to procure in advance of the main works. The scheme will be managed by ECC officers. Quantity Surveyor support will also be allocated to provide support with the contract as required.
- 3.43 A further ECC decision will be required, following the procurement processes, to award the construction contract/s to deliver the improvements. Certainty over land acquisition and all funding required to deliver the scheme will be needed before the contract/s can be awarded.
- 3.44 The indicative delivery milestones for the project are set out below. Options for expediting the programme are currently being assessed. Note that this assumes that National Highways funding is confirmed in August 2026.

Milestone	Date
Design development	Underway
Acceptance of third-party funding	End July 2026
Junction 19 tender period	Apr 27 – Jul 27
Governance and contract award	Aug 27 – Nov 27
Junction 19 advanced works	Apr 27 – Dec 27
Junction 19 main works	Jan 28 – Apr 29
Roundabout 5 tender period	Oct 27 – Jan 28
Governance and contract award	Mar 28 – May 28
Roundabout 5 advance works	Feb 28 – Sep 28
Roundabout 5 main works	Oct 28 – Oct 30

4 Links to our Strategic Ambitions

4.1 The proposals in this report will help to:

- Develop our County sustainably
- Connect us to each other and the world
- Share prosperity with everyone

5 Options

Option 1 – to accept the funding and embark on delivery of the Beaulieu Access Package (Recommended)

- 5.1 Accepting the funding is the recommended option because of the significant amount of grant funding that will be secured to benefit the County's residents and businesses.
- 5.2 Based on the viability work undertaken to inform the funding requests, there is not sufficient developer contribution available equivalent to the sum of money requested from Homes England and National Highways which could replace this funding. The Beaulieu Access Package is unlikely to be delivered in a foreseeable timeframe if ECC does not accept Homes England and National Highways funding offered, secure the developer contributions through the PFA and agree to the local contribution of £8m.
- 5.3 There are however significant risks with this approach as set out in this report. Managing delivery of the BAP, alongside meeting all the requirements of the grant funding, will require strong project management and a focus on delivery. Acceptance of the funding comes with risks if milestones are not met or certain information cannot be provided to Homes England as set out in detail in this report.

Option 2 – Do nothing - not accept the funding and do not deliver the Beaulieu Access Package

- 5.4 In doing nothing (i.e. not accepting additional grant nor pursuing the scheme), Cabinet would be protecting ECC (and future unitary authorities as potential successor bodies) from the financial risks associated with delivering a major infrastructure project under the revised contractual obligations.
- 5.5 However, this option is not recommended as it would create a legacy of a stalled strategic housing site and unlocking the housing delivery would become significantly more challenging in the future.
- 5.6 The grant funding opportunities under the Homes England Housing Infrastructure Fund and National Highways Growth and Housing Accelerator Fund are unique and time-limited and may not be available in the future. It is not plausible that another grant funding opportunity could enable delivery of the identified necessary infrastructure improvements by 2030.
- 5.7 Declining the funding would serve no apparent advantage and would lead to future issues in securing housing delivery which would be highly challenging to solve. This would potentially bring reputational harm to ECC with government departments (including Homes England), National Highways, Chelmsford City Council and developers. This option would however avoid the risks set out in this report.

6 Issues for consideration

6.1 Impact of Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution

- 6.1.1 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) could lead to the creation of a new Unitary Authority which will replace the separate administrative areas covered at present by the local authorities: ECC and CCC.
- 6.1.2 The successor authority will take on the role of grant recipient of the funding and will therefore become liable delivering the agreed outputs and for any cost overruns (or spending outside of the expenditure availability period).
- 6.1.3 The current grant offer from Homes England is time limited. It is not considered likely that the grant funding offered would still be available after the point that any new unitary authorities are vested. A delay to accepting the funding is likely to result in the offer being withdrawn and a significant delay to delivery of the schemes which would not be fundable in the short term.
- 6.1.4 If LGR goes ahead, it is anticipated that the government will issue directions under section 24 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to specify a person on behalf of a new council to give consent for ECC to enter any capital contracts over £1m in value. For the Beaulieu Access Package the current programme anticipates that construction contracts would likely be awarded in 2027 when section 24 requirements would be in effect.
- 6.1.5 These risks should be understood in the context of national planning policy requirements to demonstrate a deliverable supply of sites to meet the planned housing requirement, to support the ability of the development to proceed without having a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion) and the statutory duty on highways authorities to secure the expeditious movement of traffic.
- 6.1.6 Taken on balance, such financial and delivery obligations as those proposed in this decision are considered necessary to secure the delivery of infrastructure related to securing a significant and consistent supply of housing over a 30+ year period. Conversely, refusing to accept the grant funding, could lead to the successor authorities not being able to secure beneficial infrastructure and likely lead to a lack of housing land supply.
- 6.1.7 From a devolution perspective, the grant funding will lead to additional investment in the County's transport infrastructure that would otherwise have to be secured by alternative means. Therefore, the impacts of accepting the grant funding and embarking on the delivery of the Beaulieu Access Package are likely to benefit the devolution process and any future Combined Authority by reducing demands on its proposed capital funding budget which is proposed to be circa £8m annually for 2026/27 and 2027/28.

6.2 Financial implications

- 6.2.1 The current estimated cost of the Beaulieu Access Package is £38m. Approval of this decision will result in an addition to the capital programme for the scheme. However, it should be noted that elements of the proposed funding are already reflected in the existing capital programme.

6.2.2 The £14m Homes England contribution is currently included within the capital programme against the CNEB scheme. This funding is not required to deliver the approved CNEB works and is therefore available to support delivery of the Beaulieu Access Package following the proposed Deed of Variation to the Grant Determination Agreement.

6.2.3 The £8m Council contribution is also already included within the existing capital programme. This reflects a prudent approach taken at the time of setting the capital programme, whereby borrowing was included to support forecast expenditure for the existing HIF schemes in 2026/27, on the assumption that the original HIF funding availability period would not be extended. Following the successful negotiation of an extension to the HIF funding availability period, this borrowing is no longer required to support delivery of the existing schemes and can instead support the Council's contribution to the Beaulieu Access Package.

