MATTER 18 - Policy - DM20 & DM 21 -- submission by STOP 350

Introduction

This Hearing Statement has been prepared by Stop350 and should be read in conjunction with the representations made to the Publication Draft Plan 2017.

Stop350 is a community based group that arose because of concerns about the CLP. Stop350 is authorised by individuals to act on their behalf. These representations come from over 1,100 people formed by a combination of residents of Mersea Island and close surrounding area.

We support sustainable development and recognise the need to plan for appropriate growth. We are engaging in the examination process in a constructive manner and appreciate that our role is to assist the Inspectors in deciding whether the CLP is Sound and, where necessary, to identify how the CLP could be made to be Sound.

In light of the regrettable significant passage of time between the consultation on the Publication Draft Plan and the Examination – some 4 years – we have updated the evidence which we rely upon in assisting the Inspectors in examining the CLP. This is set out where relevant in our statement.

- *Are the Promoting Sustainable Transport and Changing Travel Behaviour, Sustainable Access to Development and Parking policies justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, and local context, and CLP 1?*
- *Do policies DM20 to DM22 provide a clear direction as to how a decision maker should react to a development proposal?*

Firstly we need to consider the only access road to the Island and the traffic flow numbers we are dealing with using this access.

The department of transport has been doing a manual annual road count in the area for some years and was last updated on 10th Sept 2020. One count place is on B1025 just south of Pete Tye Common. [z] Note this is beyond the turning to Peldon see figures later for this junction take off of traffic to the west.

This states for year 2019 an all vehicle count of **8003.** In 2009 this was **6915**, it did drop down to about this figure again 2013 at 6966. This represents an **increase of 15.7%** (Total count of vehicles in both directions). Note this for a 12 hour period 0700hrs to 1800hrs [ref]

There were three actual automatic counts done in this area by Essex County Council for the period Sat 6th July to Friday 12th July 2019. **9274** adjusted AADT[B] to **9526**. (Total count of vehicles in both directions). Note this is some **1523** more vehicles than the 12 hour department of transport figure . As Essex County Council did three actual counts along this section of road at the same time and all came to about the same number and the average is shown here.

The tide height was 5.22m at 1548hrs on Saturday 6th July, by Wednesday this was 4.69m at 1909hrs. A slowing of traffic can be seen in the off Island numbers during these high tide periods.

The numbers crossing the Strood have to be increased by the vehicles using the Mersea Road at Peldon. From Thursday 24th Nov to 30th Nov 2016 total being 3086 AADT daily average adjustment is **3507**

So total daily 24 hrs. avg. over the Strood **9526** + **3507** = **13,033** equivalent of approximately **6516** each direction.

The Average 12 hour weekday 0700 to 1900hrs vol. For B1025 is **7985**

https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/manualcountpoints/941073

Also the 12 hour average for Mersea Road to Peldon is **2707** (from our original submission)

Therefore the total both ways is 7985 + 2707 = **106692** so each way average is **5346**

This equivalent to 446 per hour or 7.4 vehicles a minute or one vehicle every 8 seconds for a 12 hour period 7am to 7pm.

Therefore when the tide blocks the road for an hour there is on average 446 vehicles each occupying an average space of 7 metres that equates to a queue 3.12 Km. When the queue crosses after the tide recedes this takes time and all the while traffic is still coming onto the end of the queue at the rate 7.4 vehicles every minute. The result is therefore long queueing times can build up.

The other issue is the Bus which is cancelled at times of high tide coverage of the Strood. This can be as many as five of the half hourly buses being cancelled, So in the worst case scenario there is a **four hour gap** in public transport on and off the Island.

There is a half hourly bus service 67, 67B, and 68 Monday to Saturdays starting from 0607 till 2240 hrs and two hourly on Sundays starting from 0840 till 2240hrs. This service goes through the village and out the far end. There is another service running from the village centre direct off the Island via the B1025 and has about 7 or 8 service no 63 Monday to Saturday running hourly from 0937 to 1337and then 1545* to 1745 (*non school days only). All these services are tide dependant and the time table is adjusted by notice for the month showing the cancelled services. (picture on previous submission).

Consideration of the latent damage to vehicles. Any vehicle crossing when the road is flooded will be going through salt water. Whilst the immediate effects of salt water may not show, the long term issue of seized brakes, corroded bearings and electrical wiring terminals corroding. It has long been a known fact in the local motor trade to never buy a vehicle from Mersea Island or if part exchanging to move it on quickly!

Whilst walking and cycling can be promoted on the Island, however because the road system is historically old, a great number of roads are very narrow already. This is most notable along the spine road, East Road, running across the top of the Avenues to the beach area and connecting the new developments to the village. This road in places is narrow and the bus has to give way to on coming traffic. There is only a single pathway on alternating sides of the road for most of the entire length.

