

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
Date:	10 December 2013
Title:	Safeguarding of land for the route of the Botley bypass
Reference:	5440
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to acknowledge the withdrawal of PPS12 and agree the Highway Authority's position on the safeguarding of land for the route of the Botley bypass in respect of the current Eastleigh Borough Council and forthcoming Winchester City Council Local Plan consultations.

1.2. This paper seeks to:

- update the position since the Executive Member decision on 6 March 2012; and
- review the Highway Authority's position to the current Eastleigh Borough Council and forthcoming Winchester City Council Local Plan consultations in respect of safeguarding the route of a proposed longer term highway scheme to by-pass Botley.

2. Contextual information

2.1. The A334 is Botley's High Street and it accommodates relatively high volumes of traffic. There is a long standing aspiration for a bypass of Botley due to peak hour congestion which contributes to local air quality problems. An Air Quality Management Area has been declared for the High Street and Eastleigh Borough Council have produced an Air Quality Management Area Action Plan. The actions mainly relate to transport and include increasing use of public transport and other alternative transport such as cycling, whilst also improving traffic flow. The provision of a Botley bypass is contained within the Action Plan along with numerous other measures. The Highway Authority has been supporting Eastleigh Borough Council on the implementation of those measures within the Action Plan which are considered to be proportionate and deliverable with current financial resources. The current capital programme includes schemes at various

stages of development covering pedestrian, cycle and traffic flow improvement measures.

- 2.2. Eastleigh Borough Council is proposing to allocate land for housing development in and around the Botley area in its emerging Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan includes policies supporting the provision of a Botley bypass. Winchester City Council's approved Local Plan Part 1 allocates land at North Whiteley for 3,500 dwellings, this allocation does not include any specific requirement for a Botley bypass.
- 2.3. In March 2012 the Executive Member agreed the Highway Authority's response to major development at Botley and North Whiteley. The decision report dated 6 March 2012 provides comprehensive contextual information which is not repeated here. The report reviewed previous transportation evidence and strategy relative to planned growth in this area and the more recent use of the Sub Regional Transport Model (SRTM) and other current transport assessment work being undertaken in association with development in this area. The Executive Member decided that there was no transport related justification for a Botley bypass in relation to development in either the Eastleigh Borough Council or Winchester City Council Local Plans. The decision also considered the national planning issues around the inclusion of safeguarding proposals in the Local Plan process and concluded that in the light of PPS12 it was not reasonable to continue to safeguard land for the Botley bypass and as such that Eastleigh Borough Council and Winchester City Council be advised that a safeguarding should not be included in their Local Plans. It is this previous advice which this decision will update, since the national policy context has now changed.

Recent work

NPPF/PPS12

- 2.4. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has replaced PPS12. The NPPF is less specific than PPS12 in respect of the requirements of 'safeguarding'. The NPPF states that Local Plans should be 'sound' (i.e. positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy). It also states that plans should be aspirational but realistic, planning positively for development and infrastructure required over a 15 year time horizon but also taking into account longer term requirements. Whilst there continues to be no transport related justification for a Botley bypass in relation to development in either the Eastleigh Borough Council or Winchester City Council Local Plans, it is acknowledged that the Botley bypass remains a long term policy aspiration, and in recognition of the National Planning Policy Framework both Eastleigh Borough Council and Winchester City Council should be advised that the safeguarding of land for the future construction of a Botley bypass should now be considered by them.

Winchester City Council Local Plan Part 1 and 2

- 2.5. The Winchester City Council Local Plan Part 1 has now been adopted following an Examination in Public (EiP) in November 2012. The Highway Authority attended the EiP along with representatives of Winchester City Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Fareham Borough Council, and Botley Parish Council. Evidence was presented in respect of development at North Whiteley and the Highway Authority's position on Botley bypass. The Inspector concluded there is no reasonable expectation that the developers of the North Whiteley site should make a contribution towards the Botley bypass construction. However, the Inspector also concluded that it seemed wise for Winchester City Council to retain the safeguarding of the intended route (under saved policy T12 of their former Local Plan) pending the final outcome of the full transport assessment for North Whiteley and other work currently being undertaken for Eastleigh Borough Council. Given the changed national planning position, this recommendation is now accepted.
- 2.6. Winchester City Council is now preparing their Local Plan Part 2 and they will be consulting the Highway Authority on this shortly. The current Winchester City Council Local Plan includes saved policy T12 (safeguarding) and this reports seeks to establish the Highway Authority position in respect of any replacement safeguarding policy.

North Whiteley Transport Assessment

- 2.7. Transport Assessment work for the North Whiteley development has continued since the Winchester City Council EiP. A development specific transport assessment is being carried out by the developer consortium. This work has intensified since the EiP, particularly around the construction of a variable highway, public transport and active mode modelling assessment. The base highway modelling has been agreed by both the Highway Authority and the Highways Agency. The forecast modelling has now been agreed by the Highways Agency and, subject to the resolution of two outstanding points, the forecast modelling will be agreed by the Highway Authority. The current forecast modelling includes significant highway capacity improvements to the south of the development including the dualling of Whiteley Way and major improvements to Junction 9 of the M27. This infrastructure will be delivered as part of the North Whiteley development and caters for increased demand for access to and from the south. The initial modelling results also indicate the enhanced capacity around junction 9 will result in the redistribution of some existing traffic which also helps limit any increased demands through Botley. In summary the North Whiteley Transport Assessment work supports all previous work and concludes that there is no identified transport related justification for a Botley bypass in relation to the North Whiteley development or that in the emerging Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan.

