

Chelmsford City Growth Package

Promoter's Response to Public Consultation

Introduction

Essex County Council (ECC) welcomes the results of this very successful public consultation and would like to thank the many people who participated and shared a wide range of views which have informed decisions on which schemes will be taken forward.

This document sets out ECC's response to the main issues raised in response to the consultation and outlines the next steps.

Background

Chelmsford is growing and developing into a place where people want to live, work, shop and spend time. With this growth, there is an increase in demand for travel on our already busy road network.

At the moment, the road network has only 4% space left at peak times. If we don't do something to reduce the pressure on the existing road network, the problem is going to get worse.

The County Council has developed a vision of a 'Future Transport Network' for the city, with the intention to make all modes of transport attractive, giving people real choice in the way they travel to work, to the shops and to their families and friends, supporting the city's economy.

Encouraging more sustainable travel on foot, by bicycle and on public transport will hopefully reduce the number of cars making short journeys on the road network, improving air quality for all residents.

To kick start this new approach, £15 million has been allocated by the County Council and the South East Local Enterprise Partnership for a series of sustainable transport improvements in and around the city. These improvements to the network need to be made by 2021.

Consultation Summary

30 potential improvements for inclusion in the Chelmsford City Growth Package were issued for public consultation on 17 July 2017 for six weeks. A total of 921 responses were received and one petition was submitted regarding one of the proposals; Baddow Road Bus Gate. Respondent views were sought on these proposals to enable ECC to make a choice on which proposals would be taken forward to be delivered as part of the £15m South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) funding).

A full summary of the consultation responses can be viewed on ECC's website: www.essex.gov.uk/chelmsfordtransport

Key Issues Raised and ECC's response:

Below are a list of key comments and issues that were raised as part of the Public Consultation process – both through the questionnaires and the public events.

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Issue Raised</i>	<i>Response and Action</i>
Baddow Road Bus Gate:	Concern regarding impact on journey times for residents' nearest the Army & Navy roundabout and for patients using the Doctor's Surgery	<p>We have moved the bus gate to the junction with Meadgate Avenue to reduce the impact on those properties closest to the Army and Navy roundabout. It is not possible to move the bus gate any further east as this would lead to increased traffic along Meadgate Avenue (which would become a route around the bus gate). Traffic originating between Meadgate Avenue and the roundabout will still be able enter the roundabout as they can under the current arrangements.</p> <p>All traffic exiting the Army & Navy roundabout onto Baddow Rd will continue to be unaffected.</p> <p>ACTION: Traffic patterns will be monitored prior to and following the implementation of the bus gate</p>
	Concern regarding impact of re-routing traffic on alternative routes such as Baddow Bypass	<p>Of the 390* vehicles currently using Baddow Road to enter the Army & Navy roundabout between 8am and 9am, we expect 26% (102 vehicles) to use Maldon Road to reach the A1114 Essex Yeomanry Way (Baddow Bypass), and 12% (48 vehicles) to use Van Diemens Road.</p> <p><small>*Traffic model assumption based on available traffic flow data.</small></p> <p>The A1114 Essex Yeomanry Way (Baddow Bypass) is expected to be able accommodate the additional traffic highlighted above. Both the A1114 and Van Diemens Road will benefit from the improved flows at the Army and Navy roundabout (achieved by effectively removing one of the 5 arms of the roundabout).</p>

		<p>Many vehicles will not reach the Meadgate Avenue / Baddow Road junction as new advanced direction signage will inform them when and where the restriction will affect their journey, allowing them to divert from further away. For example, traffic approaching Baddow Road from Beehive Lane will be directed towards the A1114 when the Baddow Road bus gate is in operation. There will be additional signage further afield which will intercept through traffic.</p> <p>ACTION: ECC will monitor traffic levels along the alternative routes; We note that a number of concerns have been made regarding increased traffic levels in the vicinity of schools, but as outlined above we are not expecting significant increases. We will consider whether any mitigation is needed along these roads prior to implementation. This may include priority working (e.g. give way to oncoming traffic signs) along the narrow part of Maldon Road.</p>
	<p>Concern that air quality would decrease on alternative routes such as Baddow Bypass</p>	<p>The Army and Navy is one of the worst areas in Chelmsford for air quality and this must be improved, and there are also operational benefits for the city's wider transport network. Air Quality modelling has demonstrated that the air quality changes on Baddow Bypass would be minimal following the implementation of the bus gate.</p> <p>ACTION: Continue to work with Chelmsford City Council to monitor air quality along Baddow Rd and Parkway.</p>
	<p>24hr operation of the bus gate</p>	<p>The bus gate restricting access to general traffic will now only operate on weekdays from 7am – 10am, and from 4pm – 7pm, as these are the times experiencing the worst congestion. Outside of these periods everyone will be able to use the roads as they do currently.</p> <p>ACTION: No further action required other than to implement the bus gate over the revised hours.</p>