6.2.4 The anticipated funding and currently expected profiling are set out in Table 1.

Table 1 – Budget Profile and Funding

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
J19	2,225	3,063	6,492	720	-	12,500
Roundabout 5	3,183	3,884	5,258	9,010	4,165	25,500
Total Budget	5,408	6,947	11,750	9,730	4,165	38,000
Funded by						
HIF Grant	5,408	6,947	1,645	-	-	14,000
National Highways	-	-	8,000	-	-	8,000
Developer Contributions	-	-	2,105	5,895	-	8,000
ECC Borrowing	-	-	-	3,835	4,165	8,000
Total Funding	5,408	6,947	11,750	9,730	4,165	38,000

6.2.5 The Homes England funding will be secured through a Deed of Variation to the existing GDA and includes the reallocation of £14m of existing contingency to support delivery of the BAP works. This will reduce the level of contingency against the existing HIF schemes. However, it is deemed from professional advice that there remains sufficient contingency to manage identified potential risks and this is not considered a material concern at this time.

6.2.6 The funding assumptions set out above include £8m from National Highways through the Growth and Housing Accelerator Fund. At the time of writing, final funding approval remains subject to completion of National Highways' business case, assurance and governance processes and the execution of a funding agreement. National Highways has however confirmed that the scheme received conditional approval at its July 2026 Investment Decision Committee and has indicated that it considers the scheme to be a strong candidate for funding, with an expectation that the required funding will be allocated subject to completion of the remaining requirements. Subject to the satisfactory completion of these requirements the scheme is expected to be considered for formal approval at the Investment Decision Committee on 14th August 2026. Until final approval is

received, a residual risk remains in relation to the timing, amount and conditions attached to this funding.

- 6.2.7 The Council's £8m contribution is currently anticipated to be required in the later years of the programme. This expenditure is expected to fall beyond the point of planned Local Government Reorganisation and, if the Government progresses with the current timetable for implementation, will become the responsibility of the successor authority.
- 6.2.8 At the point of decision, a number of elements of the funding and cost position remain subject to uncertainty. The current cost estimate includes an appropriate allowance for contingency; however this will not be fully tested until procurement is complete and tenders are received. There is therefore a risk that the final cost of the scheme exceeds the current estimate. In this event ECC (and/or any successor authority) will be required to meet any additional costs.
- 6.2.9 At this stage the £8m developer contribution is not yet contractually secured and ECC will therefore carry the full financial risk in relation to this funding. Should this contribution not be secured via the Planning Framework Agreement, or be delayed, the Council would need to identify alternative funding.
- 6.2.10 The funding arrangements are subject to the terms of the GDA and associated agreements with Homes England and National Highways. As with other HIF schemes, funding is paid in arrears and is subject to demonstrating compliance with agreed milestones and conditions. This creates a requirement for ECC to manage cashflow during delivery and exposes the Council to a risk that expenditure incurred may not be recoverable and that grant funding may be delayed, reduced or withheld where conditions are not met.
- 6.2.11 The scheme is also subject to a number of gateway review points. Failure to meet these requirements could result in funding not being released or being withdrawn.
- 6.2.12 All HIF funding must be incurred and claimed within the agreed availability period of 31 March 2030. Delivery of the scheme is programmed to extend beyond the point of Local Government Reorganisation and, as a result, responsibility for managing expenditure and any costs falling outside the funding availability period will transfer to the successor authority.
- 6.2.13 There is a risk that the scheme does not proceed to full delivery, for example due to issues relating to funding, planning, land acquisition or procurement. In such circumstances, costs incurred up to that point would be abortive and would need to be written off to revenue, resulting in a revenue pressure for the Council.
- 6.2.14 A further decision will be required prior to entering into construction contracts. This will provide an opportunity to review updated cost estimates, confirm funding arrangements and ensure that the scheme is demonstrably affordable before the Council commits to the main delivery phase. Until that point is reached, the Council remains exposed to the risks set out above which will need to be actively managed through the development and procurement stages.

6.2.15 In the context of Local Government Reorganisation, any successor authority will assume the role of grant recipient and will therefore inherit all associated financial risks and liabilities arising from this decision, including responsibility for cost overruns, funding shortfalls and any expenditure incurred outside of the funding availability period.

6.2.16 Whilst the scheme secures substantial external investment and is critical to supporting the delivery of planned housing growth, it exposes the Council to a number of material financial risks, particularly in relation to cost certainty, the securing of developer contributions, the final approval of external funding, compliance with funding conditions and delivery within a fixed funding window. These risks should be mitigated through strong project governance and financial control but cannot be eliminated entirely.

6.3 Legal implications

6.3.1 There are risks associated with the drawdown of funding under the GDA as set out in detail in this report. In particular, there are risks around acquisition of land and land access and certainty of the funding from National Highways and Developers by the GDA longstop dates. Failure to meet deadlines gives Homes England the right to terminate the GDA.

6.3.2 ECC has to comply with onerous and costly requirements in the GDA such as the provision of certificates of title acceptable to Homes England. These must be provided before any claims can be paid. Until rights to the land are secured, these cannot be started.

6.3.3 As part of the certificate of title process, title to land required for the scheme will need to be deduced. It may be that there are mineral rights that are part of the title. These rights would entitle the beneficiary to extract minerals from the land on which the scheme is built. If these are present, a beneficiary would need to make a planning application to be able to extract them. It is likely that such an application would be unsuccessful given the size of the land on which the scheme will be built. Land under 5 hectares is not considered safe to allow extraction. An application is also unlikely to be granted where infrastructure or highway exists.

6.3.4 No claims will be paid after 31 March 2030 for the BAP works and any expenditure not claimed before or after this date will not be funded by HIF funding.