The new and any future development sites will and are being built at the east end of the existing developed area of West Mersea and as such they are all some 1 ½ kilometres from the village centre with Post office, shops and Library, at this distance most will drive to village centre in order to bring back shopping. This centre has limited car parking available and with visitors using this parking as well the centre becomes clogged with illegal parking and the side roads soon fill up. It should also be noted that promotion of electric vehicles will also encourage “locals” to make more trips to village centre as they will see this as “good for the environment”. However this will only increase the lack parking issue!

The last item of DM21 is to accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and services which is unlikely to be possible with a tidal causeway being the only access to goods needing to be brought into Mersea Island.

The changing way in which households are doing more online shopping will undoubtedly reduce the number of individual car journeys. However the increased number of small van delivery vehicles will be increasing and on the new housing developments access can be an issue. Also any hold ups on the Strood will lead to missed delivery slots and frustration for delivery vans drivers as well receipt-ants.

Conclusions

It is difficult to understand how Sustainable transport or changing travel behaviour is possible given the Island situation and the issues noted above and under climate change policy discussed early under Matter 3.

MATTER 18 - Appendix - presentation by STOP355

Traffic Issues References

[B] Health warning for METHODOLOGY on automatic count data:

Although checked intermittently the equipment remains unmanned for much of the duration of the survey, and can potentially be interfered with, vandalised, damaged or stolen and Essex Highways cannot be held responsible for any periods where data has not been captured.

The equipment is located in accordance with the details provided by the client and Essex Highways cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of the data or loss of equipment due to theft and vandalism.

16hr AADTs are calculated using the seasonal COBA methodology; DMRB Vol. 13, Pt 4: Traffic Flow Input To COBA, with formulae available in the (hidden) config worksheet.

Automatic traffic counts are undertaken using a pair of pneumatic tubes installed securely across the carriageway, one metre apart, recording air pulses to determine vehicle speed, class and volume. The ATC equipment generally remains in place for a consecutive seven day period, and the data analysed post-survey.

In queuing conditions, the accuracy of ATC recording equipment may reduce as follows;

- *20 – 30mph: potential reduction of 9% accuracy in volume values*
- *10 – 20mph: potential reduction of 26% accuracy in volume values*
- *00 – 10mph: potential reduction of 39% accuracy in volume values*

These figures are based on multiple ATC results compared against accepted reference values from resilient manual counts.

Traffic on all urban roads has increased by 2.2% between 2018 and 2019.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/916749/road-traffic-estimates-in-great-britain-2019.pdf

Traffic trends by road type The overall trends in traffic by road type are largely driven by the trends in car traffic, as cars account for over 70% of the vehicle miles travelled on each of the different road types. The table below shows the change in motor vehicle traffic compared to 25 years ago by vehicle type and road type Urban and rural trends In 2019, rural 'A' and rural minor roads carried 43% of all motor vehicle traffic between them; around 16% more vehicle miles than those travelled on urban roads. This is partly due to the fact there are a greater proportion of rural roads. When considering the average daily flow, rural roads (12,300 vehicles on rural 'A' roads; 1,100 vehicles on rural minor roads) were far below the level on urban roads (19,100 on urban 'A' roads; 2,600 on urban minor roads). Since 1994, traffic on rural roads has risen by 39% and 47% on 'A' roads and minor roads, respectively. Similar growth has been seen on urban minor roads, which have increased by 36%, however this is in contrast to the relatively flat trend in urban 'A' road traffic (1% increase). This pattern has varied amongst vehicle types, with van traffic on urban roads rising 80%, compared to a fall of 26% in lorry traffic over the same period.

Percentage change in road traffic in Great Britain, 1995-2019

Urban Minor Roads:- Cars and Taxis +29% Vans +112% Lorries -29% Other Motor Vehicles + 25% All Motor Vehicles + 36%

Road Count details B 1025 https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/manualcountpoints/941073

Quality flags in data downloads below

DfT's road link level traffic estimates are calculated using a variety of methods, with some methods likely to produce more accurate estimates than others.

*The data tables available to download here contain a column – **estimation_method** – showing the method used to estimate traffic for each location and year. Figures having an estimation method of "Counted" are likely to be more accurate than those marked as "Estimated", and the latter should be used with caution*

Annual Average daily flow 12 hour 0700 to 1800 [z]

Year	Count method	Pedal cycles	Two wheeled motor vehicles	Cars and taxis	Buses and coaches	Light goods vehicles	Heavy goods vehicles	All motor vehicles
2019	Manual count	16	61	6510	45	1237	150	8003
2018	Manual count	30	61	6360	48	1356	148	7973
2017	Manual count	12	48	6418	29	1284	111	7890
2016	Manual count	22	68	6381	46	1295	193	7984
2015	Manual count	33	48	5909	55	1223	161	7397
2014	Manual count	62	84	5911	68	1049	223	7334
2013	Manual count	19	86	5518	40	1140	181	6966
2012	Manual count	50	69	5834	46	1024	129	7103
2011	Manual count	39	67	6262	49	1104	142	7624
2010	Manual count	19	64	6157	47	1228	215	7711
2009	Manual count	38	77	5525	58	978	277	6915