

A120 Improvement Project and A12 Widening Project Consultations		Agenda No: 7a
Portfolio	Planning and Housing	
Corporate Outcome:	A sustainable environment and a great place to live, work and play A well connected and growing district with high quality homes and infrastructure Delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses and reducing costs to taxpayers	
Report presented by:	Councillor Lady Newton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing	
Report prepared by:	Andrew Hull, Head of Projects	
Background Papers:		Public Report
<u>Cabinet – 6th February 2017 Reports and Minutes</u>		Key Decision: No
Executive Summary:		
<p>On 6th February 2017, Cabinet agreed to the submission of formal written consultation responses containing the Council's support for the A120 improvement project and the A12 widening project. The public consultation for the widening of the A12 between Chelmsford and Marks Tey closed on 3rd March 2017 with the public consultation for the A120 project closing on 14th March 2017.</p> <p>Cabinet approved on the 6th February 2017 the proposal for Cllr Lady Newton, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Corporate Director for Economic Growth, to submit the Council's responses to both public consultations.</p> <p>Attached as Appendix 1 to this report is the formal written consultation response for the A12 project. Due to the submission timetable, at the time of writing, the response for the A120 project is still being prepared. The final response will be circulated to Cabinet in advance of the meeting on 13th March 2017.</p>		
Recommended Decision:		
To note the consultation response.		
Purpose of Decision:		
To inform the Cabinet of the formal written responses to the A120 improvement project and A12 widening project consultations.		

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail.

Financial:	There are no direct financial implications related to this report. However, should the proposed improvement to the A120 and A12 fail to occur, it may prove difficult to deliver planned housing and employment growth.
Legal:	Legal services will be consulted as appropriate during project development and delivery. Both the A120 and A12 are operated by Highways England and the Secretary of State for Transport is the planning authority.
Safeguarding:	There are no direct safeguarding issues arising from the proposals set-out in this report.
Equalities/Diversity:	The proposed improvements to the A120 and A12 will have a positive impact on equality and diversity by improving housing and through access to employment.
Customer Impact:	The proposed improvements to the A120 and A12 will deliver tangible benefits to residents and communities, as detailed in this report.
Environment and Climate Change:	Environmental concerns are fundamental to the feasibility studies and choice of preferred routes. The projects aim to improve the quality and connectivity of transport provision within the A120 and A12 corridors for people using non-motorised forms of transport, such as pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders and encourage alternatives to car travel through improvements to the attractiveness of public transport.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	The feasibility studies for both the A120 and A12 are subject to a structured, substantive public consultation process. A Members' briefing focusing on the A120 project was held at Braintree District Council on the 12th January 2017. A Parliamentary Reception, arranged by Haven Gateway Partnership, was held on 18 th January 2017, to launch the A120 route option shortlist and promote support for the project amongst MPs and other key stakeholders.
Risks:	Failure to deliver improvements to the transport infrastructure will reduce the ability to deliver growth and support the delivery of services.
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1.0 Summary of Braintree District Council Responses

- 1.1 Braintree District Council has indicated strong support for both the A12 and A120 projects. The potential improvements to both routes will provide tangible benefits for our road users, businesses and communities and will enable housing and economic growth required by the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.2 Following publication of the route options for both the A12 and A120, a cross-departmental internal working group was established to study the proposals and consider potential impacts upon the district. The working group has liaised closely with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing and the Corporate Director for Economic Growth to draft the formal responses.
- 1.3 In order to produce thorough and meaningful consultation responses, a detailed analysis has been undertaken of all four route options for the A12 and all five route options for the A120. This analysis has taken into account the following issues:
 - Impacts on communities and businesses;
 - Impact on delivery of the housing and economic growth proposed in the draft Local Plan;
 - Environmental, biodiversity and landscape matters;
 - Impacts on operational matters (e.g. waste collection).
- 1.4 For both routes, the Council has not committed explicit support to a single preferred route option. Detailed comments and, where appropriate, queries and requests for additional information have been produced.
- 1.5 With regard to the A12, the Council's response does explicitly ask for Option 1 to be discounted. This option, which provides online widening to the existing route, is adjudged not to deliver sufficient resilience in the network, does not address significant severance issues for villages such as Rivenhall End and would create numerous complex rear entrances to existing properties.
- 1.6 The deadline for submitting the consultation response for the A120 study is 14th March 2017. The working group is currently finalising the Council's response, in close liaison with the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning and the Corporate Director of Economic Growth. The completed document will be circulated to Cabinet in advance of the meeting on 13th March 2017.