6.3.5 Any 'fundamental default' of the GDA will enable Homes England to terminate the GDA in its entirety, suspend or alter the timing of the payment of any HIF funding, withhold and cancel any further payment of HIF funding due to ECC under the Contract and require the Grant Recipient to immediately repay the HIF Funding and all other amounts due under the GDA together with interest. This potentially applies to all the funding although, as explained in this report, unpaid claims on the current infrastructure projects are likely to be low. A fundamental default would involve any actions/omissions made by the Grant Recipient that could bring Homes England's reputation into disrepute.

- 6.3.6 HIF funding may be reduced in the event that there are variations arising out of the operation of the delivery plan and/or expenditure forecast, changes to the infrastructure works or the housing outputs agreed between the parties or increases in income or other sources of financial assistance becoming available to ECC in relation to the delivery of the infrastructure works.
- 6.3.7 ECC will need to ensure that it has adequate sub-contracts and appointments in place to protect itself, in so far as possible and to assist it in complying with the terms of the GDA. It will also need to monitor the delivery of the infrastructure to ensure milestones are met.
- 6.3.8 As the scheme includes works on parts of the A12 trunk road, an agreement will be required to be entered into between ECC and National Highways pursuant to the Highways Act 1980 to give ECC the necessary permission to do the work as National Highways is the highway authority for trunk roads.
- 6.3.9 ECC is bound to comply with rules in the Subsidy Control Act 2022. ECC will be required to obtain a formal subsidy control opinion, that is satisfactory to Homes England as a condition of making a successful claim for grant under the GDA. It is not expected that there are any subsidy issues because the funding will be spent on delivering infrastructure for general public benefit and will be free and available to the public to use.

7 Equality and Diversity Considerations

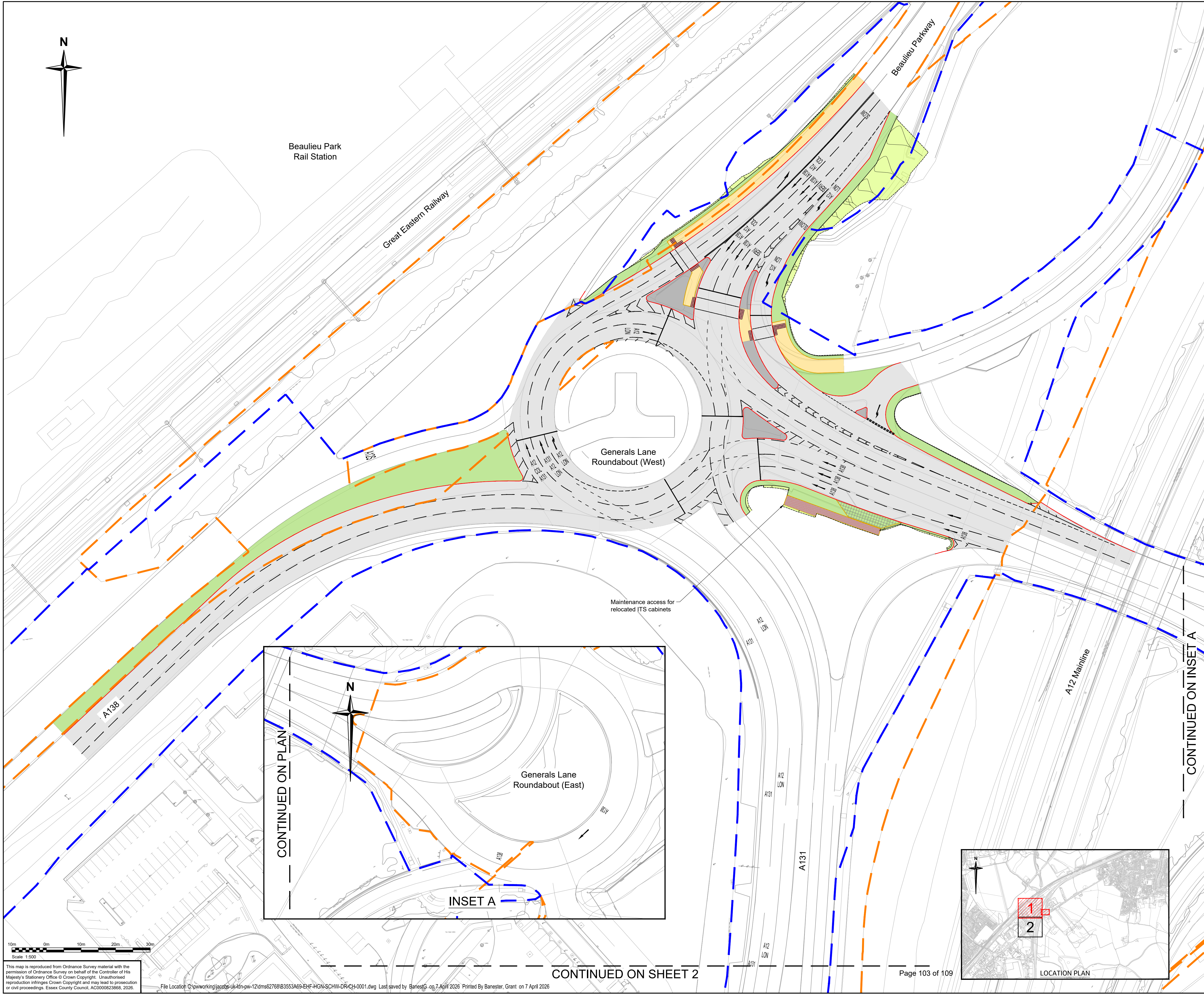
- 7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 7.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 7.3 The Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

8 List of Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – General Arrangement Plan for A12 Junction 19 improvements
- 8.2 Appendix B – General Arrangement Plan for Roundabout 5 improvements
- 8.3 Appendix C – Plan of land requirements for A12 Junction 19 improvements
- 8.4 Appendix D – Plan of land requirements for Roundabout 5 improvements
- 8.5 Appendix E – Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment
- 8.6 Appendix F – Beaulieu Access Package Location Map

