

EXD082 – Section One Local Plan – Matter 6. Further questions.

Response from Wivenhoe Town Council

We believe this document, and elements of the process around this aspect of the consultation, to be fundamentally flawed

- Model shift is still considered a panacea and we find that intolerable as it demonstrable fact that a 30% swop to bus travel will almost certainly not occur.
- The documented evidence contained is only to the end of the first Plan period with the year 2032 chosen as the end date when TCBGC is due to take 7 decades to complete.
- Assumes Greenstead Roundabout capacity can be significantly increased which we do not believe it can be (or it would have been improved by now given the historic congestion at this critical junction).
- A12 Junctions 28 (Colchester North Interchange) to Junction 29 (Ipswich Road) will be at overcapacity as a direct result of the TCBGC. We argue that this impact renders the GC unsound as it is not appropriate, proportionate or indeed a sperate town but the urban extension we have feared all along it would become.
- The frank admissions about congestion and the limited ability to mitigate against it held in these documents is exactly why this is the wrong location for the vulgar scale proposed for TCBGC and is hardly sustainable. We believe that these documents would have positively informed the SA discussion and should have been disclosed earlier.
- Time – how can we respond fully to this in just 2 weeks? This needs formal consultation and we would have wished to appoint a Transport Consultant had time allowed. Transport is vital if the TCBGC is to be sustainable and this information should have been subject to full scrutiny.
- The evidence does not take account of annual background increase already happening.

The Executive Summary is brutally honest about the damage to the Colchester road ecosystem TCBGC will create. The following statements are direct quotes.

“The network wide summary results show that the local plan development scenario experiences a reduction in average network speed with a corresponding increase in congestion and delay when compared against the committed development scenario”.

“Haven Road and Colne Causeway – The Colchester Tendring borders Garden Settlement contributes to traffic issues in the local plan scenario.”

“Ipswich Road – although not overcapacity it is close to capacity, which means the junction is susceptible to delays”

And “Further research, design and appraisal would be essential”. It clearly is as TCBGC is not compatible with the existing road network.

Point 1 - Breakdown of the total £65M cost for the A120-A133 link road.

Please Note - Wivenhoe Town council's observations regarding this question are based on a jointly commissioned costing exercise with CAUSE. The commission was prepared by an industry expert who has referenced both Spon's Civil Engineering and Highways works price book 2020 and who has sought agreement on certain elements with senior planners at ECC.

Type	Description	Council Cost £m	PJ Estimate £m	PJ references/comments
Design & Planning		3.4	0	Included in Spon's rates
Infrastructure	Link Road	28.3		
			8.6	2.1km dual 2 lane Spon's page 183 of 705 £4100/m (this is the upper limit but the route has yet to be chosen).
			30	1 grade separated junction. Unit cost as per ECC A Lindsay and Jacobs conversation 7/2/17
			15	2 No dual carriageway roundabouts based on Stonehenge non dual carriageway roundabout with about 50% increase for A133 dual carriageway
Other	Preliminaries	6.2	6.2	Excluded from Spon's see page 106 of 705
Infrastructure	Inflation	6.2	6.2	Assume same as Council. Looks as road will not start for some years!
Infrastructure	Statutory Diversions	4.1	4.1	Assume same as Council
Other	Part 1 Claims	0.6	0.6	Assume same as Council
Developer Profit	3% Link road contractor profit	1.3	0	Included in Spon's rates. 3% very low

Land	Land Acquisition	1	1	About 16 acres. looks generous unless there are CPOs for houses
Sub total		51.1	71.7	
Risk & Contingency		13.9	28.68	40% allowed (44% used by HE)
Total		65	100.38	

