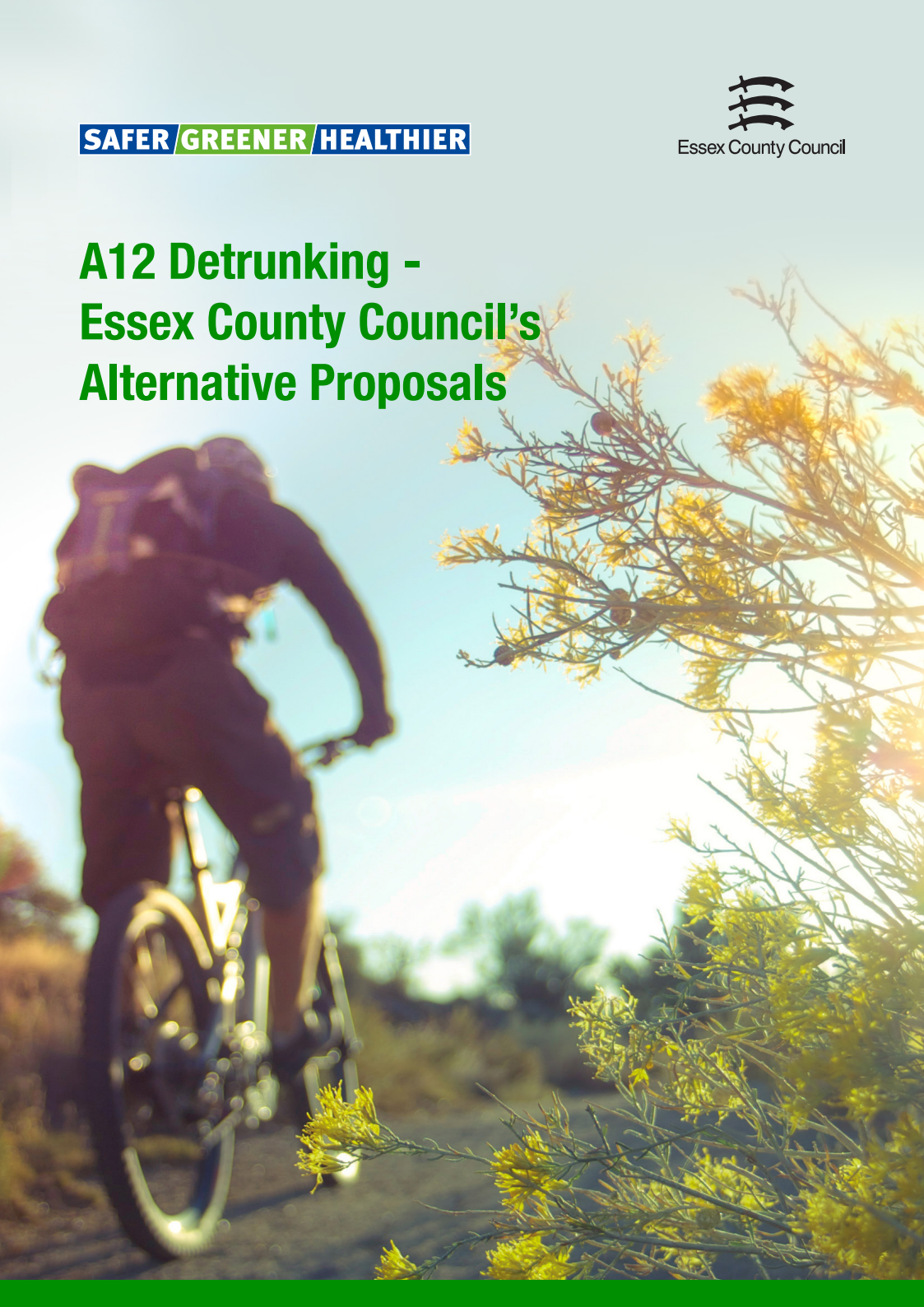


**SAFER / GREENER / HEALTHIER**



# **A12 Detrunking - Essex County Council's Alternative Proposals**



## Overview

This document sets out what Essex County Council believes is a better alternative to that put forward by National Highways for two sections of the A12 which are planned to be detrunked. We invite you to take a view on the options.

## Background

National Highways has applied for a Development Consent Order for the A12 Chelmsford to A120 Widening Scheme, which looks to widen the A12 between Junction 19 (Boreham) and Junction 25 (Marks Tey) to ease congestion, improve road safety and support planned growth.

The A12 is an important economic link in Essex which connects East Anglia with Greater London and is in much need of improvement to address current and future challenges.

As part of the scheme, new sections of the A12 would be constructed away from the existing road. Two sections of the old A12 which remain would be detrunked and handed over to Essex County Council largely in their current form. While the council is supportive of the project overall, we have significant concerns about the current approach to detrunking.