9 List of Background Papers

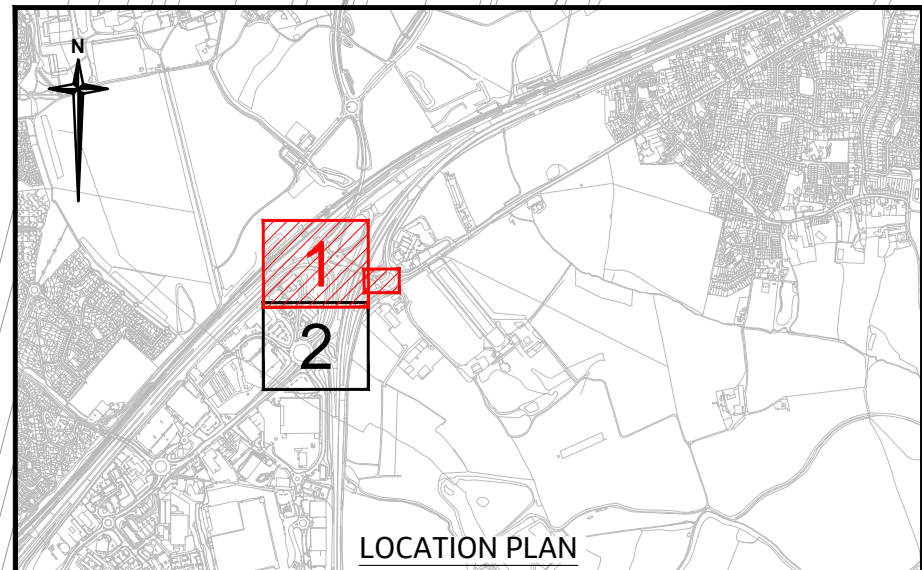
- 9.1 Letter from National Highways re in-principle decision on £8m funding allocation from their new Growth and Housing Accelerator Fund

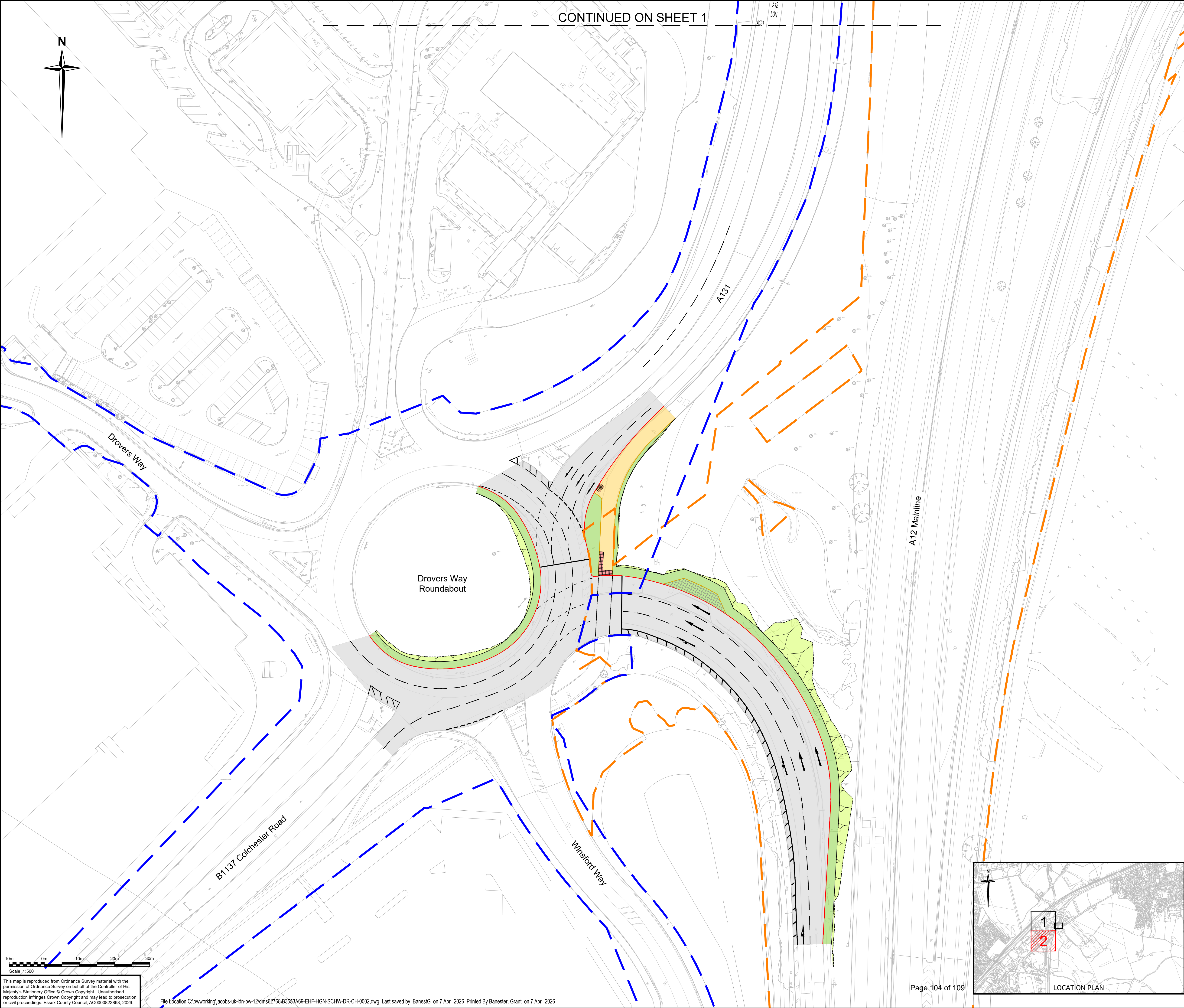


- Notes:
1. All dimensions in metres unless stated otherwise.
 2. Drawings to be printed in colour to enable correct viewing of symbols.
 3. Do not scale from this drawing.
 4. The Contractor shall verify the presence and location of all services before undertaking any work in any area of the site, by carrying out a full non-intrusive survey of the entire site before commencing the works.
 5. This drawing does not represent the final design and shall only be shared for the purpose of information.
 6. The topographical survey data used is a combination of historic data and it's accuracy is yet to be verified. The 3D design will be updated once the latest survey has been completed.

