

Chelmsford City Council

Relevant Representation to A12 Chelmsford – A120 Widening

Thank you for confirming that Chelmsford City Council, as a host (B Authority), has been automatically registered as an interested Party in the A12 Chelmsford to A120 Widening application, under section 102(1)(c) of the Planning Act 2008, and therefore its views will be considered for the duration of the examination.

To assist the Examining Authority (ExA) in forming its initial assessment of principal issues in advance of the preparation of the draft examination timetable and ahead of the submission of the Local Impact Report (LIR), Chelmsford City Council makes the following representation, as set out below, in respect of its main areas of interest to the Development Consent Order Application.

Chelmsford City Council acknowledges that there is a recognised national support for large-scale transport facilities. The assessment of such proposals requires the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure should be identified, assessed and taken into account.

At the local level, Chelmsford City Councils local planning policies seek to ensure that existing and planned infrastructure is used effectively and mitigated.

The A12 is at capacity and there is a recognised need for improvements and Chelmsford City Council support in principle its upgrading and improvement. The proposals would not directly impact upon the City Centre of Chelmsford- and would be beneficial to the growth of the Beaulieu development and Chelmsford Garden Community which are key development allocations in the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan.

However, the proposal would, for the reasons below, impact upon the village of Boreham which neighbours the A12 to the north and this is of concern.

Chelmsford City Council considers that the main issues arising from the proposal are the principle of the development, the impacts upon the settlement and residents of Boreham, the construction of a new bridge across the A12 from Boreham to the Chelmsford Garden Community and the acceptability of the Environmental Statement.

Chelmsford City Council (CCC) recognises that the improvements to the 15-mile section of the A12 between Junctions 19 and 25 will help remove traffic from the outskirts of the City. In turn this will limit traffic travelling through the Centre to avoid congestion on the A12 by providing more reliable journey times on the trunk road network.

Impact on Boreham Village

The proposed alterations to Junction 19 (Boreham) and the construction of the Paynes Lane bridge in themselves are not expected to harm or create unacceptable impact upon Boreham settlement and its residents. However, the closure of Junctions 20a and 20b to the north of Boreham at Hatfield Peverel and their replacement with a new junction 21 (Witham South Interchange), to provide access to the A12 northbound and southbound, is expected to impact upon Boreham settlement and its residents. Due to the closure of Junctions 20a and 20b and the construction of a new junction 21 to the north east of Hatfield Peverel, the proposal is likely to lead to an increase in trips along the B1137 (Main Road) and through Boreham.

The proposal to implement only 'Standard Mitigation' and reduce the speed limit to 30 mph along Main Road Boreham is not considered to be enough to manage and mitigate against the effects on the living environment of Boreham residents and businesses who may experience higher levels of congestion and associated noise, disturbance and vibration than they are accustomed. What is required is a comprehensive package of measures to make the route unattractive and to encourage road users to use the new Junction.

Further, at Waltham Road, the junction operates satisfactorily in 2027 but by 2042, would be over capacity in both weekday AM and PM peak hours, with queues up of to 100 vehicles and delays over 20 minutes. Chelmsford City Council has concerns relating to the operation and management of the junction and are keen to explore and understand how the impacts of how the estimated traffic levels on the road can be managed and appropriately mitigated. Consideration must be given to a signalised junction.

Proposed Paynes Lane WCH Bridge

The proposed Paynes Lane Bridge would provide a continuous Walking, Cycling and Horse Riders (WCH) route across the A12, side roads and railway. The bridge would connect all users to the proposed Beaulieu Park Station and wider Chelmsford area from Boreham without negotiating junction 19 and is welcomed in principle.

The proposal would comply with City Council's key objective to ensuring a high-quality pedestrian, cycle and equestrian route which connects Boreham with the new railway station, the proposed Business Park and the wider Chelmsford Garden Community as well as reconnecting the currently severed bridleway.

However, the proposed design of the bridge is considered adequate, having a functional, rather than an aesthetic appearance, such that a design of a higher standard and distinctiveness is required to integrate the bridge with the wider Garden Community development.

Environmental Statement

The proposal has potential to effect matters including, but not limited to, air quality, cultural heritage (including archaeology and built heritage), landscape and visual amenity, biodiversity, geology and soils, material assets and waste, noise and vibration, population and human health, road drainage and the water environment, climate and cumulative effects.

Chelmsford City Council expects a full and thorough consideration of those including detailed measures to mitigate identified adverse impact, plus any other associated matters raised within the Relevant Representation from other interested parties and stakeholders, to take place within the Examination.

A full consideration of the Environmental Statement will be undertaken as part of the Final Local Impact Report. At the time of writing, it is considered that overall within Chelmsford, there may be some significant adverse effects upon landscape and visual amenity but this would be limited to the immediate locality.

The proposal would lead to a clear and noticeable change in residential living environment, particularly for those residents living immediately adjacent to the Order limits. Any perceived and direct effects upon living environment will need to be thoroughly considered and the views of those affected residents taken into account. The appropriateness and reasonableness of mitigation to

address any concerns should be considered. Where effects cannot be mitigated, the effect will need to be balanced against the overall need and benefit of the proposal.

Without prejudice to the above, Chelmsford City Council will be producing a Local Impact Report where it will set out its position in full.

The City Council looks forward to receiving further information regarding the submission timeframe of this, and other associated documents. The City Council will continue to engage with the applicant, Host Authorities and Essex County Council regarding the Development Consent Order.