Long Term Strategic Implementation Plan (LTSIP)/Transport Delivery Plan (TDP)

- 2.8. In February 2013 the Transport for South Hampshire Transport Delivery Plan (TDP) was published. The TDP was previously referred to as the Long Term Strategic Implementation Plan (LTSIP). The TDP objectively assessed transport improvement schemes that respond to identified constraints and facilitate growth. It is important to recognise that the plan is based on forecast growth and current evidence. Based on current forecasts and evidence Botley bypass is not presented as a scheme on which to focus investment. However at the same time the TDP explains that Transport for South Hampshire will continue to plan beyond the plan period and identify schemes that may have potential in the longer term: Botley bypass is identified in this context.
- 2.9. The TDP does include schemes to improve the flow of traffic on both the A27 and M27. These schemes seek to improve traffic flow and capacity on these important east – west corridors and these projects complement other motorway junction improvements along this corridor such as those proposed as part of the North Whiteley development at Junction 9.

Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan

- 2.10. Eastleigh Borough Council is currently consulting on a revised draft Local Plan following representations on its earlier draft in August 2012. Representations received on the earlier version meant the draft could not proceed to the next stage. In particular, a major site was withdrawn and concerns were expressed by the Highways Agency about the transport assessment. The revised draft Local Plan has now been published and it no longer includes a conditional requirement for a Botley bypass in relation to development in and around Botley. However, it does still include requirements for developments in the Botley area to contribute towards and in some cases partially construct a Botley bypass. The revised Local Plan does not include any new evidence to justify the provision of a Botley bypass as the full transport assessment for the Local Plan is still in preparation. However the current version does acknowledge that previous transport assessment work for the Local Plan has not fully supported the case for a Botley bypass in transport terms.
- 2.11. Eastleigh Borough Council's current plan identifies land under Policy BO2 for housing and states that the road network within the site will include part of the route for a 40mph single carriageway bypass to Botley village. There is no current justification for a Botley bypass, neither is there any likelihood that the remaining sections of a Botley bypass will be completed in this plan period. Also in residential site masterplanning terms a 40mph bypass that also functions as a road within a residential allocation is unlikely to make a successful place. As there is currently no certainty that a bypass would ever be completed it is not recommended to build part of it. However in the light of the replacement of PPS12 with the NPPF it may now be appropriate to reserve or safeguard land within the emerging Plan for the future construction of a Botley bypass.

Eastleigh Borough Council Engineering report

2.12. Eastleigh Borough Council has historically supported the construction of a bypass for Botley and it has recently engaged engineering consultants Waterman to undertake an assessment of the engineering requirements and costs of delivering a single carriageway 40mph bypass to the north of Botley village. The Waterman assessment has now been completed and the Highway Authority has reviewed the work. The Eastleigh Borough Council assessment proposes a distributor road as opposed to a more traditional bypass standard road. This has led to the overall cost of the scheme coming down. Although the Eastleigh Borough Council cost estimates are considered reasonably robust as a desk top calculation, there are a number of highway design issues and potential ecological constraints that could still increase the cost of constructing the bypass, and for these reasons it is not possible to determine the cost of a deliverable scheme at this stage. In addition, should a future bypass scheme and business case be fully developed, it may well need to take a different form to that proposed within the Eastleigh Borough Council assessment. Firm decisions on this level of detail cannot reasonably be made at this stage. However, in recognition of the road specification in Eastleigh Borough Council's work, it is reasonable that the costing shown in the Eastleigh Borough Transport Statement be revised from £30million to £20million. Despite the cost coming down from previous estimates there remains no development related traffic justification for requiring the scheme.

3. Finance

3.1. There are no immediate financial implications of this decision apart from to note that the likely cost of a future Botley bypass, in the form included within the Eastleigh Borough Council engineering assessment, is around £20million. At this stage there is no funding to bring the scheme forward, and no transport case to require developer funding to construct a Botley By-pass.

4. Performance

4.1. The decision will allow the Highway Authority to provide clear and up to date advice to Eastleigh Borough Council and Winchester City Council in respect of their emerging Local Plans before they are submitted for Examination. The main update, in recognition of the replacement of PPS12 with the NPPF, is that Eastleigh Borough Council and Winchester City Council be advised that the safeguarding of land for the future construction of a Botley bypass should be considered by them.

5. Future direction

- 5.1. The safeguarding of land for the future construction of a Botley bypass will allow the scheme to be reassessed in the future should further evidence or suitable funding sources become available. The scheme remains a long term policy aspiration.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 That, in the light of the withdrawal of PPS12 and its replacement with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Eastleigh Borough Council and Winchester City Council be advised that the safeguarding of land for the route of the proposed Botley bypass should now be considered as part of their emerging Local Plans.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u> Highway Authority response to major development at Botley and North Whiteley	<u>Reference</u> 3753	<u>Date</u> 6 March 2012
Botley Bypass - Southampton Area Transport Strategy Meeting of County Council and District Council Representatives	6764/JC	21 November 2001
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u> National Planning Policy Framework		<u>Date</u> 27 March 2012

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
National Planning Policy Framework	Publically available

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1 The proposals in this report have been developed with due regard to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Council's equality objectives. The website contains a summary [assessment of the impacts](#) on Keeping Hampshire Moving.
- 1.2 It is considered that the issues covered by this report will not have impacts requiring further specific actions by the Council above those already established in its existing policies and working procedures.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. None.

3. Climate Change:

- 3.1. How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

There are no immediate impacts on our carbon footprint or energy consumption.

- 3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

The decision enables the provision of clear and up to date policy advice for partners to plan for growth.