- Key:
- Highway Boundary (Essex County Council)
 - Highway Boundary (National Highways)
 - Topo/OS
 - Proposed Kerbs
 - Proposed Edging
 - Proposed Shared Use Path / Footway / Cycleway
 - Proposed Carriageway / Resurfacing
 - Proposed Grassed Verge
 - Proposed Island
 - Proposed Maintenance Hardstanding
 - Proposed Earthworks
 - Proposed Corduroy Tactile Pavers
 - Proposed Blister Tactile Pavers Controlled Crossing
 - Proposed Blister Tactile Pavers Uncontrolled Crossing
 - Proposed Maintenance Footpath
 - Proposed Traffic Sign (symbol type varies)
 - Proposed Road Markings
 - Proposed Street Lighting (symbol type varies)
 - Proposed Traffic Signals and Cabinets
 - Proposed Bollard (symbol type varies)
 - Proposed Vehicle Restraint System
 - Existing Vehicle Restraint System
 - Proposed Pedestrian Restraint System
 - Proposed Retaining Wall
 - Proposed / Existing Trees
 - Proposed Fencing

P01.2 07/04/26 First Revision				
Rev	Date	Description of revision	Origin'd	Checked
DRAWING STATUS				
Work in Progress				
Essex Highways				
Essex Highways, Seax House, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH. Tel: 0345 6037631 © Essex County Council				
SCHEME TITLE				
Essex County Council A12 J19				
DRAWING TITLE				
General Arrangement Plan Generals Lane Roundabout Sheet 1 of 2				
DESIGNED HA	DRAWN MG	CHECKED GB	REVIEWED KC	APPROVED PM
DATE MAR 26	DATE MAR 26	DATE MAR 26	DATE MAR 26	DATE MAR 26
DRAWING UNITS U.N.O. Dimensions in millimetres Levels in metres			SCALE AT A1 (841X594mm) 1:500	REV P01.2
DRAWING No. B3553A69-EHF-HGN-SCHW-DR-CH-0001				
 				





CONTINUED ON SHEET 1

- Notes:
1. All dimensions in metres unless stated otherwise.
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 - Proposed Pedestrian Restraint System
 - Proposed Retaining Wall
 - Proposed / Existing Trees
 - Proposed Fencing

Rev.	Date	Description of revision	Origin'd	Checked	Review'd	Approv'd
P01.2	07/04/26	First Revision	---	---	---	---

DRAWING STATUS

Work in Progress



Essex Highways, Seax House, Victoria Road South,
Chelmsford, CM1 1QH.
Tel: 0345 6037631

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SCHEME TITLE

Essex County Council
A12 J19

DRAWING TITLE

General Arrangement Plan
Drovers Way Roundabout
Sheet 2 of 2

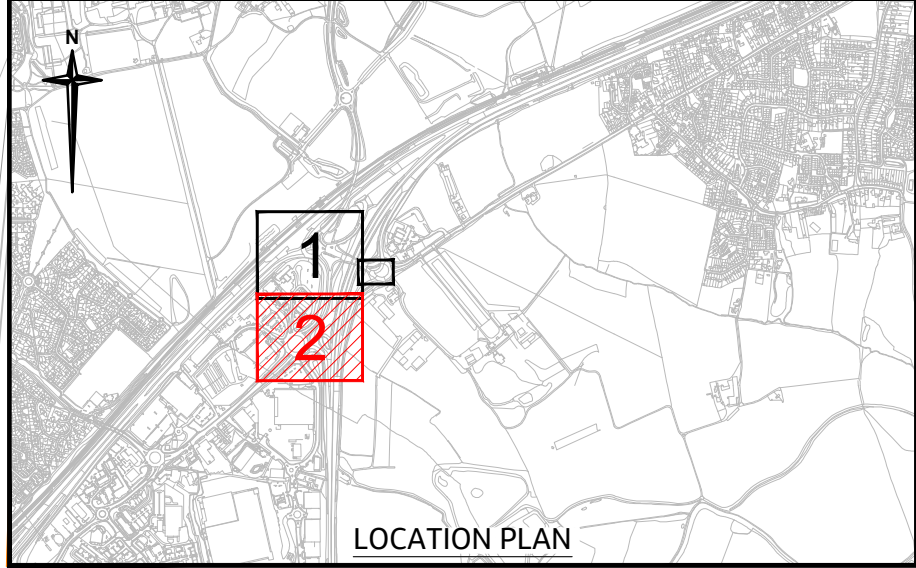
DESIGNED HA	DRAWN MG	CHECKED GB	REVIEWED KC	APPROVED PM
DATE MAR 26	DATE MAR 26	DATE MAR 26	DATE MAR 26	DATE MAR 26
DRAWING UNITS U.N.O. Dimensions in millimetres Levels in metres			SCALE AT A1 (841X594mm) 1:500	REV. P01.2