## Detrunking

**The act of removing responsibility of a road from the national Highways Authority (or central government) and transferring it to the relevant local authority.**

## Our position on National Highway's current proposals



Future traffic flows do not warrant ten lanes of dual carriageways



High probability of vehicles exceeding the speed limit



Arrangements represent a significant on-going maintenance burden



Not consistent with our placemaking agenda



Missed opportunities to improve facilities for active travel users and increase green infrastructure in support of local and national ambitions for net zero, biodiversity and flood control

## SAFER / GREENER / HEALTHIER

Essex County Council's vision is to enable safer, greener, and healthier travel for current and future users of the transport network in Essex.

Our Safer, Greener, Healthier campaign aims to make it as easy, safe and fun as possible for people in Essex to travel more sustainably - walking, cycling, scooting or taking the bus or train - especially for shorter journeys.

**Find out more:**

[www.essex.gov.uk/safer-greener-healthier](http://www.essex.gov.uk/safer-greener-healthier)

# Our Alternative Proposal

We are recommending a number of changes be made to the road before National Highways transfer the de-trunked sections of the A12 back to us.

We propose removing one carriageway from the existing dual carriageway and using it to create good off-road provision for active travel modes, such as walking, cycling and horse-riding. This would be known as an **'Active Travel Corridor'** and would also provide space for environmental enhancements in the form of 'regreening'.

The retained carriageway would be a single carriageway road, with one lane in each direction.

**Regreening/Rewilding: to restore (barren, degraded, or deforested land) to a healthy ecological state by planting vegetation (such as trees, shrubs, grasses, or sustainable crops) often in conjunction with improvements in soil fertility and water retention.**

## Northern section (Feering to Marks Tey)

*Where we support elements of National Highways' proposals:*

- ✓ Revision to access arrangements around Easthorpe Road, Colchester
- ✓ Provision of a roundabout at New Lane, Feering
- ✓ Principle of introducing consistent lengths of footway

## Southern section (Witham to Rivenhall End)

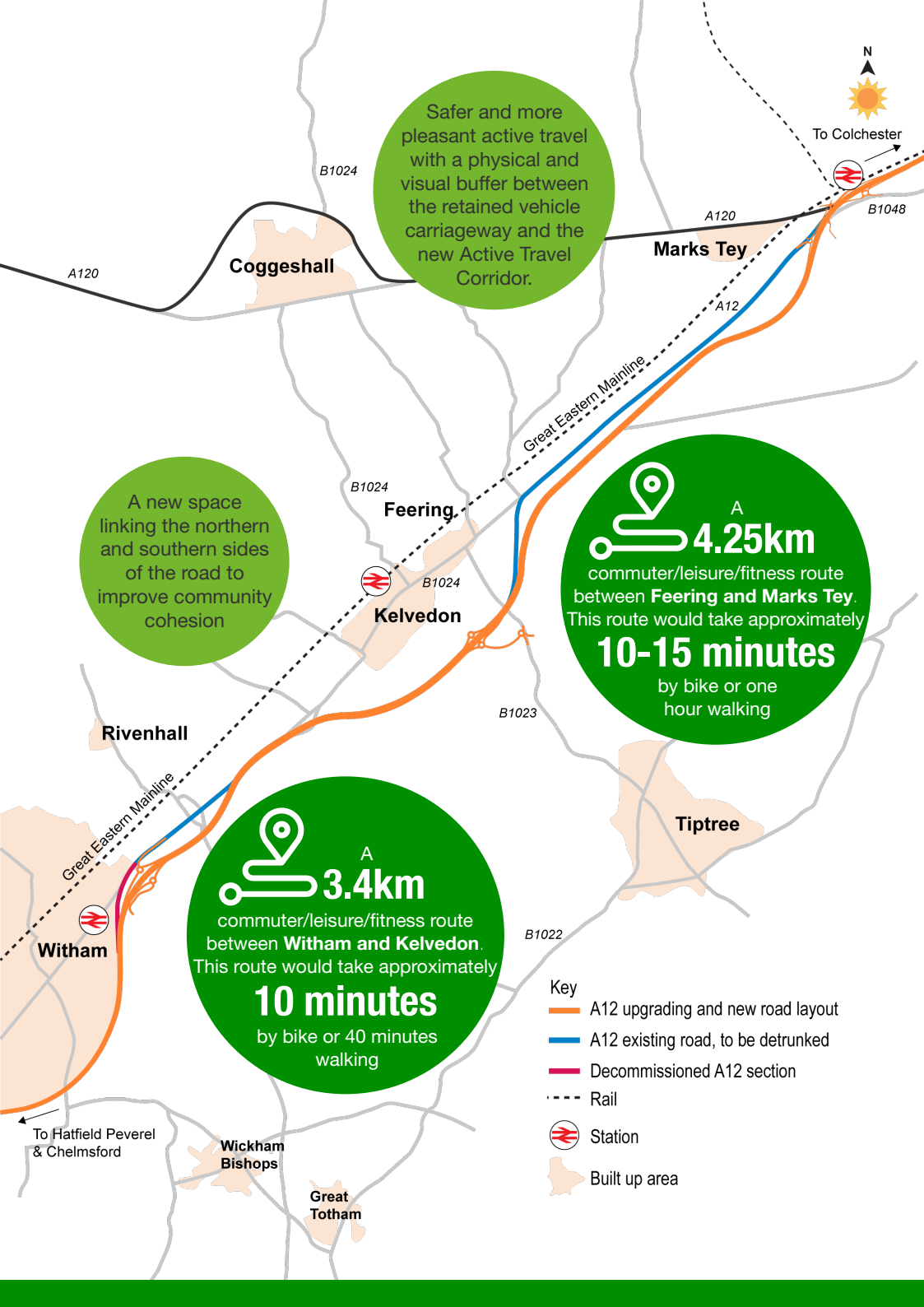
*Where we support elements of National Highways':*

