

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

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| Decision Maker: | Executive Member – Environment and Transport |
| Date: | 6 March 2012 |
| Title: | The Highway Authority response to major development at Botley and North Whiteley |
| Reference: | 3753 |
| Report From: | Director of Economy, Transport and Environment |

Contact name: Stephen Jenkins

Tel: 01962 846819

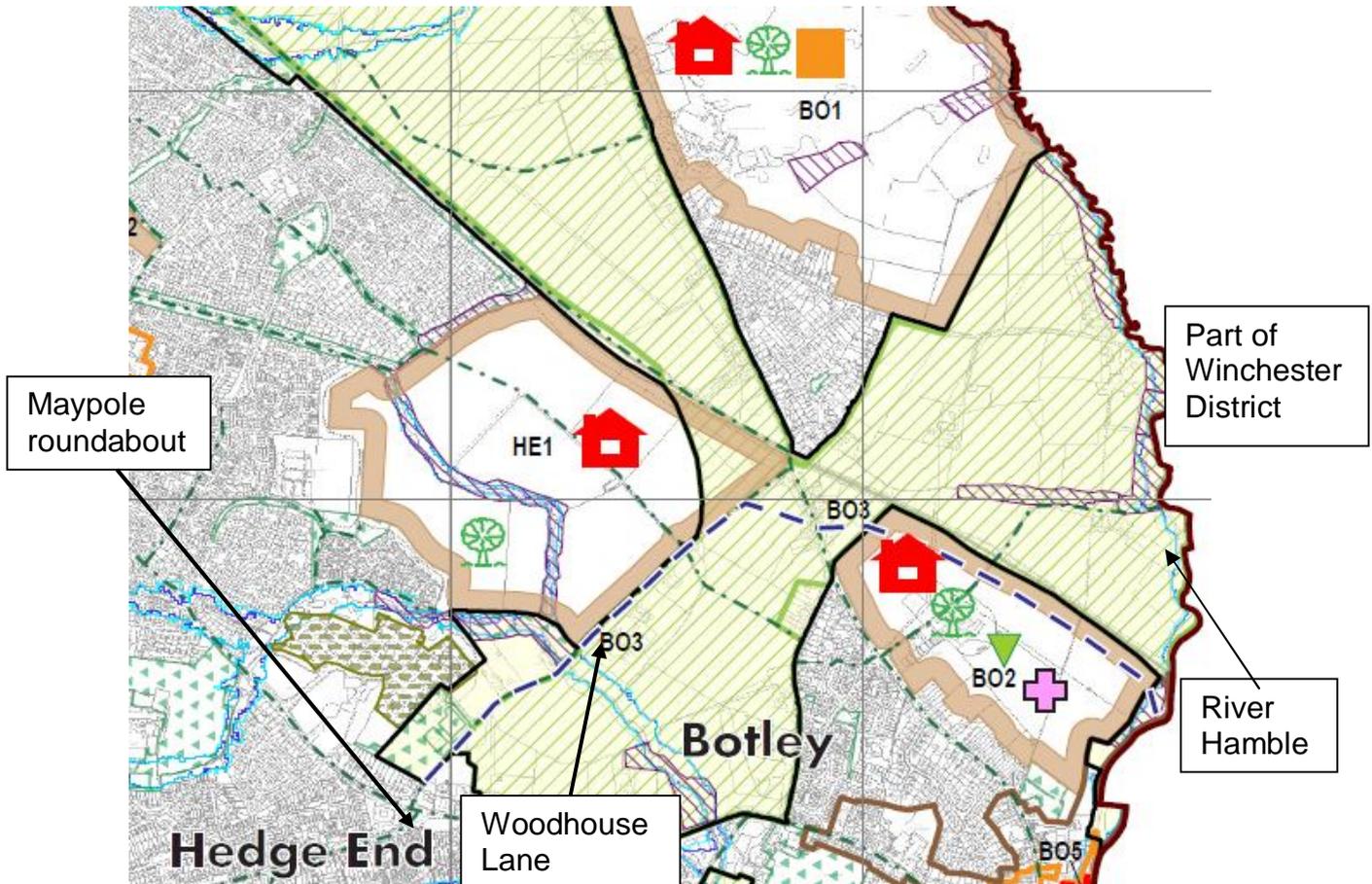
Email: stephen.jenkins@hants.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to enable the Executive Member to consider the issues relating to major transport infrastructure proposals in response to major development at Hedge End/Boorley Green and North Whiteley including the need for a future safeguarding for a Botley bypass within the context of the current transport evidence base and both Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council's draft Local Plan proposals.
- 1.2. This paper briefly reviews previous Transport for South Hampshire (TfSH) transport evidence and strategy relative to planned growth and associated major transport infrastructure in the south western parts of Winchester District and the eastern parts of Eastleigh Borough.
- 1.3. The paper also provides the latest position on transport and planning evidence and strategy including a summary of the Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council draft Local Plan proposals and associated use of the Sub-Regional Transport Model (SRTM) and other current transport work being undertaken in association with the development identified in these draft plans.
- 1.4. The paper summarises and supports the emerging on site 'street' based highway infrastructure proposals at North Whiteley and recommends this approach is pursued in respect of Eastleigh Borough Council's planned development at Hedge End/Boorley Green.
- 1.5. The paper also considers the national planning policy issues around the inclusion of safeguarding proposals in the Local Development Framework (LDF) process and suggests the future of the bypass is next reviewed via the forthcoming South Hampshire Long Term Strategic Implementation Plan (LTSIP).

