

EXD/075 Response comments from the Wivenhoe Society

These comments relate to Route 1 (TCBGC)

1. Capital Costs

The Vision to Plan document sets out various possible alternatives for Route 1 (listed in table 3.6). There was also a recent public consultation on the alternatives. It is not clear whether the lower and higher estimates of costs refer to the different alternatives. One of the possible alternatives is to put in bus lanes adjacent to the A133 as far as Ipswich Road. This would be the most expensive option. (Call it the A133 option). Do the higher investment scenarios relate to this?

The costs do not include any estimate of the disruption costs of the road works required to provide bus lanes and to alter roundabouts. In terms of delay, extra fuel and CO² emissions these could be considerable.

2. Journey time calculations

Table 5.1 gives projected end to end journey times for route 1 of 37 minutes for the lower investment scenario and 27 minutes for the higher investment scenario. It does not differentiate between journeys going eastward and journeys westward. On the eastward bound journey, given the one way system, the bus would have to make a loop in the town centre via Queen's St and Osborne St which would add to journey times.

Comparing these predictions with current bus times the 37 minute estimate for the lower investment scenario is the same as what can be inferred from current bus times for the eastward journey. Assume the lower investment scenario (going from East to West) takes the form of entering the University via a connection to Nessfield Road and then links to Capon Road and then follows the route taken by the 62 bus (Call this the Greenstead Rd option). Looking at the eastward route the current Park and Ride bus is scheduled to take 12 minutes from the Park and Ride to Colchester High St. The 62 bus is scheduled to take 25 minutes from Colchester High St to the Co-op in Wivenhoe. A section of the 62 route is on the traffic limited Boundary Road. Wivenhoe Co-op is a slightly shorter distance than to the most easterly point of the proposed RT route but the last stretch of the route to the Co-op is on a speed restricted urban route with on road parking. The total scheduled time is also 37 minutes which is the same as the lower investment scenario estimated journey time. Allowing for extra time on the westward journey to allow for the diversion via Osborne Road the journey time would be around 40 minutes. The Rapid Transport would seem no faster than current bus travel which has more scheduled stops.

In the higher investment scenario, A133 option, the route would avoid delays at the East St level crossing but would mean longer journey times by RT to and from the Garden Community to a station providing main line services. (The Greenstead Road option would

provide a bus stop close to Hythe Station which is nearer to the Garden Community than Colchester Central)). The A133 option and the Greenstead Road option share the same route in Central Colchester to and from the Ipswich Road/East St junction so the reduction of ten minutes in total journey time as a result of the higher investment scenario must result from the provision of a bus lane along the A133 as far as the suggested Nessfield Road junction. It is not clear that this assumption is justified. To show that the higher investment scenario takes 10 minutes less time it needs to be demonstrated that the journey time from the Ipswich Road /East st junction to the bus stop shown for the University/Knowledge Gateway is 10 minutes less on the A133 route than the Greenstead Road Route making the same assumptions about the frequency of stops.