- ✓ Closure of Oak Road, Tiptree to from the existing A12, with cycle/pedestrian access retained
- ✓ Provision of the new Henry Dixon Road, Witham, junction
- ✓ Bus stop locations
- ✓ Provision of priority crossings for pedestrians and cyclists

*Where we are seeking to change other aspects:*

- + One existing carriageway for traffic\*
- + Use of the other carriageway for off road active modes of transport and 'regreening'. This would be achieved by breaking up redundant sections of the existing carriageway and covering them with earth/top soil, to create suitable growing conditions for different plants which would, in turn, help offset carbon creation.

Note: \*with the exception of the stretch from Junction 22 to Rivenhall End west roundabout.





Safer and more pleasant active travel with a physical and visual buffer between the retained vehicle carriageway and the new Active Travel Corridor.

A new space linking the northern and southern sides of the road to improve community cohesion

A **4.25km** commuter/leisure/fitness route between **Feering and Marks Tey**. This route would take approximately **10-15 minutes** by bike or one hour walking

A **3.4km** commuter/leisure/fitness route between **Witham and Kelvedon**. This route would take approximately **10 minutes** by bike or 40 minutes walking

- Key
- A12 upgrading and new road layout
  - A12 existing road, to be detrunked
  - Decommissioned A12 section
  - - - Rail
  -  Station
  -  Built up area

To Hatfield Peverel & Chelmsford

To Colchester

# Key Benefits

## Green Infrastructure Enhancements

Our proposed **green infrastructure landscaping** for the **northern section** would cover an area of **about 43,000m<sup>2</sup>** – the **equivalent of six football pitches**

Potential to offer considerable benefits to biodiversity

Minimal long-term maintenance

Green Infrastructure could offset impacts of other schemes

Landscaping focus on developing native habitat types

Our proposed **green infrastructure landscaping** for the **southern section** would cover an area of about **7,000m<sup>2</sup>**

Supporting ECC's Safer, Greener, Healthier principles

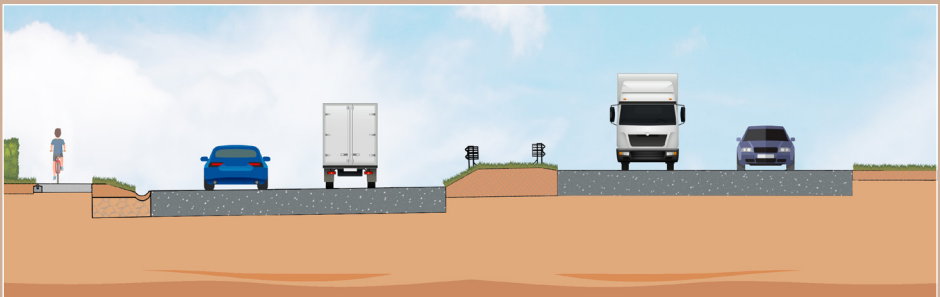
Opportunities for Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS)

Options for landscape types could include:

- Mown grass
- Wildflower grass
- Native shrubs
- Native woodland
- Individual specimen trees



Essex County Council proposal: Removal of one carriageway to create an Active Travel Corridor



National Highways proposal: retention of existing dual carriageway

# Placemaking Opportunity

The creation of an Active Travel Corridor would provide further placemaking opportunities, resulting in a healthier and more welcoming environment.

As the proposed Active Travel Corridor passes through the village of Rivenhall End, the width of the corridor grows significantly from 18m wide to approximately 30m wide. This width would be further increased by the removal of the connection between Oak Road and the A12 de-trunked road.

This would allow designers to emphasise the village setting and achieve the placemaking goals of both National Highways and Essex County Council.

The sketch below outlines a potential concept for a new community park in Rivenhall End. If our proposals are taken forward, there would be the opportunity to create a new village focal point in consultation with the local community.



Rivenhall End - Potential Community Park Spatial Concept

This information is issued by Essex County Council.



Published March 2023