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. The South East Plan included a 6,000 dwelling Strategic Development Area (SDA) on land in the Hedge End/Boorley Green area. The SDA proposal was abandoned in 2010 as Eastleigh Borough Council took early advantage of the new Government's intention to revoke the South East Plan through the Localism Bill. In July 2010 the Borough Council formally resolved that the SDA would not be taken forward in its planning work. Eastleigh Borough Council has recently consulted on a draft of its new Local Plan 2011 – 2029 which identifies land near the previous SDA in the Hedge End/Boorley Green area as being suitable for residential development but on a reduced scale compared to the SDA (circa 2,400 dwellings as opposed to 6,000). The County Council has responded to this consultation formally.
- 2.2. In December 2011 Winchester City Council approved the draft Core Strategy for its Local Plan, setting out the levels and areas for development across the district over the next 20 years. The document includes a new community of around 3,000 homes at North Whiteley. The document also proposes to reserve land for a bypass at Botley if required by the Highway Authority.
- 2.3. Previous Local Plans for both Eastleigh Borough Council and Winchester City Council have included the safeguarding of land for a Botley bypass.
- 2.4. A Botley bypass route has been safeguarded by the County Council since 1988. It was previously included as Policy T16 in the County Structure Plan 2001 – 2011. Policy N of the current Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011 – 2031 safeguards proposed strategic routes such as Botley bypass.
- 2.5. The adopted Winchester City Council Local Plan 2006 includes Policy T12 which safeguards land for the construction of an east-west bypass for Botley between the A334/A3051 junction and the boundary of the Local Plan area at the River Hamble.
- 2.6. The adopted Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan (2001 – 2011) includes Policy 91.T which safeguards appropriate land for the Botley bypass. The adopted Local Plan identifies a route for a bypass and the written element of the policy describes the bypass as part of a number of overall transport schemes which will enhance access opportunities, improve the performance of the transport network and enable development to take place.
- 2.7. The draft Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan (2011 – 2029) now includes a specific policy for a Botley bypass. Policy BO3 states that an indicative route is reserved for a new road bypassing Botley to the north. The route is shown on the associated draft proposals map, an extract of which is below. The route is shown by the purple dashed line marked BO3. The draft Local Plan suggests the route shall comprise improvements to Woodhouse Lane from the Maypole roundabout in Hedge End and a road built to 'Distributor Road Standard' eastward across the River Hamble to the junction of the A334 with the Curdrige Road in Winchester district.



- 2.8. Eastleigh Borough Council's draft Local Plan also identifies land in the Hedge End/Boorley Green area as being suitable for residential development. The two largest sites are HE1, which is identified for 1,000 dwellings north of Woodhouse Lane, and BO1 which is identified for 1,400 dwellings at Boorley Green. The draft Local Plan states that the construction of the Botley bypass is a conditional requirement of the development of these and other housing sites. This is specifically noted in polices S7, BO1, BO2 and BO3.
- 2.9. It is recognised that a bypass at Botley is identified in the current LTP as a proposed strategic route suitable for safeguarding. However the LTP is required to set out the long-term direction of transport policy as well as the likely future programme. The detailed implementation of a scheme identified in this long-term policy aspiration, like the Botley Bypass requires significant additional work to determine if it is suitable and deliverable. At this stage any conditional link between development and the bypass is not properly evidenced. The County Council has not seen any transport assessment work which justifies the provision of a Botley bypass in conjunction with identified development either in the draft Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan or in the draft Winchester City Council Local Plan.
- 2.10. It is relevant to note that an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) has recently been declared for the High Street, Botley due to high levels of nitrogen dioxide. Following the declaration of an AQMA, a Local Authority is required to prepare an Action Plan to improve air quality. EBC's

Environmental Health service has prepared a draft version of an Action Plan. The actions mainly relate to road transport and include increasing use of public transport and alternative forms of transport such as cycling and improving the flow of traffic. The provision of a by pass for Botley is contained within the Action Plan along with numerous other measures. The Action Plan suggests implementation of measures needs to be carefully considered to ensure that they do not negatively affect local businesses or shift the problem elsewhere, this is supported. In addition it is considered that measures need to be proportionate to the problem and a careful combination of a number of actions is likely to be more realistic and effective rather than relying on just one or two actions.

