

Our ref Colchester local plan 2015  
Your ref:

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Dear Sir

## **COLCHESTER LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION JANUARY 2015**

Thank you for consulting us on your plan, we recognise that this is a significant and complicated process, aimed at planning the Boroughs future development in a planned and sustainable way.

The borough is primarily rural in nature with one major settlement Colchester. This makes sustainable transport in the Borough challenging.

We welcome the fact that the plan looks to 2032 and beyond as we recognize that appropriate infrastructure takes a long time to deliver and this needs to be identified early in order that it comes on stream as it is required.

As highlighted in the report options 1a, 1b and 2a, 2b are likely to result in significant impacts on both the A12 and A120 which are already running close to capacity. It is highly likely that modelling work, yet to be undertaken will confirm that upgrading of the A12 and A120 will be required.

The Roads Investment Strategy published by the DfT in December 2014 committed the Highways Agency to widening the A12 between J19 Chelmsford and J25 Marks Tey as well as the introduction of traffic technology (ie detection loops, CCTV cameras and variable message signs to allow better information to drivers and active traffic management of traffic along the whole route between M25 and Ipswich). The announcement also recommended the widening of the A12 between M25 and Chelmsford and the A12 Colchester Bypass, which are to be developed during the next road period.

The Roads Investment Strategy has not identified the A120 for improvement. Through the Route Strategy process, which investigated operational and investment priorities for the strategic road network for the period up to March 2021, we have considered the case of major improvements for the A120. However, we were always aware that the

Route Strategies would identify more challenges and opportunities than any budget would allow it to address. Whilst improvements to the A120 have not been announced as part of this investment plan, we will continue to work with stakeholders to identify and take forward improvements to the route.

Marks Tey benefits from a rail station. I am uncertain as to what spare capacity is available on the line to accommodate the additional journeys generated by this level of growth. It is likely that investment in roads infrastructure will be necessary.

It may be better to focus growth to be delivered in the early part of the planning period to the east of Colchester until the situation regarding the future improvement of the A120 becomes clearer. Significant growth around Marks Tey may only be possible with appropriate mitigation measures funded through development.

We welcome working with you on the transport evidence base as the local plan develops.

Yours faithfully



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