2.0 Summary of Local Authority Response

- 2.1 The Council's responses have been drafted in liaison with neighbouring local authorities. Having studied the submitted responses of other authorities in relation to the A12 consultation, there is a general consistency, particularly around the need to maximize resilience, deliver safe, fit-for-purpose junctions and enable housing and economic growth. A summary of the responses on the A12 project can be found as Appendix 2 of this report.

A12 Chelmsford to A120 Widening Consultation

Braintree District Council Response

Introduction

Braintree District Council (BDC) is strongly supportive of the proposals to widen the A12 between Chelmsford and the A120. Improvements to the route will deliver significant benefits to our communities and businesses by reducing congestion and improving journey times. Critically, the A12 corridor represents a key growth area in the Braintree District, with the potential to accommodate the development of significant numbers of new homes.

Following a detailed analysis of the route options, BDC does not feel it is in a position to commit to a single preferred option. However, following the analysis, BDC does have a preference to discount Option 1.

This response contains comments on each route, the location and quality of junctions and environmental concerns. Where appropriate, we have suggested areas where further detailed study is required. The analysis has been undertaken factoring in the impact of the proposed A12 widening on the delivery of BDC's draft Local Plan and the North Essex Garden Communities.

Local Plan

BDC is currently preparing a draft Local Plan which is due to be submitted in the autumn of 2017. The Plan will include over 15,000 new homes being built in the District, together with new employment, services and facilities to support the new residents. This level of growth represents a step change in housing delivery in the District since the 2011 Core Strategy was adopted, and more than triples the annual housing requirements. Infrastructure has been identified as critical to the provision of new development, to ensure that new residents and businesses have access to high quality, reliable transport infrastructure. It is also a key concern of existing local residents and businesses that a congested local and strategic road network cannot cope with additional vehicles.

The A12/mainline railway corridor has been identified as one of the key growth areas in the District. It will directly accommodate around 3,500 new homes in the town of Witham and villages of Hatfield Peverel, Kelvedon and Feering which sit directly adjacent to the A12 at present, and have mainline railway stations. However, the A12 corridor, as one of only two major link roads in the region, attracts large volumes of traffic for more rural parts of Essex, which also causes congestion issues for villages such as Hatfield Peverel, Kelvedon and Feering, as traffic seeks to get on or off the A12.

Modelling Work

BDC understand that the modelling work undertaken to date has included committed growth in the form of those sites which had planning permission at the time the model was run, and we assume a general growth assumption has also been factored into the predicted traffic by 2038. However, all the local authorities in the vicinity of the A12 are facing substantial new housing and employment growth which is likely to increase the pressure on the strategic road network. This project should ensure that the strategic road network is future-proofed in the longer term and that additional growth will not generate the need for further lanes or amended or enlarged junction designs shortly after being completed.

Highways England is aware that the North Essex Garden Communities Project is planning a number of new settlements in the area, including a significant proposal for a new town to the west of Marks Tey. With an eventual size of up to 25,000 homes this could have significant implications for local traffic movements and is part of the Garden Communities Programme at the DCLG. More detail on this is set out below.

Garden Communities

BDC is working as part of the North Essex Garden Communities Project to build three new standalone garden communities on the local authority areas of Braintree, Colchester and Tendring. The biggest of these new communities stands on the A12 in the vicinity of junctions 24 and 25 and could accommodate up to 25,000 homes in the medium term and 2,500 homes in the Local Plan period between now and 2033. This will of course be accompanied by major employment and service facilities.