Winchester City Council / North Whiteley major development

- 2.11. Winchester City Council is now progressing the master planning of development proposals at North Whiteley. The scheme emerging at North Whiteley is now likely to involve three new schools and two local centres along with new transport links from the A3051 Botley Road to M27 Junction 9. The new transport links will reflect modern street design philosophies as opposed to the previously proposed 'Whiteley Distributor Road'. The North Whiteley 'street' infrastructure approach is appropriate for the creation of a safe, cohesive and attractive new community and it is supported by the County Council in its Manual for Streets Companion document. The 'street' infrastructure approach at North Whiteley is unlikely to readily reconcile with a bypass of 'Distributor Road Standard' at Botley.

Previous assessment work

- 2.12. Previous transport assessment work in 2010 undertaken by TfSH and the County Council assessed the impact of both the SDA and the development at North Whiteley. It did not identify a transport requirement for a bypass either in relation to the SDA or North Whiteley or in association with both sites. The work assessed the effects of both developments in various scenarios with a number of interventions including the Botley bypass. All scenarios indicated that relatively little additional traffic to and from the developments was expected to use the Botley bypass route with most traffic from the Hedge End SDA heading to/from M27 J8 or to/from the North and most traffic from North Whiteley heading to / from M27 J9. The previous work culminated in a report to the TfSH Joint Committee in June 2010 when the committee resolved that neither the 6,000 dwelling SDA or other planned major developments such as that at North Whiteley would provide a significant development-related justification for a Botley bypass.
- 2.13. The revised development proposals around Hedge End/Boorley Green are much smaller than the SDA proposal. In December 2011 the County Council objected to Eastleigh Borough Council's inclusion of a conditional requirement for Botley bypass to be constructed and has suggested to the Borough Council that this section of its plan should be reworded making it clear that any requirement for the bypass will need to be fully justified in transport terms based on current evidence, strategy and policy.

Current assessment work

- 2.14. Since the previous assessment work Eastleigh Borough Council has formally resolved that the SDA will not be taken forward. Eastleigh Borough Council's revised development proposals have recently been tested with the TfSH Sub-Regional Transport Model (SRTM). This has provisionally shown that the traffic generated by the reduced level of development at Boorley Green and Hedge End (now 2,400 homes rather than 6,000 homes) would also be insufficient to justify the bypass in development related transport terms.
- 2.15. The initial testing identifies the main highway capacity issue resulting from the Hedge End/Boorley Green sites is likely to occur on the approach to M27 Junction 8 in the AM peak.
- 2.16. Since the previous work Winchester City Council's proposals for North Whiteley have evolved. The same level of development is proposed so the overall traffic impact is unlikely to vary from that agreed in 2010, however the masterplan is now clearer with the site including three schools and two distinct local centres one in the north and one in the south all being served by a network of new streets rather than Distributor Roads. In addition the emerging transport strategy for North Whiteley now includes major highway capacity improvements in Whiteley and at M27 Junction 9 which will address the existing congestion problems to and from the south. These proposals are being developed in conjunction with the Highway Authority and the Highways Agency.
- 2.17. At this stage there is no development related transport evidence to suggest that the reduced scale of development in the Eastleigh Borough Council area and/or the North Whiteley development will require a Botley bypass. This was agreed in 2010 by the TfSH Joint Committee who at the time were considering a much larger scale of development.

National Planning Policy Issues

- 2.18. The inclusion of specific safeguarding proposals in Local Plan documents raises national planning policy issues. Both Eastleigh Borough Council and Winchester City Council's draft Local Plans include the safeguarding of land for a Botley bypass. Government policy contained in Planning Policy Statement 12 (Local Development Frameworks) considers the issue of safeguarding land. Paragraph 2.32 states:

"It is important that policies are realistic and are likely to be implemented during the plan period."

In addition paragraph 2.33 states:

"Where there are policies in a development plan document that are no longer likely to be implemented, the local authority should take the necessary action to ensure that this is clear to those using or referring to the local development framework. This is particularly important for major

developments or infrastructure (e.g. roads) where uncertainty of the likelihood of projects proceeding can lead to perceived blight to property owners in the vicinity. The annual monitoring report should record the decision of the local authority not to proceed with that policy and this will be a material consideration for any planning application or subsequent appeal. The local authority should then ensure that the decision not to proceed with the policy is incorporated into the next review of the relevant development plan document(s)”

- 2.19. Having regard to government advice, as set out in paragraph 2.17, it is not reasonable to continue to safeguard a Botley bypass in Local Plan documents without any evidence of it being required in relation to planned development or an implementation programme or prospect of funding.
- 2.20. The long term future requirements for a Botley bypass are less clear. Whilst this report recommends that the strategic route safeguarding should be removed from both draft Local Plans as it is unlikely to come forward in the plan period, the County Council recognises that the scheme could have potential other benefits for instance in environmental terms linked to the recent designation of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Botley. A Botley bypass is one part of the AQMA Action Plan. On this basis it is suggested that a bypass should be regarded as a longer term policy aspiration to be next reviewed as part of the LTSIP process.

