

A12 Widening Scheme

Essex Police Additional Comments

March 2023

National Highways

Section 56 Planning Act 2008

Application by National Highways for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme

Planning Inspectorate reference: TR010060

Interested Party reference number: 20033069

Background

As key social infrastructure providers, emergency services and interested parties in this Development Consent Order (DCO) process, Essex Police in partnership with East of England Ambulance Services NHS Trust (EEAST) and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) identified the A12 to A120 road widening scheme as having significant impact on its joint operations, service capacity and resources requiring appropriate mitigation and management measures.

This document follows the initial representations of Essex Police previously outlined under interested party reference 20033069. Reference to initial relevant representations made are noted in brackets as *(RR)*.

Considerations

Our comments in relation to the responses provided by National Highways to Essex Police relevant representations are outlined below.

Design

- Essex Police Designing out Crime Team will review the necessary design and landscape proposals and look forward to working with National Highways regarding the creation of safe and inclusive places. *(RR sections 1.1 - 1.2)*
- Essex Police support concerns raised by Essex Highways in relation to the proposed de-trunked sections of the scheme, Feering to Marks Tey and Witham to Rivenhall End. We wish to see measures introduced which decrease the opportunity for anti-social driving on these sections that do not require a need to increase our enforcement to mitigate risk. Alternative proposals for the de-trunked sections should support a route which provides safer road use by vulnerable road users and reduces risk and creates good off-road provision for active travel modes.
- The Human Rights Act 1998 makes provision for expression which includes protest. There is an obligation on public organisations to protect these rights, but protection of these rights must be balanced against the restriction protest activities may have on the wider community. The strategic road network within Essex, including the A12, has been subject to disruption by protest activity and it is anticipated likely that this will continue. Further engagement and liaison with National Highways is essential in regard to a specific protest response plan to this scheme to ensure an attendance management plan is agreed. *(RR section 1.3)*

Construction

- Essex Police acknowledge the response regarding the location, design and security of site compounds and look forward to further discussion to ensure effective measures are in place to mitigate the risk of criminal activity such as theft of equipment and/or materials and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). *(RR section 2.2)*

- Essex Police acknowledge the response provided regarding the construction workforce and note that within the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) portion of the Code of Construction Practice reference is made to Worker Healthcare (inclusive of physical and mental wellbeing). We look forward to working with National Highways to ensure that relevant measures are proposed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their workforce. *(RR section 2.3)*
- To maintain public confidence and ensure the safety of road users during the construction phase, Essex Police wishes to reemphasise a desire to see average speed systems operating offline at the following locations: B1023 Main Road Boreham, Kelvedon Road, Inworth & Maldon Road, Hatfield Peverel. These schemes should remain post construction and provide a legacy to the works to ensure local communities are not adversely impacted. *(RR section 2.4)*
- Essex Police acknowledge the response from National Highways regarding speed enforcement during the construction phase. It is essential that Essex Police are made aware of the definitive plans around speed enforcement to ensure minimal impact to policing resources. *(RR section 2.5)*
- Essex Police will be seeking a management solution that does not require the monitoring and enforcing of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) and require acknowledgement that any TRO will be self-enforcing and not an additional burden on policing resources. *(RR section 2.5)*
- Advance insight into the movement of Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs) for early mitigation is essential. Essex Police seek to agree a point of contact with National Highways and a clear process for the movement of such vehicles to allow for police approval and management. Additionally, there is a requirement to allocate identified holding areas for AILs to ensure minimal disruption and the safety of all road users. *(RR section 2.6)*
- Essex Police acknowledge the proposed mitigation measures provided to facilitate emergency access and maintain emergency response times and request additional detail once the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) has been developed. A dedicated point of contact and early insight into any proposed measures is essential to ensure policing provision and emergency response times are maintained. *(RR section 2.6)*
- Emergency planning must be engaged with to ensure an appropriate multi-agency plan is in place to respond to incidents; This should include attendance response and management, key points of contact, the management of health and safety, the provision of a base or holding location for emergency services to reduce disruption, and the requirement for specialist equipment storage facilities. Essex Police acknowledge the response regarding the provision of holding bays and welcome further discussion. *(RR section 2.7)*
- Essex Police welcome engagement with the National Highways Community Liaison Manager to ensure a clear contact strategy is in place to ensure National Highways are the central contact for matters relating to this scheme and mitigate the impact in receiving misplaced calls to the force contact management command. *(RR section 2.8)*
- Essex Police acknowledge the requirement of traffic management forums as outlined in the OCTMP and welcome the opportunity for inclusion in these forums as a key stakeholder to ensure policing perspectives and requirements are considered in the design of traffic management schemes. *(RR section 2.9)*

- Essex Police remain committed to seeking, through National Highways, a funded temporary Traffic Manager Officer post. This post is critical to the management of communications, operational planning and liaison with residents effected by the project works, as well as working alongside planners at various geographic operational offices and will enable detailed meetings to take place relating to traffic management schemes. *(RR section 2.9)*

Completion

- Essex Police acknowledge the implementation of the HADECS speed enforcement system on the A12 post construction and reemphasise a desire to maintain the average speed systems operating offline at the following locations: B1023 Main Road Boreham, Kelvedon Road, Inworth & Maldon Road, and Hatfield Peverel to assist the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) with the aspiration of Vision Zero road deaths and serious injury by 2040. *(RR section 3)*

Examining Authority's Written Questions (ExQ1)

16.0.3: to The Applicant

Certain emergency services (including the Police and East of England Ambulance) have expressed concerns as to their operations during construction. How is it proposed that any impacts are minimised?

Whilst this question was directed to the applicant, as a key emergency service provider Essex Police acknowledge the response provided and mitigation measures outlined and request additional detail and contact information once the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) has been developed.

Conclusion

Essex Police acknowledge the applicants' comments with regards to effective engagement and collaboration and the development of a (draft) Statement of Common Ground (dSoCG) and look forward to receiving this document for development throughout the examination.

We look forward to receiving an acknowledgement in respect of these representations. Please send this and any future correspondence to: Strategic.Planning@essex.police.uk

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