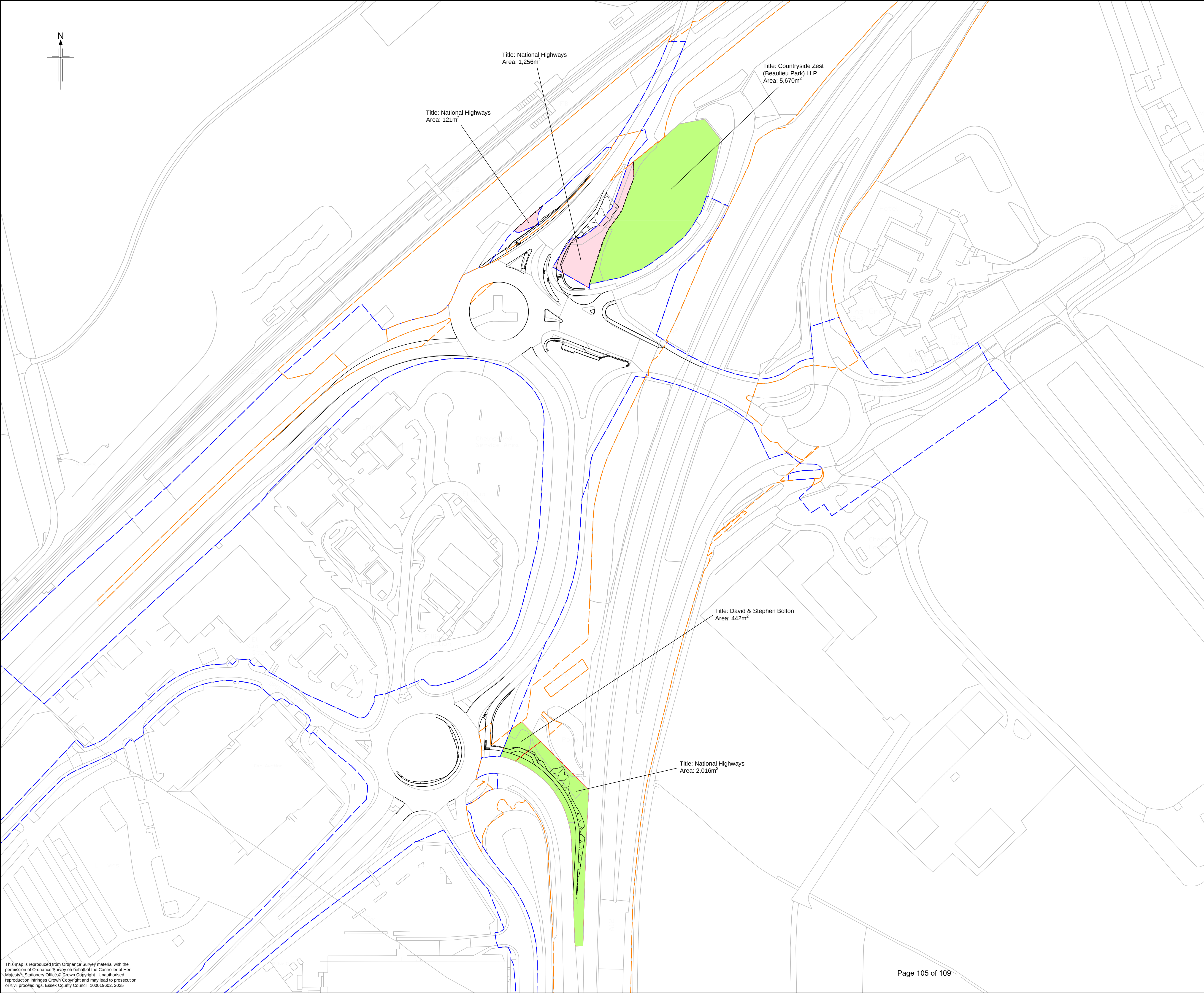
DRAWING No.

B3553A69-EHF-HGN-SCHW-DR-CH-0002



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Legend

Land required (permanently)

Land required (temporarily)

Proposed Design

ECC Adopted Highway Boundary

NH Adopted Highway Boundary

Rev.	Date	Description of revision	Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Approved
3	06/26	OWNERSHIP ADDED	WE	RHT	RHT	RHT
2	06/26	OWNERSHIP ADDED	WE	RHT	RHT	RHT
1	04/26	FIRST ISSUE	WE	RHT	RHT	RHT

DRAWING STATUS

FOR INFORMATION

Essex
Highways

Essex Highways, Seax House, Victoria Road South,
Chelmsford, CM1 1QH.
Tel: 0345 6037631.

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SCHEME TITLE

A12 JUNCTION 19

DRAWING TITLE

LAND REQUIREMENT PLAN

DESIGNED	DRAWN	CHECKED	REVIEWED	APPROVED
WE	WE	RHT	RHT	RHT
DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE
16/06/26	16/06/26	16/06/26	16/06/26	16/06/26

STATUS CODE:	PROJECT STAGE:
Preliminary	
DRAWING UNITS U.N.O. DIMENSIONS IN METRES LEVELS IN METRES	SCALE AT A1 (841X594mm) 1:1250
REV.	P03

DRAWING No.

