

Braintree District Section 2 Local Plan

Statement of Common Ground between Braintree District Council, Essex County Council and
Highways England in relation to the Strategic Road network

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Braintree District Council (BDC) submitted a Local Plan for examination in October 2017. The Plan was made up of two parts, the Section 1 which had parts identical to the Plans of Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council which were submitted at the same time, and the section 2 Plan which dealt with Braintree specific issues. The Section 1 has been adopted by all three authorities in February 2021.
- 1.2 Essex County Council (ECC) are the local highways and transportation authority for the District and Highways England (HE) the highway and traffic authority for the Strategic Road Network which in the district relates to the A120 and A12 trunk roads.
- 1.3 A separate Statement of Common Ground has been provided with ECC on non-strategic highway matters, where ECC has a statutory role and responsibility, including education, flood risk etc and has the reference number SOCG013.
- 1.4 The two highway authorities have worked closely with Braintree District Council throughout the development of the Local Plan. Two Statements of Common Ground have been signed in relation to the Section 1 Local Plan.
- [SCG017](#) in January 2018 was signed between the parties, including Highways England and Greater Anglia and focussed on the strategic routes of the A12, A120 and Great Eastern mainline railway,
 - [SCG017a](#) in December 2019 focussed on the
 - A12 and A120 in terms of scheme progress and funding bids,
 - the A120 – A133 Link Road & Rapid Transit System (RTS), and the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) and;
 - the *A120 Millennium Way Slips (Braintree) scheme*,

2 Purpose of this Statement of Common Ground

- 2.1 In order to provide clarity for the section 2 Inspectors and recognising the time which has passed since the original statements of common ground were signed, a further Statement of Common Ground has been prepared which sets out the issues specifically in relation to policies and allocations contained within the Local Plan Section 2, and an update on progress regarding the new route for the A120 and A12 widening scheme.
- 2.2 HE provided comments to the Local Plan Section 2 in 2017. These comments were given the reference numbers 851 – 860.

2.3 ECC provided comments to the Local Plan Section 2 in 2017 and these are set out within the separate statement of common ground (SOCG13). No comments were made relating specifically to the strategic road network, namely the A120 or A12.

3 Area of Agreement

3.1 Whilst Duty to Cooperate has been dealt with within the Section 1 examination, all parties agree that the Duty to Co-operate has been met.

3.2 All parties agree that the housing and employment allocations within the Local Plan section 2 can be accommodated on the strategic road network with the necessary contributions as set out in the Local Plan Section 2 and junction improvements secured through the granting of planning permission of Strategic Growth Locations (LPP19 – LPP21), and identified in the IDP Update (BDC058).

3.3 The parties agree that allocations in the Local Plan section 2 will not have adverse impacts on the route of the A12 widening scheme between Junction 19 (north of Chelmsford) and junction 25 (Marks Tey). Previous concerns raised by HE in comments, including 853, 855 858, 859, 856, have been dealt with as the A12 scheme has progressed to preferred route in 2020.

3.4 The parties agree that there is no in principle objection to the strategic growth allocation at land east of Great Notley (site reference BLAN114) and its accompanying policy LPP18, based on its impact on the strategic highway network (incorrectly identified as site BOCN114 within comment 851). The parties are all actively engaged in pre-application and masterplanning discussions with the developer as to the detail of the highway solutions that will be necessary to mitigate the impact of the development on the strategic and local highway network.

3.5 The parties agree that there is no in principle objection to the strategic growth allocation at Feering (site reference FEEER233) and its accompanying policy LPP22. It is agreed that the informal recreation designation to the east of the existing A12 may need to be amended to take into account the revised route of the A12 in this location. As noted in paragraph 6.75 of the Local Plan Section 2 this is additional open space which is being offered by the landowner for the benefit of the community. The HE preferred route for the A12 widens the existing A12 to provide three lanes in both directions around Kelvedon, up to a new junction 24. The new junction 24 will be provided to the west of Inworth Road with an all movements dumb-bell layout providing improved access to the upgraded A12 from Inworth Road which will serve the communities of Kelvedon, Feering, Inworth, Tiptree and others.

3.5 HE expressed concerns within their comment 860 that the increase in area for specialist employment uses relating to the emergency services at site RIVE364 would not be implementable due to the changes being developed for the location of the A12 in the vicinity of the site. It should be noted that the A12 currently provides direct access (and indeed the only access) to this site which is used as the Headquarters of Essex Fire and Rescue. As part of the proposed A12 widening

scheme currently under development by HE, alternative local access to the employment area will be provided for vehicles and non-motorised users.

- 3.6 Comment 852 relates to the provision of slip roads connecting the A120 with Millennium Way. The proposals are designed in the medium term to provide a reduction in traffic congestion at Galleys Corner Roundabout by providing an alternative access into Braintree, and the Braintree Village retail outlet. The proposals received planning consent in August 2020, and subject to completion of the detailed design is expected to be under construction by 2023
- 3.7 HE confirms that the proposed A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme will be submitted for a Development Consent Order (DCO) in Spring/Summer 2022. The A12 scheme is currently subject to a Statutory Consultation, as part of the pre DCO application process. The current timetable proposes that construction will commence in 2023/24 with the road open to traffic by 2027/28. The scheme is funded as part of governments Road Investment Strategy (2020 – 2025) (RIS2). Further information on the scheme can be found at <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/east/a12-chelmsford-to-a120-widening-scheme/>
- 3.8 Proposals to upgrade the A120 from Braintree to A12 are now identified as a 'pipeline scheme' in the RIS2 programme. The proposals for improving the route were initially developed by ECC, and a favoured route option was recommended to Government in 2018 for future investment. The scheme is currently undergoing further detailed design and development by HE and will be considered for investment and delivery in a future RIS. The A12 and A120 Schemes are being developed collaboratively to ensure that the A12 does not preclude the A120 scheme to be implemented and minimise disruption to the local roads Further information on the scheme can be found at <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/east/a120-braintree-to-a12/>

4 Areas of Disagreement

- 4.1 There are no areas of disagreement.

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