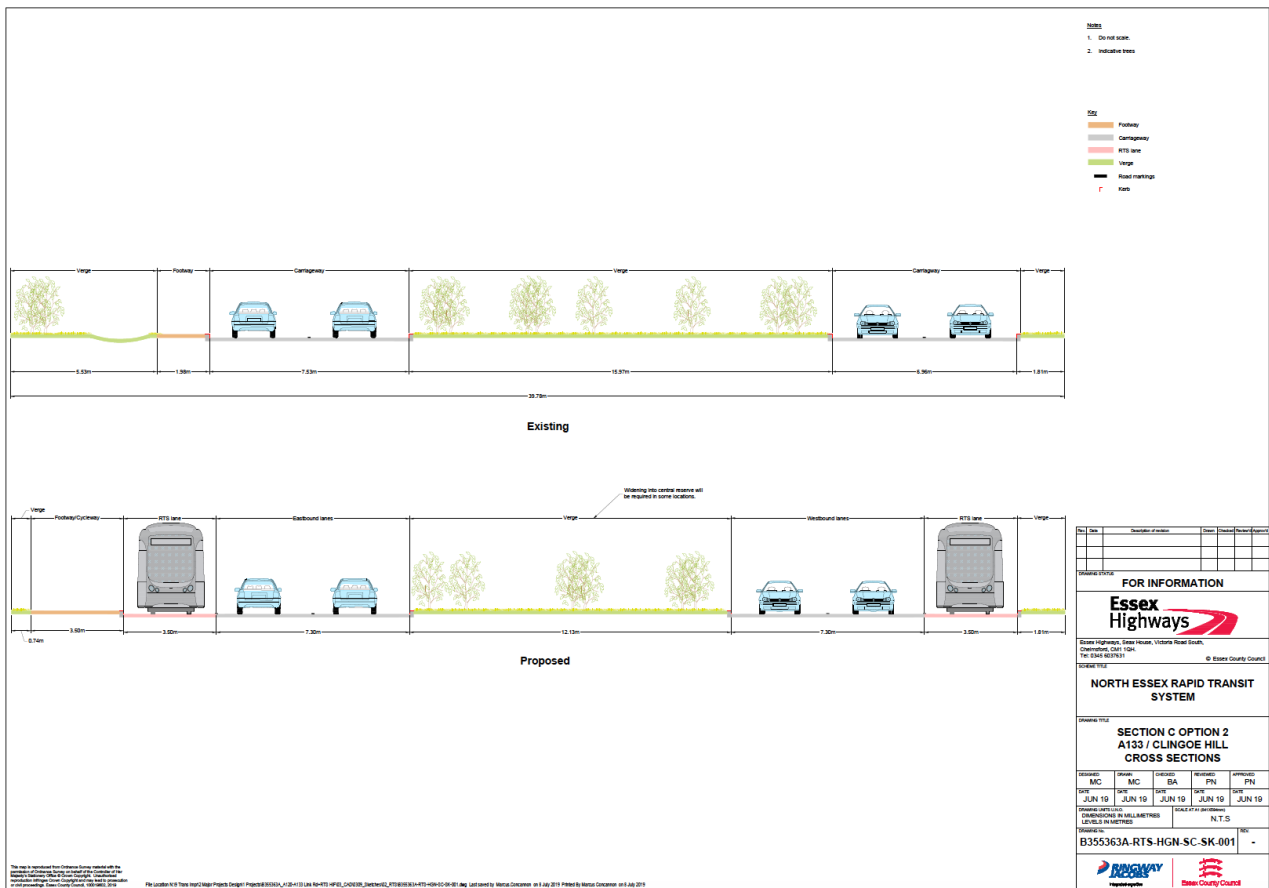
(Notes on table: Costs such as design & planning which are, by definition, included in Spon's. Spon's also excludes VAT. The dumbbell junction or grade separated junction cost is as per conversation with Jacobs/Alan Lindsay. The two roundabouts are based on the Stonehenge new roundabout upgrade cost a few years ago of £4m from Homes England, but with 50% assumed uplift as the A133 is dual carriageway. AECOM allowed £30m for 6 new grade separated junctions for the West Tey work back in 2016/7. So £5m per junction/roundabout with 50 % increase for dual carriageway gives £15m for two. One could argue this £15m for 2 dual carriageway roundabouts is on the light side).

Jacobs figures give a 21% contingency which is woefully low. Especially when a preferred route has yet to be chosen. Therefore, we have assumed a 40% contingency.

It was explained at the hearing that other road costs associated with the link road have been calculated and included elsewhere. These were reported to be £5m for A133 improvements and £3m for wider road improvements. These too seem inadequate considering what we anticipate is necessary to ensure that both the RTS can perform as expected and in terms of plans we have seen in the past for additional road works for the top of Wivenhoe that connect to the link road to the University. It is of note that despite asking for confirmation from ECC which route they expect traffic to use (from the link road to university) they have not confirmed it will not be via Elmstead Road and the B1028 which has been previously been shown to include upgrades.

We will concentrate on Clingoe Hill and the Greenstead Roundabout (known locally as the magic roundabout) as this is ubiquitous to all the RTS routes. It is also the worst traffic hot-spot in Colchester and directly linked to the TCBGC site.

The RTS and link road consultation that was held after the closing date for the technical consultation, revealed that two addition lanes were to be added to Clingoe Hill.



The supporting documents to this consultation do not give details of what detailed works are planned for the Clingoe Hill roundabout. This is a critical pinch point for all RTS routes, it is inconceivable that a fully costed detailed engineering solution for this has not taken place yet.