LP/002



integrated expertise



Essex County Council



Notes

1. Land take based on the split junction design.

2. Allowance has been made for environmental mitigation.

3. Allowance has been made for the accommodation of drainage features.

4. Land take boundary adjacent to development site aligned to indicative layout.

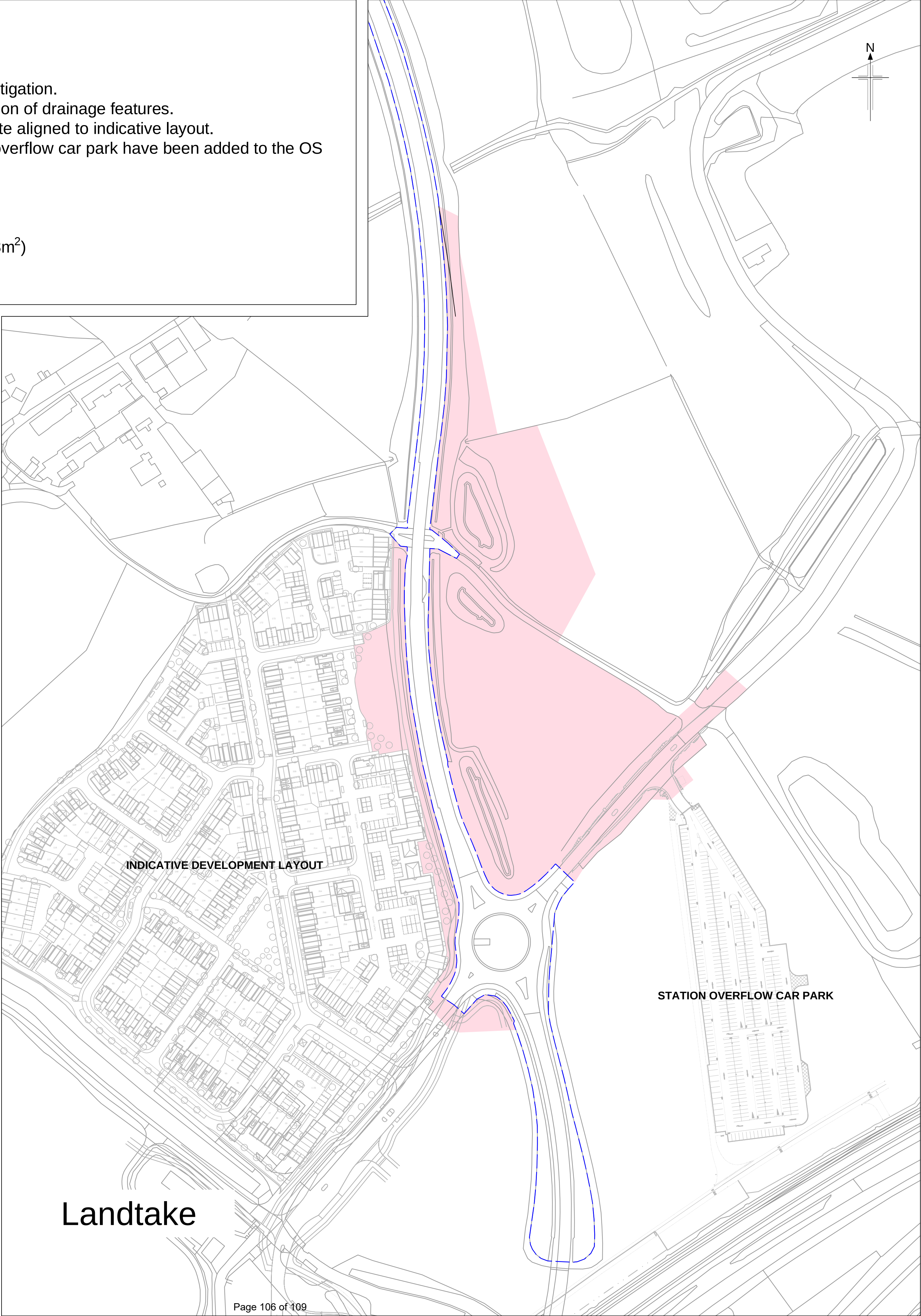
5. The indicative development layout and station overflow car park have been added to the OS mapping for information only.

— — — —

Adopted highway (current)

Split junction land requirements (38,978m²)

6. Freehold title: Countryside L&Q (Beaulieu) Ltd



Appendix F: Beaulieu Access Package – Location Map



Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held in Committee Room 1 at County Hall at 11am on 31 July 2026**Present:**

Councillor	Cabinet Member Responsibility
Cllr Peter Harris	Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Cllr Russell Quirk	Deputy Leader of the Council
Cllr Bo Davis	Finance and Corporate Services
Cllr Sue Truman	Children and Families
Cllr Sam Journet	Education, SEND and Skills
Cllr Mark Webster	Highways and Infrastructure
Cllr Paul Godfrey	Adult Social Care
Cllr Chris Hossack	Residents and Community Services
Cllr Jeff Bray	Regeneration, Planning and Heritage

Cllrs Annie-May O'Neill, Deputy to the Leader of the Council (Local Government Reorganisation), Cllr Lee Scott, Leader of the Opposition, Cllr Zoe Hockton, Deputy to the Cabinet Member for Residents and Community Services, Cllr Keiron McGill, Deputy to the Leader of the Council (Business), Cllr Max Maxwell, Deputy to the Cabinet Member for Education, SEND and Skills, Cllr Kevin Bellamy, Deputy to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Heritage, Cllr Geoff Bagnall and Cllr Mike Steel. Cllr Lee Scordis attended remotely.

1. Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

The report of Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received, and the following were noted:

1. Membership of the Cabinet was as set out in the report.
2. Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Christopher Benn, Cabinet Member for Waste and Recycling, Cllr Neil Carlsson, Deputy to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure, and Cllr David King, Leader of the Liberal Democrat and Independent Group.
3. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes: 3 July 2026

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Questions from the Public

There were none.

4. Annual Governance Statement for 2025-26

The Cabinet received a report setting out the arrangements for governing the council and any issues that had arisen under the Annual Governance Statement 2025-26.

In response to a question raised by Cllr Mike Steel regarding Education, Health and Care Plans, the Cabinet Member for Education, SEND and Skills highlighted that the current backlog was being addressed in order to subsequently seek to achieve the 20-week statutory duty.

Resolved:

1. Note the annual governance statement at appendix 1, which has been considered by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee.
2. Decide whether or not the Cabinet wishes to take any action in response to the Annual Governance Statement.

5. 2026/27 Financial Overview as at the First Quarter Stage (FP/115/06/26)

The Cabinet received a report setting out and to agree the current forecast financial position of the Council's revenue and capital budgets as at the first quarter stage of the 2026/27 financial year.

In response to questions raised by Cllr Lee Scott, Leader of the Opposition, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services (Efficiency) advised that he would provide a written response on the specifics of the proposed drawdown of reserves since May 2026 elections. In particular, the Essex Climate Reserve where £275,372 was drawn down for climate action, the £628,000 drawn down from the Renewal Fund Reserve for sustainable growth, the £657,911 drawn down from the Transformation Reserve for an inclusion strategy and the £2 million from the Transformation Reserve for transformation resources.

In response to a question raised by Cllr Lee Scordis, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services (Efficiency) advised that he would provide a written response on the overspend for the fleet replacement program for the winter gritters.