We understand that this is not a 'committed' development. However, it is the largest garden community currently being proposed and, if it provides 25,000 new homes, will be akin to a town the size of Tunbridge Wells or Corby. The project has the support of government through the Garden Communities Programme and has received development funding accordingly. Highways England is involved in the project and is aware that the current A12 route travels directly through the area of search and is likely to be a major access point into the site.

There can be no doubt that, even with the most optimistic modal shift, additional road capacity on the A12 is required if the new garden community at Colchester Braintree Borders (and that at Tendring Colchester Borders in unison) are to meet their full development potential. The road is predicted to exceed capacity along this stretch even without the extensive large-scale development now planned. Therefore, additional capacity is needed, in the corridor and at junctions.

The decision for online or offline will be critical to capacity for development of the proposed garden community but equally important is the future use of any bypassed sections of road which will determine ultimate impact and capacity. As such it would be prudent to plan specifically for this growth within the A12 proposals. This would ensure that appropriate land is safeguarded and junction numbers and sizes are proposed as part of this scheme, which would resolve existing issues and provide long term resilience to the A12.

Depending on the design of the new A12, offline routes do have implications for the design of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community, as it is unlikely that land between the old and new A12 would be suitable for residential development. Design and capacity of roads needed to serve the new community will also depend on which option is carried forward as part of the A120 study and, therefore, whilst work is progressing at pace on the garden community, the exact access arrangements, number and position of junctions required to serve the new community cannot be stated exactly at this time. As such, Highways England should continue to be actively involved in this project going forward.¹

Overall however BDC believes that the offline solution in this area would create more resilience and capacity in the network which would ensure that the garden community proposed at Colchester Braintree borders is served by the most appropriate highway solutions. BDC also believes that the 'orphan' stretch of the existing A12 created by the offline solution could be used to promote modal shifts: for example, the creation of dedicated bus lanes.

One crucial point is worth noting now: BDC appreciates that, as currently set-out, the wording of the Roads Investment Strategy 1 ends this project at junction 25 Marks Tey, with the A12 beyond junction 25 to be improved in a later plan period. However, in our view, if the A12 is to go offline, the most appropriate place for it to re-join the A12 is beyond junction 25 between Marks Tey and Copford. This avoids the constrained area around Marks Tey where homes, roads and the railway line come together. Whilst we understand this may have implications for process and timing for Highways England, we believe that the best long term viable solution for the road should not be constrained by an arbitrary project end.

Proposed New Route Options

The A12 runs through the centre of Hatfield Peverel village, essentially cutting the village in two. There are three structures crossing the A12 within the village. Whilst there is some further land adjacent to the A12, it is not clear whether additional land will need to be taken from private properties and whether there will be the loss of properties. Whilst we understand the necessity of this work, we would urge Highways England to keep any losses of property to a minimum and to work closely and collaboratively with the Parish Council and the local residents and businesses on this.

In addition, land directly adjacent to the A12 known as Sorrel's Field is allocated in the draft Local Plan as part of a wider housing allocation at the former Arla Dairy site.

There also draft site allocations for new homes around junction 21 at Witham south and an allocation of 1,000 homes adjacent to the A12 and Inworth Road at Feering. An allocation for employment development is also proposed around junction 22 as an extension to the existing employment site here. Any proposals should therefore avoid affecting these areas wherever possible. However, given the scale of growth

¹ Areas of search for three new garden communities were contained within the Local Plan Preferred Options consultations of all three local planning authorities (Braintree, Colchester, Tendring) in 2016. Specific sites and boundaries have not yet been determined but will be refined through the Local Plan decision-making process.

proposed in some locations, it may be possible to seek developer contributions to contribute to road or junction improvements.

BDC is supportive of the offline route of the A12 between junctions 22 and 23, which is set out in options 2 and 3. The junction at Rivenhall End is of particular poor standard and the village as a whole would substantially benefit from the A12 moving away from its current alignment. At present, the Essex Fire and Rescue services headquarters are located in this area with a direct access to the current A12. This is a major service and employer in the District and has some specialised needs. We presume that talks with Essex Fire and Rescue have taken place to ensure this can be accommodated.

By moving the A12 southwards, the road moves closer to the river valley and areas at risk of flooding. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has just been completed by BDC and is available on our website, which may be of benefit when considering the best way to mitigate this risk.