3. Finance

- 3.1. There are no immediate financial implications resulting from a decision to update the Highway Authority's position on major transport proposals in response to planned development at Botley and North Whiteley. Neither are there any financial implications of confirming that the Highway Authority does not support the inclusion of a Botley bypass safeguarding within either the draft Winchester City Council or Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plans.
- 3.2. A bypass of Botley is expected to cost in excess of £30 million to deliver and at this stage there is no funding in place to bring the scheme forward.

4. Performance

- 4.1. The suggested advice to Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council will provide a clear and up to date statement of the Highway Authority's current position in relation to major transport proposals in response to planned development in their areas. It will enable Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council to progress their draft Local Plans with certainty before they are submitted for Examination.
- 4.2. The decision will also reaffirm the support of the Highway Authority of the emerging street based infrastructure provision at North Whiteley and provide overarching strategy and direction for transport infrastructure provision linked to growth in this part of the County.

5. Future direction

- 5.1. In terms of Botley bypass, there is no current justification to safeguard a strategic route for a Botley bypass in draft Local Plans as there is no likely prospect of the scheme coming forward for delivery in that timescale. It is

therefore recommended that the Executive Member advise Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council to remove the safeguarding of the proposed strategic route for a Botley bypass from their Local Plans.

- 5.2. A review of the bypass scheme will be next carried out within the LTSIP process. All interventions including Botley bypass will be assessed and prioritised in relation to current and future transport problems and requirements, with the latter reflecting the implications of planned growth. The LTSIP will be evidenced, tested and appraised by the SRTM, making the LTSIP a robust document enabling the County Council and TfSH to make a compelling case for investment in South Hampshire. The LTSIP will be used to frame any future funding bids.
- 5.3. The Highway Authority will work closely with both Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council to secure appropriate mitigation measures alongside any development at North Whiteley or around Hedge End/Boorley Green to ensure that both Council's proposals do not adversely impact on the operation of the local highway network.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 That Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council be advised that there is no transport related justification for a Botley bypass in relation to proposed development in the Hedge End/Boorley Green or North Whiteley areas and hence no likelihood of a bypass being required, funded or delivered within the Local Plan period. A safeguarding for a Botley bypass should therefore not be included within Winchester City Council or Eastleigh Borough Council's Local Plan at this time.
- 6.2 That Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council be advised that any scheme to bypass Botley village be regarded as a longer term policy aspiration which will be subject to further review during the preparation of the Long Term Strategic Implementation Plan.
- 6.3 That formal abandonment of a scheme to bypass Botley village is considered premature at this stage.
- 6.4 That the emerging 'street' based highway infrastructure at North Whiteley be supported and pursued in respect of Eastleigh Borough Council's planned development at Hedge End/Boorley Green.

Rpt/3753/SJ

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

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| 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

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| Links to previous Member decisions: | | |
| <u>Title</u> | <u>Reference</u> | <u>Date</u> |
| 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> | | <u>Date</u> |
| PPS12 (Local Development Frameworks) | | 4 June 2008 |

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.)

DocumentLocation

| | |
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| M27 Parallel Study Report June 2010 | Electronic |
| Transport for South Hampshire Evidence Base MVA SRTM Report - Eastleigh Core Strategy Report | Electronic |

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1 The implications of this decision have been assessed and no adverse impact has been identified in terms of race, creed or gender.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1 It is considered that there will be no direct impact from the decision on crime or disorder.

3. Climate Change:

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

The decision to advise Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council to remove the safeguarding of a strategic route for the Botley bypass and reaffirm support for the new street based infrastructure at North Whiteley and in Hedge End/Boorley Green is likely to result in the provision of transport infrastructure which creates a greater sense of place and provides an environment that is accessible and safe for all rather than one which only provides for the expeditious movement of traffic.

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

By advising Winchester City Council and Eastleigh Borough Council to remove the safeguarding of a strategic route for the Botley bypass and reaffirming our support for the new street based infrastructure at North Whiteley and Hedge End/ Boorley Green whilst retaining the Botley bypass scheme as a longer term aspiration the Highway Authority is able to provide a clear and up to date policy steer for partners to plan for growth in a sustainable way.