It is also not clear from any of the supplementary documents where the section is shown and no key accompanies the section. Although we are left to guess where the section is, it does show the central reservation. Therefore, we assume it is somewhere between Boundary road and the B1028. As the central reservation is reduced in the proposed section, we also assume no land acquisition is necessary for this stretch of the road. However, from Boundary Road to the roundabout land will have to be acquired. Currently there isn't sufficient width to cross Salary brook with six lanes without an extension to the existing bridge. It's inconceivable that the roundabout improvements, land acquisition costs, the bridge and the construction of this section of road will only come to £5m. We also believe that if there was a solution to the traffic congestion at the roundabout it would have been evidenced in

detail by now. As it is necessary to relieve congestion regardless of the new town and link road.

The £3m figure for additional roadworks also seems far-fetched. We have seen in various reports that traffic to the University appears to be being directed along Elmstead Road to a new mini roundabout on the Colchester Road B1028. Not only is this the least direct route, it also involves sections of road that are currently single carriage way.

We are reminded of the cycle path ECC commissioned for the top section of Wivenhoe (from Vine Parade to the University along Colchester Road), when the budget overran by 206%. It also failed to meet the project timescales as works were stalled on the first day as disputes over land acquisition had not been resolved. Damage that was caused by rerouted traffic has never been repaired despite firm promises that these had been factored into the works. In summary a scheme for £75,000 that was publicly supported eventually cost the tax payer £2.3m.

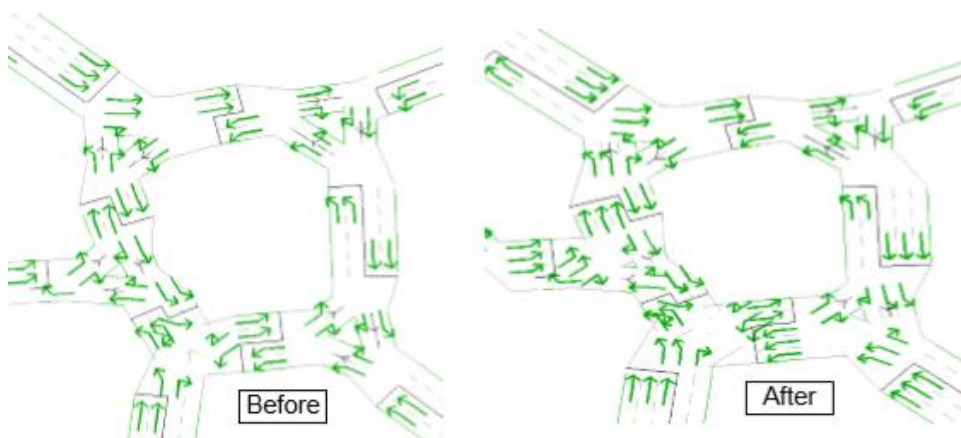
Point 2 - The source of the modelling which identifies the other highway improvements needed to cater for the traffic generated by the Tendring Colchester Borders GC

Details highlighted are contained in local plan transport modelling reports for Colchester and Tendring. Colchester Local Plan Traffic Modelling Technical Report (CBC/0051).

The key to transport mitigations, as acknowledged in various points of this document, is increased capacity at Greenstead Roundabout (GR).

We are offered the following solution to GR overcapacity issues.

Figure 19 Changes at Greenstead roundabout



If we have orientated this map correctly the extension to 3 lanes at entry to the right of "After" is Clingoe Hill. If you follow the journey round (either way – it is a magic

roundabout) each three lane hits a mini-roundabout and a reduction to 2 lanes. Precisely the factors that gridlock it currently and lead to it being over capacity. To the left of "After" is Colne Causeway. It is pedestrians crossing here to access the University that causes the AM peak overload. This road is also not wide enough to accept an additional lane. We would like much more information on this as it seems outrageous to base an entire BRT\RTS on this "improvement".

We have a few additional points from other aspects of this document.

