

**EXAMINATION STATEMENT
HOCKLEY AREA ACTION PLAN SUBMISSIONS DOCUMENT**

VIEWS OF THE LOCAL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY: ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

ISSUE 2 i) *Is there a need for a transport assessment for Hockley or for the wider District to be undertaken as a pre-cursor to the HAAP?*

Essex County Council, as Highway Authority, is satisfied that the overall impact on highway capacity within Hockley and across the District has been adequately addressed. A major concern of both the Highway Authority and the District Council has been to ensure that travel demands arising from future development in the District can be adequately accommodated.

The Highway Authority has worked in partnership with the District Council during all stages of preparation of the Area Action Plan. Both authorities collaborated on a similar basis during preparation of the Core Strategy and the Allocations Document. Similar joint working arrangements are in place for preparation of the Area Action Plans for Rochford and Rayleigh and the Joint Area Action Plan for Southend Airport and Environs (also in partnership with Southend Borough Council as the neighbouring local highway authority).

The view of the Highway Authority has been, and remains, that a District-wide transport model would not be the most appropriate tool for assessing the future development provision of the District. This is because of the comparatively low scale of total provision over the Plan period to 2025 and its distribution through a number of locations/sites across the District.

In these circumstances the Highway Authority's view is that a strategic transport model would not accurately identify necessary changes to the local network arising from the additional development. Rather, the use of individual junction models is preferred to assess the highway impact of proposed developments on relevant junctions. Each junction model is able to take account of the wider context of future development locations in more detail than could be undertaken in a strategic model.

In addition to modeling future development locations Transport Assessments use currently available data, guidance and advice produced by the Department for Transport. The Highway Authority also has benefit of the results of transport assessments, and modeling using SATURN, available from the preparation of the Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan. Similarly, results of other transport studies in the Thames Gateway South East sub-region are available to inform the Highway Authority of the wider context.

The Highway Authority considers that the adopted approach provides a holistic assessment of future development proposals in Rochford District. It allows the overall impact of future development to be adequately assessed and, importantly in the context of the Hockley Area Action Plan, it enables identification of specific possible mitigation measures to facilitate delivery of identified sites to the benefit of the highway user.

ISSUE 2 ii) *Is it sufficient to rely upon improvements coming forward in relation to individual planning applications?*

and

ISSUE 2 iii) *How will the schemes referred to in Policy 3 be realised given that the Council is not the Highway Authority?*

Highway and transport improvements and schemes may come forward through the Local Highway Panel as well as through individual planning applications and the Highway Authority directly. Essex County Council, as Local Highway Authority, has established a Local Highway Panel for each Borough/City/District in the County. Membership of the Panels is drawn equally from local County Council members and District Council members.

The Local Housing Panel is responsible for prioritising and making recommendations for proposals and schemes. Priorities and recommendations should accord with policies, strategies and standards of the Highway Authority and have due regard to the advice of Officers.

The scope of works that the Panel can prioritise is broad and includes the following:

- Traffic Management improvements
- Tackling congestion
- Safer Roads (including casualty reduction)
- Public Rights of Way improvements
- Cycling schemes
- Passenger Transport improvements
- Minor improvement schemes e.g. new signing provision
- School crossing patrol infrastructure improvement schemes

Each Panel also has a role to monitor spending of Section 106 funding on highway improvements within its area and to act as a conduit for liaison with their Parish and Town Councils to identify local issues and potential solutions

A county-wide budget, from Highway Authority funds, has been allocated to Panels by a formula of relevant influences. For the Rochford Panel a capital allocation of £427,808 has been made for 2013/14. There is also a revenue budget, equating to £130,000 per Panel, for surveys, scheme validation and option generation.

Generally, schemes identified in year 1 to be programmed for delivery in year 2. There is the possibility of carrying money over from one year to the next in recognition that,

- it might not be possible to implement a full programme of schemes in one year;
- where a scheme exceeds the annual budget, the Panel can also use funds from the following year's allocation.

[End of Statement]