Resolved:

1. Approval was granted for the following:
2. To draw down reserve funds of:

- a. **£2.8m** from the Quadrennial Elections Reserve to the Finance and Corporate Services (Efficiency) portfolio to fund current year election activity (section 5.6.iii)
 - b. **£1.4m** from the Transformation Reserve to the Children and Families portfolio (£1.4m) to mitigate the removal of Fostering Development Programme savings (section 5.2.iii)
 - c. **£320,000** from the Covid Equalisation Reserve to the Children and Families portfolio to offset pressures arising from adoption placement costs, driven by an increase in care proceedings resulting in placement orders (section 5.2.iii)
 - d. **£242,000** from the Everyone's Essex Reserve to the Education, SEND and Skills NONDSG portfolio relating to the following Cabinet Member Actions which have now time lapsed and cannot be drawn down from the reserve without a fresh approval; **£128,000** - FP/038/02/24 Harlow Futures Project and **£114,000** - FP/562/11/22 Levelling Up Tendring (section 5.5.ii)
 - e. **£150,000** from the A130 PFI Reserve to the Highways and Infrastructure portfolio to fund resource support to the A130 project (section 5.7.iii)
3. To approve the following adjustments:
- a. **£1m** transfer from the Waste Reserve to the Reserve for Future Capital Funding to fund the 2026/27 Recycling Centre for Household Waste (RCHW) maintenance programme (section 9.2)
 - b. Vire **£374,000** from the Adult Social Care Portfolio to the Finance and Corporate Services (Efficiency) RSSS portfolio for Business Support and Procurement (sections 5.1.iv and 5.15.iii)
 - c. Vire **£202,000** from the Adult Social Care Portfolio to the Regeneration and Planning portfolio to transfer income target from Place Policy within Economic Renewal to Adult Services, as part of the transfer of Public
 - d. Health responsibilities (sections 5.1.iv and 5.9.iii)
 - e. Vire **£178,000** from the Regeneration and Planning portfolio to the Finance and Corporate Services (Efficiency) RSSS portfolio to fund resource support to the Future Highways Programme (sections 5.9.iii and 5.15.iii)
 - f. Vire **£150,000** from the Highways and Infrastructure portfolio to the Finance and Corporate Services (Efficiency) RSSS portfolio to fund resource support to the A130 PFI project (sections 5.7.iii and 5.15.iii)
 - g. Vire **£34,000** from the Education, SEND and Skills NONDSG portfolio to the Highways and Infrastructure portfolio to fund a marketing post

transferred from Travel Training to IPTU staffing (sections 5.5.ii and 5.7.iii)

- h. Vire **£33,000** from the Highways and Infrastructure portfolio to the Finance and Corporate Services (Efficiency) RSSS portfolio to support the Future Highways Project (sections 5.7.iii and 5.15.iii)
- i. Vire **£23,000** from the Waste and Recycling portfolio to the Finance and Corporate Services (Efficiency) RSSS portfolio for the network and connectivity costs associated with the Recycling Centre/Transfer Station network (sections 5.11.ii and 5.15.iii)
- j. Vire **£11.2m** from General Grant Funding to the Waste and Recycling portfolio reflecting a change in accounting treatment of the Extended Producer Responsibility grant (from general government grant to specific government grant). Note – this will have the appearance of reducing the net budget by £11.2m but has no impact on ECC's spending power.
- k. x. Accept receipt of **£1.6m** of revenue grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE) in relation to the Best Start in Life Programme.
 - Commence spending the funding received to date to commission services to:
 - Improve school readiness and increase more children achieving a Good Level of Development
 - Support early development, particularly speech and language
 - Reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for disadvantaged families
 - That the Executive Director for Children, Families and Education, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer approve delivery partners following appropriate procurement processes, and to enter into funding agreements with delivery partners (section 5.5.iii)
- l. Amend the capital budget as shown in Appendices C (i) and C (ii) which allows for capital slippage of **£3.4m** with **£2.3m** into 2027/28 and **£1.2m** into 2028/29. Capital budget additions of **£10.3m** and capital budget reductions of **£5.5m**. (see section 7.2)

6. **Design and Delivery of Beaulieu Access Package, Chelmsford (FP/105/05/26)**

The Cabinet received a report setting out and to agree the Design and Delivery of the Beaulieu Access Package.

In response to a proposal made by Cllr Lee Scott, Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Council welcomed the suggestion to write a joint

letter to the Government to call on them to reconsider their decision to not fund the Beaulieu Access Package.

Resolved:

1. Agree to accept £14m of grant funding from Homes England to deliver the Beaulieu Access Package and agree to enter into a Deed of Variation to the HIF Grant Determination Agreement with Homes England to accept the terms of the funding.
2. Agree that, if offered, ECC will accept £8m of grant funding from National Highways as part of the Growth and Housing Accelerator Fund and agree to enter into a Grant Agreement with National Highways for this funding.
3. Note that the Head of Planning will enter into the Planning Framework Agreement with Chelmsford City Council and the Developer Consortium for the Chelmsford Garden Community which will secure £8m of developer contributions towards the costs of Roundabout 5.
4. Agree to fund £8m towards the costs of delivering the Beaulieu Access Package from ECC resources.
5. Agree to add £16m to the capital programme for the Beaulieu Access Package funded by £8m National Highways grant and £8m developer contributions. To note that the remaining £22m of funding (£14m of HIF grant and £8m of ECC resources), is included within the existing capital programme.
6. Agree that the construction contracts for the construction of the Beaulieu Access Package will be procured using the Eastern Highways Alliance 4 Framework Agreement and that the high-level evaluation criteria will be 60% quality and 40% price.
7. Agree that the Director of Property, Investment and Delivery, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the s151 Officer, is authorised to agree the terms of the Grant Agreement with National Highways.
8. Agree that the Director, Property, Investment and Delivery is authorised to: agree the detailed design for the Beaulieu Access Package; and
 - a. invite tenders for the construction of Beaulieu Access Package, including where necessary, advance works. This may be progressed as separate contracts at the discretion of the Director, Property, Investment and Delivery.
9. Note that the award of construction contracts will be subject to a separate executive decision by the Deputy Leader of the Council once the required land has been secured, valid tender/s have been received and there is certainty of funding.

10. Note that we will not be able to proceed with the recommendations in this report unless National Highways agrees to pay the £8m referred to in this report.

**11. Decisions Taken by or in Consultation with Cabinet Members
(FP/129/06/26)**

The reports were noted.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Cabinet would take place at 2pm on 16 September 2026 in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH.

13. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

Chairman

2026