- p10 4.2 assumes background growth will remain the same when this is a fallacy as demand for GR grows every year – notably due to changing demographics in Tendring (i.e. people move to the area and commute out when the best scenario would be to use the train but the TCBGC is not served by rail).
- P10 4.3 The Variable Demand Model (VDM) infers people will leave cars for public transport if journey times increase – no they will not! (this is stated again as if it is gospel in p17 5.3 and again in p17 5.4 where hundreds of journeys are removed on the basis that people will pay a fiver to use P&C on a winters day). Model shift is desperately unlikely to occur at a significant level, the BRT uses the road in huge unsegregated portions and there is no train station serving the GC and most jobs will be beyond Colchester as the local job market relies on low paid work.
- This is proven as Table 8 p14 shows an AM change from 785 departures (onto GR) to 760 post VDM – this is hardly model shift and we would suggest at around 3% is insignificant and will be swallowed up by background growth and be utterly indefensible when the latter plan stages kick in (this figure is for 2.5k houses)
- It should be noted, however, that scenario 0b does not include the proposed A120-A133 link road – this is an important omission as over time this will be heavily congested. It is also highly likely to only be a single carriageway due the cost underestimation described above.
- 6.2 junction analysis – does not account for overcapacity knock on effect. If a junction is overcapacity this will have a negative impact on feeder junctions causing congestion to spread like contagion, we won't labour this point as p27 states "Of note are junctions along the A12 which suffer increased congestion in the local plan scenario. This is a result of the additional demand, and the new A120-A133 link road which facilitates trips onto the A12."
- This report does not account for the family centric activity park\Maize Maze to be opened in Alresford which expects 700,000 visitors a year which will have to use the A12 and local roads gridlocked by the unnecessary and inappropriate GC.
- Figure 25 (P39) shows the overcapacity changes to GR. It shows these as a collection of green discs which, according to the key mean "solved". We find this fascinating as Jacobs have been analysing the issues at the GR for 25 years and have yet to offer any form of viable mitigation. However, there is no

description of the measures that result in these green discs, nor of the costs involved (we have commented on this in Q1).

- CBC0051 Appendix B demonstrates Colchester overcapacity issues clearly due to the abundance of red font. We paid attention to page 58 which highlights the issues of capacity at GR which sees capacity of 91% rise to between 100 and 104% in the 1b local plan scenario.
- 7.4 – States that AM peak traffic will drop by 2% (an insignificant figure) due to linking Cunobelin Way to Warren Lane. This is confusing as they are linked by the B1022. This is a single carriageway road with development alongside most of. It would be very expensive to make this a southern distributor. Also, Shrub End (Cunobelin Way to Gosbecks Road) is already congested.

Point 3. Further information regarding RTS routes

We have the following observations about Table 1.

Table 1: Revision to Table 5-2 of EB/079

Capital costs (£m, current prices)	Lower investment cost per km	Higher investment cost per km	Bristol cost per km	Leigh - Salford cost per km
Route 1: TCBGC - Colchester North P&R via Colchester town	3.2	4.7	4.6	5.5
Route 2: Colchester Town - CBBGC	2.9	4.8		
Route 3: Stansted - Braintree via WoBGC	2.3	4.1		
Route 4: Braintree - CBBGC	3.3			
Total for all routes by 2051	2.8	4.2		

- EXD082 and the Technical Reports referenced as links in the NEA response CBC0051 all assess scenario's based on a plan period ending in 2032 and up to 2,500 houses. This presents a total based on 2051. There appears to be no reason for this date being chosen.
- How can we be certain of costings when these are not due to start for another 3 – 5 years and due to continue for an unidentified period of time.
- We are unsure why the TCBGC needs to link to the exiting P&R site at Colchester North as this is underutilised for a variety of reasons listed in previous submissions and 5 – 8 miles away. The link road will mean no in-bound commuters to TCBGC will use the P&R due to the distance and having to change transport modes.

Table 2 shows a cost per kilometre of 2.8m to 4.9m. this is 171.5 for the low investment scenario or 305.1 for the high investment scenario. Without the higher investment scenario being hardwired in (despite its impact on the fragile viability) to policy then the benefits will not be realised and sustainable travel will simply not occur. Page 5 of the NEA response states "*In the lower investment scenario, there is less segregated infrastructure and hence, in general, the routes are longer utilising existing highway with some priority measures*". This is concerning as it feels like the GC principles and the strategic gains on a sub-regional level of a true RTS are about to be lost as developer led implementation (as discussed at hearing) has hundreds of millions of pounds less earmarked for infrastructure.

Point 4. Clarifications regarding Fastrack

Applying "Fastrack" to Greenstead Roundabout, historic (planned by the Romans) Colchester town centre and to single carriageway St Andrews Avenue is, to be frank, some way from the rapid transport system provided by a tram or road train that we were offered before the NEA's realised that, even if it were possible, they could not afford it.

"Fastrack" had to remove a lane used by motorists in several places to accommodate the bus. This is, given Colchester's junction overcapacity issues not a palatable solution. Moreover, any BTS for TCBGC should be focused on commuters and the AM Peak (as focused on by the Jacobs reports) whereas "Fastrack" is designed to ferry shoppers to Bluewater and holiday makers to Ebbsfleet International. This is a very different clientele base that is easier to mode shift than time and lifestyle challenged commuters trying to get from TCBGC to theirs jobs in Chelmsford and London.