BDC asks Highways England why a northern bypass route option is not possible, placing the A12 within the same corridor as the railway line. This would put both uses in a single area, minimising environmental and visual impacts and allowing both routes to be crossed or mitigated in tandem.

Taking all of the above into account, BDC is not supportive of Option 1, which provides online widening. This option does not provide sufficient resilience in the network and continues to cause significant severance issues for villages such as Rivenhall End as well as creating a series of complex rear entrances to a large numbers of properties.

Junctions

It should be noted that the following comments are in relation to our view of where the current and future junction arrangements could be. However, there has been no technical or modelling work undertaken on the options. We strongly request that BDC, alongside Essex County Council, is fully engaged in any future modelling work on the junctions and the implications that this may have for local road movements.

There are six major junctions along this stretch of the A12 within the District, as well as many other minor accesses and junctions. Many of these junctions are not all movement but provide a single movement access; for example, at junctions 20a and 20b to the west and east of Hatfield Peverel and junctions 23 and 24 for Kelvedon and Feering. There is much traffic, which travels from further afield, particularly from the Maldon District to the south and from parts of the Colchester District around Tiptree, which are required to travel through some of the historic village centres to reach the A12. This situation is not helped by the spilt junctions, which can mean vehicles must travel on non-strategic roads and do not necessarily use the closest junctions.

Hatfield Peverel is one such village, which suffers from significant congestion in its central area. There are two routes only from Maldon to the strategic road network at present, one of which is through Hatfield Peverel along Maldon Road and onto The Street. Extensive investigation work on this junction by Essex County Council concludes that no suitable measures can mitigate the traffic at the junction.

This congestion causes both significant issues for this junction and for high levels of traffic movements all the way down The Street. This could cause traffic and pollution issues along the main street and provides a severance between parts of the village, which is already in place because of the A12.

Maldon District Council, Essex County Council and Braintree District Council signed a statement of common ground in 2014 to champion a new 'bypass route' from the Maldon Road before it enters Maldon and then to join the A12 at a revised junction to the east of Hatfield Peverel. BDC strongly urges Highways England to consider this opportunity for providing a suitable junction and if possible the link road itself to the Maldon Road. This would solve a longstanding issue and ensure that the area is future-proofed against additional growth.

South Witham in the vicinity of junction 21 is an area of housing and employment growth for the District. Around 800 homes already have the benefit of planning permission in this area, with a further 450 homes proposed in the draft Local Plan. A business park has also been approved as part of these developments. Improvements to junction 21 would therefore be beneficial to provide more of a gateway entrance into Witham, which would benefit from a rearrangement. At present the junction does not allow traffic travelling towards Chelmsford to exit here; traffic instead has to exit at junction 22 and travel through Witham, or leave at Hatfield Peverel and travel back up the A12. Again we would welcome an all-movements junction here, providing the impact on the local road network was acceptable.

In relation to these junctions, BDC is strongly supportive of a new all movements junction between Hatfield Peverel and Witham which would facilitate an alternative route for those travelling from the south in Maldon District to the A12. This route is essential to provide an alternative to travelling through Hatfield Peverel. However further work modelling the impacts on the local highway network should be undertaken to understand the impacts of merging junctions 21 and 20b or 21, 20b and 20a are and to ensure problems would not be created elsewhere.

Junction 22 at north Witham is an all-movements junction. If the A12 stays online here, then improvements to junction safety and capacity would be strongly welcomed. This junction carries a significant HGV traffic load from the nearby large industrial parks. In addition, a sand and gravel extraction site has been allocated in the vicinity of this junction, which would be the main access point for vehicles travelling to and from the site. The requirements of HGVs and the ability to get them on the strategic road network as soon as possible should be particularly considered.

If the A12 moves offline here as proposed by Options 2 and 3 then an all-movements Witham north junction must be re-provided, with particular emphasis on the HGV access to the industrial parks as set- out above being a key consideration.

