

# Minutes

## Local Plan Sub-Committee 24th November 2022



Present:

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
J Abbott	Yes	D Hume	No
K Bowers	Yes	Mrs I Parker	Yes
G Butland	Yes	Mrs W Scattergood	Yes
J Coleridge	No	Mrs G Spray (Chairman)	Yes
T Cunningham	Yes	P Thorogood	Yes
A Everard	Yes	J Wrench	Apologies

### 9 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**INFORMATION:** The following interests were declared:

Councillor J Abbott declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 5 – ‘A12 to A120 Widening Scheme – Statement of Common Ground’ as a Member of Rivenhall Parish Council, which had been involved in meetings with Essex County Council and National Highways regarding the widening scheme and would be taking part in the Examination of the Development Consent Order.

Councillor G Butland declared a Non-Pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 5 – ‘A12 to A120 Widening Scheme – Statement of Common Ground’ as an Elected Member of Essex County Council.

Councillor T Cunningham declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 5 – ‘A12 to A120 Widening Scheme – Statement of Common Ground’ as an Elected Member of Essex County Council and, in particular, as the Deputy to the Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning.

Councillor Mrs G Spray declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 5 – ‘A12 to A120 Widening Scheme – Statement of Common Ground’ as Braintree District Council’s Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure and as she had attended briefings about the widening scheme.

Councillor P Thorogood declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 5 – ‘A12 to A120 Widening Scheme – Statement of Common Ground’ as the Elected Member for the Braintree Eastern Division of Essex County Council through which the A12 passed.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Councillors remained in the meeting, unless stated otherwise, and took part in the discussion when the Item was considered.

## 10 **MINUTES**

**DECISION:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Local Plan Sub-Committee held on 5th July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 11 **QUESTION TIME**

**INFORMATION:** There were no questions asked or statements made.

Principally, these Minutes record decisions taken only and, where appropriate, the reasons for the decisions.

## 12 **A12 TO A120 WIDENING SCHEME – STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to an update report on the A12 to A120 road widening scheme and the proposed Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) between Braintree District Council and National Highways.

The A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme was a £1bn - £1.2bn road investment by National Highways affecting the entire length of the A12 within the Braintree District. The scheme was a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, which was subject to the approval of a Development Consent Order (DCO) by the relevant Secretary of State. In determining the Order, the Secretary of State would consider recommendations arising from an Examination process led by the Planning Inspectorate. The scheme was scheduled to be completed by 2027, after a construction period of four years. The Council and several other discharging Authorities would be responsible for ensuring that the construction/operation of the project was sufficiently controlled. The SoCG was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The SoCG set out matters about the widening scheme that had been agreed between the Council and National Highways. The SoCG was a ‘live’ document, which would be kept up-to-date. Essex County Council and other Local Authorities would also be agreeing individual SoCGs with National Highways, although collaboration would be sought between the Authorities in respect of key matters. Members of the Local Plan Sub-Committee were invited to comment on the SoCG

and to highlight any matters for inclusion. It was noted that the Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Head of Planning and Economic Growth, would approve the SoCG on the Council's behalf.

The A12 to A120 widening scheme would widen the existing A12 between junctions 19 and 25 to three lanes in each direction; create a three lane bypass in each direction at Rivenhall End; and create a bypass between junction 24 (Feering) and junction 25 (A120 Marks Tey interchange). National Highways had carried out non-statutory consultation on the project between January and March 2017 when views had been sought on three route options. Consultation had also been carried out between October and December 2019 regarding new junctions and route options to accommodate a proposed garden community between Braintree and Colchester. The Council had also been consulted on a draft Statement of Community Consultation.

The preferred route for the widening scheme had been announced in May 2020 and statutory public consultation had taken place between June and August 2021 on the preliminary design and the Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment Report. A copy of the Council's response was attached at Appendix 2 to the report. The scheme had subsequently been amended to combine junction 21a/b at Hatfield Peverel with junction 21 Witham; to amend the location and layout at junction 22 (Witham North); to alter the location of the bypass at Rivenhall End in order to avoid the floodplain of the River Blackwater; and to revise the location of junction 24 in order to reduce its impact on the Grade II listed Prested Hall. Furthermore, an area had been designed to enable the A120 to connect at Kelvedon at a later date. There had also been supplementary consultation in 2021 in respect of design changes affecting Hatfield Peverel and Witham South. The Council's response to this consultation was attached at Appendix 3 to the report.

National Highways had submitted an application to the Planning Inspectorate on 15th August 2022 for a DCO for the widening scheme and, following an 'Adequacy of Consultation' process lasting 28 days, the Planning Inspectorate had accepted the application. The Council's response to this process was attached at Appendix 4 to the report.

Details of the key proposals for the route from junction 19 (Boreham interchange) to junction 27 (Marks Tey) and how these would affect the District were set out in the report. In addition, information regarding Essex County Council's latest position on the project was attached at Appendix 5 to the report.

## **DECISION:**

- (1) To note that issues denoted as Green within the Statement of Common Ground between Braintree District Council and National Highways have been agreed with National Highways.

- (2) To note that issues denoted as Amber and as Red within the Statement of Common Ground between Braintree District Council and National Highways are currently unresolved.
- (3) To note that the Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure, in consultation with Head of Planning and Economic Growth, will agree the final Statement of Common Ground.

13 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2022-2024 – UPDATE NOVEMBER 2022**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to a report on an updated version of the Local Development Scheme.

The Local Development Scheme was a project management document containing details of planning documents, which the Council would be producing and the timetable for their production. The revised, draft Local Development Scheme for 2022-2024 (November 2022) was attached as an Appendix to the report. The document would replace the previous Local Development Scheme for the period 2021–2023, which had been approved in May 2021.

The Council was required to publish a Local Development Scheme setting out a rolling programme and identifying the key stages and timescales for the preparation of planning documents, which would form Braintree District Council's Development Plan. The Council was also required to keep the Local Development Scheme up-to-date.

The main changes to the Local Development Scheme included references to the adoption of Section 2 of the Local Plan; an update on Neighbourhood Development Plans, including Feering and Kelvedon; and an update on Supplementary Planning Documents and the timetable for these.

**DECISION:** That the revised Local Development Scheme 2022–2024 (November 2022) be approved.

**Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project - National Grid Electricity Transmission - 'East Anglia Green'**

At the conclusion of the meeting reference was made to the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project proposed by National Grid Electricity Transmission for a 400 Kilovolts (kV) grid reinforcement between Norwich, Norfolk and Tilbury, Essex. The project, known as 'East Anglia Green', affected part of the Braintree District and the Council had been invited to respond to public consultation. Individual District

Councillors had also been given the opportunity to attend briefings about the project and to submit representations.

It was reported that the project was currently subject to a further round of consultation, which closed on 5th December 2022. However, due to the limited time available for the submission of representations, it would not be possible for the Local Plan Sub-Committee to meet and to consider the Council's proposed response. Instead, the Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure would approve the response on the Council's behalf. If possible, Councillors representing Wards affected by the route of the project would be notified, via E-Mail, about the proposed response prior to its submission.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and closed at 7.19pm.

Councillor Mrs G Spray  
(Chairman)