	<p>Concerns about the punctuality and costs of the bus service as an alternative</p>	<p>The bus gate proposals should provide substantial improvements to the length and reliability of bus journey times, allowing a more sustainable and viable service to be operated. ECC recognise that further work is needed with the bus companies to maximise quality and minimise price of services however this scheme should enable such improvements to be considered.</p> <p>ACTION: ECC have begun (and will continue) to liaise with bus companies regarding the potential for improved services and vehicles across the city, and we will continue to explore options to improve the vehicle fleet.</p>
	<p>Suggestion of alternative solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A two-way replacement flyover on the Army & Navy Roundabout • Bus gate between Meadgate and Baddow Bypass 	<p>Replacing the flyover with a two-way structure was discounted in the short term due as the estimated cost significantly exceeding the budget available over the next 3 years. However, this option is being considered as a potential longer-term scheme. It should be noted that a replacement flyover would be unlikely to address sustainable travel in the region or air quality.</p> <p>Creation of a bus link from Meadgate Terrace onto the Baddow Bypass has been considered in the past. This was discounted for multiple reasons including failure to improve the Army and Navy roundabout, buses still having to queue up to Meadgate Avenue, failure to address air quality issues and Meadgate Terrace being unsuitable for buses.</p> <p>ACTION: ECC will continue investigatory work into the long-term future for the Army & Navy flyover and will publish the results of this once completed.</p>
<p>Broomfield Road:</p>	<p>One-way Corporation Rd creating concern about longer journey times and re-routing of buses</p>	<p>Preventing buses from turning left from Broomfield Road into Corporation Road would affect bus services 54 and 56. First Essex Buses Ltd. commented that diverting buses via a longer route increases journey time and increases costs, potentially resulting in a reduced frequency being provided by the same resource. They therefore suggested a contraflow bus lane along Corporation Road to allow the continuation of two-way bus operation whilst still achieving the objective of reducing traffic at the junction with Broomfield Road.</p> <p>As a result, the design for the Corporation Road junction is being amended to</p>

		<p>allow buses to continue to be able to serve the road in both directions. Further investigation has shown that the left turn from Broomfield Road into Corporation Road can remain open for all traffic while still achieving the majority of the schemes objectives.</p> <p>The proposals will still prevent the left turn from Corporation Road to Broomfield Road, and the right turn from Broomfield Road into Corporation Road.</p> <p>ACTION: No further action.</p>
New London Road Bus Lane:	Concern raised about the existing levels of parking along this corridor (on both sides of the road) blocking effective traffic flows	<p>Due to the legitimate comments made and concerns raised, the scope of the New London Road bus lane enforcement has now been extended to look at additional improvements on the corridor to consolidate parking where it causes a restriction to traffic flow.</p> <p>ACTION: Carry out an additional study to look at the removal / reallocation of on-street parking along the corridor.</p>
Waterloo Lane Loop:	Concern that there might be increased traffic flows along Waterloo Lane once it is made a through-route.	<p>Since the public consultation further traffic modelling has been undertaken and subsequently Waterloo Lane loop has not been taken forward as a scheme due, in part, to these responses and the impacts of the new signalised junction on Victoria Road. However, the portion of the scheme to close Tindal Square has been retained to extend the pedestrian area of the High Street and remove cars for safer links for non-motorised users.</p> <p>ACTION: No further action.</p>
Gt. Baddow to City Centre:	Perception that the proposals do not provide an off-road provision	<p>A number of concerns have been raised about whether the proposed scheme (largely an on-road signage scheme) goes far enough to encourage cycling between Great Baddow and the city centre. An off-road shared provision would be impractical due to the number of driveways and the level of pedestrian footfall, particularly adjacent the school.</p> <p>ACTION: During further design phases ECC will revisit the alternatives and</p>

		seek to maximise dedicated provision. We will also look to extend provision west along Baddow Road to connect with High Bridge Road and the Meadows shopping centre.
Parkway:	Concern about the impact of the nearside bus lane on Parkway	<p>This proposal will secure key road space for the creation of a sustainable corridor, linking to the adjacent bus gate, which will allow growth in bus use into the future. Modelling indicates the proposal will not have significant effect on traffic flows as the left hand lane is underutilised even in peak periods. The reassignment of lane markings at the base of the flyover and at the Odeon roundabout should reduce current weaving issues between lanes and improve reliability for bus services, further encouraging the use of Park and Ride and other bus services.</p> <p>ACTION: Traffic flows will be monitored prior to and following implementation</p>
	Concern that delays to buses would be caused by closure of the 'gap' at the New London Rd junction	<p>Some concerns have been raised about the proposed closure of the central reservation, which will prevent southbound buses going directly into New London Road. Traffic modelling indicates that there will be a substantial overall improvement in the operation of the junction due to the effective creation of two separate junctions, reducing red time for all traffic (including buses). This substantially outweighs the slight negative impacts for buses that use this 'gap'.</p> <p>ACTION: ECC will work with the bus companies to monitor bus journey times following the implementation of this proposal.</p>

Proposals to be progressed

- Baddow Road Bus Gate - changes to consultation proposals include: reduced to only peak hours and moved to Meadgate Avenue. This will be implemented on an 18-month trial basis.
- Broomfield Road: Hybrid Cycleway (Gyratory to Patching Hall Lane) and Highway Capacity Improvements - changes to consultation proposals include: amendments to the layout of the Corporation Road junction, restricting some movements but not progressing the one way proposal
- Chelmer Valley Road: Bus Priority Measures and Highway Capacity Improvements
- Chelmer Village Way cycleway
- City Centre Cycle Connectivity (Bellmead link to Chelmsford Railway Station)
- City Centre Cycle Parking
- Citywide Signage & Technology
- Essex Regiment Way Pegasus Crossing
- Great Baddow to City Centre cycle route
- Great Waltham to City Centre Cycle Route
- New London Road Bus lane
- New Street hybrid cycleway
- Parkway (five schemes) - Bus Lane and Three Lane Running / Permanent Left Turn Segregation / New London Road Junction Enhancement / New London Road Left Turn Widen / Manor Road
- Pump Lane/Springfield Road Toucan Crossing
- Tindal Square: closure to general motorised traffic (previously entitled Waterloo Lane Loop)
- Writtle to City Centre Cycling Improvements (National Cycle Network 1): Including Admirals Park Bridge replacement

While the other schemes proposed in the consultation will not be taken forward as part of the Chelmsford City Growth Package, some of these may be progressed in the future using alternative funding sources.

The latest information on the progress of the proposals, including Frequently Asked Questions, will be found here: www.essex.gov.uk/chelmsfordtransport