There is an allocated sand and gravel extraction site (Coleman's Farm) in close proximity to junction 22. Whilst this may provide materials in close proximity to the road construction, minimising mineral miles and HGV journeys, BDC would not want to see the site sterilised and alternative gravel extraction sites being proposed in other parts of the District.

Junctions 23 and 24 are set at either side of the historic villages of Kelvedon and Feering and effectively form all-movements 'split' across the two junctions. Traffic travelling from Tiptree and other villages use the B1023 Inworth Road and London Road/Feering Hill to access the A12 northbound. The junction suffers from significant congestion and schemes, which may improve the situation, have only been shown to work in the short-term given the constraints of existing properties. In order to go south on the A12, much traffic is required to travel through the historic cores of Kelvedon and Feering to access junction 23, causing significant congestion and pollution through the heart of the conservation area. In addition, 1,300 homes are proposed in Kelvedon and Feering as part of the draft Local Plan.

An all-movements junction at junction 24 is an absolutely essential requirement of this scheme to deliver a significant betterment to existing residents and to ensure Local Plan growth and development can take place within this area. However, if the A12 runs offline (as shown in Options 2 and 4) between junctions 24 and 25, BDC is unclear where a suitable junction point would be. The only existing connecting road into Feering is Inworth Road; constraints around the junction at Inworth Road and London Road are noted above. It appears, therefore, that suitable link roads would also need to be created into Feering or to London Road to link into Feering. It would be unacceptable not to have a junction in this location and so we request that Highways England works with Essex County Council, BDC and the Parish Council to deal with this issue.

If the current A12 route is bypassed and the A12 runs offline as per Option 2, it is unclear as to the location of replacement junction 23 and junction 24. It appears that the junction 22/23 bypass would re-join the route of the A12 around where Maldon Road passes over the A12 and goes into Kelvedon. This area has a very rural character and is home to several listed buildings. Maldon Road carries into Kelvedon village but is via an old weight-restricted bridge and several areas of single-track road. Running adjacent to the river, it is also at risk from significant flooding. As such it would not be suitable for carrying major traffic into the village of Kelvedon.

BDC is also strongly supportive of improvements to junction 19, the Boreham Interchange, to support highway safety and capacity. The junction also needs to ensure that the Chelmsford North East bypass can be accommodated at this junction as its access point to the A12. This is an important link road both for Chelmsford and for wider traffic movements in the area.

We would strongly encourage Highways England to install new cycleway, bridleway and walking facilities alongside any new or widened route that provide strategic links between the villages in the vicinity, which can help ease traffic congestion in other areas.

The new route of the A12 crosses several existing local and rural roads, as well as public footpaths and bridleways and it is not clear whether these roads would bridge the new A12, or would be severed. It is essential for local communities and for leisure uses that this network remains intact as far as possible and work should be undertaken to involve the local communities, Essex County Council and BDC in this consideration. Any crossings for the A12 at height are more appropriate in safety terms but do have implications for the landscape that must be carefully addressed. If offline options are considered for the A12, some stretches of the existing route will become redundant. BDC would like to work with Essex County Council and

Highways England to find the most appropriate use of the existing pieces of road, for example as a more sustainable, public transport focused travel corridor.

We would welcome discussions with Highways England on the phasing of the improvements on the A12 which we understand will take place over approximately five years.

Relationship Between the A12 and the A120

BDC is also strongly supportive of the plans currently out for consultation by Essex County Council for a new A120 route between Braintree and Marks Tey. It is essential that these schemes are considered side-by-side as they have significant implications for local and strategic traffic movements across the District and delivery of the Local Plan.

The areas which are proposed to be offline in Option 3 are in the same locations where the A120 project proposes it will join with the A12. This point of merger will be a significant and major transport interchange in the District and will need to be carefully planned on all grounds. Any work on the A12 project should not prejudice the A120 project and vice versa.

Landscape and Biodiversity Comments

At this stage potential benefits and costs to the local landscape, biodiversity and the water environment have not been assessed in any detail, although it is acknowledged that the main environmental constraints have been summarised in the options assessment; the impact on the character of the local landscape setting within the District will be largely determined by the quality of the design and the extent to which it and the supporting landscape proposals have the scope to mitigate for the development over the medium term. Key areas of concern are addressed below and largely reflect the consequences of creating additional corridors of infrastructure within the open countryside. As the project developers BDC request that Highways England works with us to identify and protect any important views which can be gained from the new route.

The level of fragmentation of the local landscape and the visual impact on the character of the local river valleys, most notably the Blackwater, by the cumulative effect of three transport corridors: the main railway line, the route of the existing A12 and the proposed new bypass routes to the north and south of Kelvedon. An option that provided an improved communications corridor in proximity with the existing railway line would have a less damaging impact on the relative tranquillity of the river valley and the open countryside but does not seem to have been considered.

Kelvedon: it has been established from previous landscape character studies that the views across the area are strongly influenced by the river valley landscape in which lie a variety of valued components including the County Wildlife Site/Local Nature Reserve at Brockwell Meadows, the proximity of Kelvedon Conservation Area, the good network of public footpaths, numerous listed buildings, ancient monuments and the varying degrees of tranquillity away from the existing route of the A12.

The improvements between junctions 22 and 23 south of Kelvedon would have an impact on the setting of the river valley. Whetmead Local Nature Reserve, off

Blackwater Lane in Witham lies to the south of junction 22. The site sits in isolation as it is bordered by the River Brain and Blackwater and by the A12. Whetmead mainly consists of unimproved grassland and lagoons and despite its artificial nature the reserve is a valuable wildlife habitat. Whilst it is accepted that there is a level of ambient road noise from the A12 it is not clear whether widening the existing road and/or providing a new bypass will have a significant environmental impact on the setting and extents of the reserve.

North of Kelvedon (junction 24) the settlement edge is softened by mature tree and shrub planting within the grounds of local residential properties. The visibility within the wider landscape of the settlement edge is restricted by the well vegetated A12 embankments and by the parkland setting of Prested Hall further to the east. The visual impact of the new bypass as it proceeds north from this point is likely to be greater because the requirements for the new road will probably open up views of the settlement which are currently screened by the established planting on the embankments and by the parkland setting.

Where the road is widened along the existing route, it is reasonable to expect that a large amount of the current tree cover on the embankments will need to be removed to achieve the physical requirements for extra lanes. The loss of existing landscape and landform linked to the limits of the current road will need to be replaced with a suitable mitigation scheme. The scope for this to be effective in the short to medium term will be largely driven by the physical constraints of the current route and the opportunities it presents for the restored landscape setting to blend sympathetically with the pattern of the surrounding countryside.

A12 Chelmsford to A120 Widening Consultation

Summary of Local Authority Responses

Essex County Council (ECC):

- Supportive of the initiative to deliver a modern, fit-for-purpose dual three-lane carriageway;
- Option 1 is not supported;
- Option 2 is 'generally supported';
- Options 3 and 4 require additional work to determine the benefits of duplicating road capacity between Feering and Marks Tey.
- Boreham J19: Requires upgrading to cater for a future Chelmsford NE bypass and connectivity to Beaulieu Park;
- Hatfield Peverel J20a: ECC question the need for this junction and the need to amalgamate J20a and J20b is disputed in preference for amalgamating J20b and J21;
- Hatfield Peverel to Witham South J20b and J21: ECC identify a need to amalgamate both junctions to provide one all-movements junction which caters for movements from Witham (south) and Hatfield Peverel (north). This new junction creates potential to provide a future link road to access to Maldon and relief to the village of Hatfield Peverel;
- Witham north J22: Needs to be an all-movements junction with three-lane provision for the main A12;;
- Kelvedon south J23: Needs to be an all-movements junction with three-lane provision for the main A12;
- Witham to Kelvedon (Rivenhall section): The link between J22 and J23 needs to be an offline improvement to dual three lane standard as per Option 3. The old line of the A12 needs to be used for local access to Witham and Kelvedon including the Fire Headquarters and a junction and link to access Oak Road on both sides of the A12;
- A120 Scenario 1, Routes D&E: Under this scenario the all-movements junction at Kelvedon south would need to accommodate the new line of the A120. The best solution for Kelvedon north would be to have a new all-movements junction at the Inworth Road, which would give access to Tiptree and Feering. Under this scenario J24 would be closed;
- A120 Scenario 2, Routes A, B, C: Under this scenario there are two solutions for access to Kelvedon North/Tiptree and the A120. The first solution would be for J24 to become an all-movements junction but with a local link road provided to permit access to the Inworth road. The A120 would then become the next junction located approximately between J24 and J25. The second solution is for the A120 junction to be provided closer to J24, and for a new all-movements junction to be provided in the vicinity of J24, again with a local access road to the Inworth Road;
- Kelvedon to Marks Tey: The option to provide a parallel dual three-lane carriageway (Options 2 and 4) requires further justification in terms of benefits. It

could complement a new A120 junction (for example, under A120 options A, B or C), or it may afford additional capacity for local traffic between Marks Tey and Kelvedon;

- Marks Tey J25: The A12 should be upgraded to a dual three-lane carriageway, and under A120 scenario A, B and C this would need to be designed to accommodate dual four lanes from the new junction with the A120 to J25 and three lanes under the existing flyover. Solutions to J25 (Marks Tey) must be explored further as there are constraints in this area.

Chelmsford City Council (CCC):

- No specific preferred route;
- CCC welcomes the proposals for a modern and fit for purpose three-lane carriageway and improved junctions between J19 and J25;
- Improvements to Boreham Interchange J19 in particular are welcome.
- Boreham J19: Requires upgrading to cater for a future Chelmsford NE bypass and connectivity to Beaulieu Park;
- Requests that serious consideration is given to the inclusion in RIS2 of the section of the A12 between J15 and J19;
- Emphasises the need for increased capacity and improved performance on the strategic road network to facilitate significant future growth in Chelmsford (and Braintree, Colchester and Tendring). Specifically, CCC states that the proposed Chelmsford North East Bypass from J19 Boreham Interchange to the Deres Bridge Junction on the A131 is key to supporting the delivery of growth in Chelmsford and the wider area. CCC requests that careful consideration be given to safeguarding appropriate access for the Chelmsford North East bypass as part of the proposed improvements to J19 Boreham Interchange.

Colchester Borough Council (CBC):

- Supports the principle to invest in the A12 to support economic growth and improve safety and reliability;
- CBC 'see greater merit' in Option 4, subject to confirmation of the relationship with the potential Garden Community, a package of mitigation measures and revised access arrangements;
- CBC urges Highways England to widen the scope of the project to give greater consideration to the potential Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community;
- CBC only comment specifically on J24 and J25:
 - J24: CBC support a new J24 with access to the B1023 Inworth Road, allowing traffic from Tiptree and surrounding areas to access the A12 without the need to pass through Kelvedon and Feering;
 - J25: CBC support revisions to J25 to ensure the use of the Stane Street route by through traffic is minimised;
- CBC advocates a new junction to serve a potential Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community and a junction north of Kelvedon to serve an improved A120.

Maldon District Council (MDC):

- MDC's preferred route is Option 2;
- J20a and 20b: MDC states a preference for removal of the existing and creation of a single new junction;
- MDC draw attention to the existing peak time bottleneck along Maldon Road, Hatfield Peverel, caused by vehicles from the Maldon District accessing the A12.

Consequently, MDC states that solutions will need to consider appropriate B Road access to the new junction to address this;

- Supportive of an all-movements junction at Feering, to mitigate the problem of southbound traffic passing through Kelvedon High Street and causing a negative impact on access to the A12 via Great Braxted, Tiptree and Inworth.

Tendring District Council (TDC):

- TDC's preferred route is Option 2, on the basis that it would maximise the benefits of removing the sub-standard carriageway at Rivenhall End, enhancing safety of the occupiers of the buildings in Rivenhall End and A12 users. Option 2 also provides an offline opportunity for accessing the proposed Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community;
- TDC states that Option 1 is the 'least beneficial';
- The response suggests that the realigned A12 could re-join the carriageway at Copford, as opposed to Junction 25, as this would bring additional benefits to A12 users and better accommodate the growth being considered in the currently congested Junction 25 area.