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# Elsenham Draft Transport Assessment Summary

This is a summary of the Draft Transport Assessment (TA) of a development proposal for a sustainable new market town on land at Elsenham, Essex. The TA provides a robust assessment of the proposed new market town consisting of either 3000 households as identified in the Local Development Framework (LDF) core strategy for Uttlesford District, or one of two other scenarios for 5000 households constructed either as expansion of the 3000 LDF scheme under future or emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) figures for new households within the Uttlesford District over the longer term or under the Governments Eco-town initiative.

The TA was produced following discussions and consultations with key stakeholders and their appointed consultants. These include Essex County Council (ECC), The Highways Agency (HA), Uttlesford District Council (UDC), and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). During this process the key transport issues were discussed and the approach and methodology for the TA agreed.

The TA explains the market town design philosophy of reducing the number of journeys made to off-site destinations from the outset and identifies the key components of the sustainable settlement. A sustainable transport strategy is defined for maximising containment of trips within the market town and encouraging residents to adopt healthier lifestyles, in which they can walk or cycle to facilities including work, to the shops and to school.

The approach is to focus on a sustainable new community with carefully selected mix of masterplan facilities which reduce the need to travel. Overall the new market town at Elsenham will seek to create a lively and vibrant town centre where people can live and work within easy reach of the railway station and new transport interchange facility at its heart. All scenarios for the new market town at Elsenham are sustainable and the ethos is for only providing sufficient off-site highway road traffic capacity for the most sustainable outcome. Therefore the number and length of journeys will be minimised and the amount of car only journeys reduced. The result will be a settlement which is viable and sustainable in the future.

The proposals embrace emerging best practice and accord with locally adopted planning and transport policies including local policies applicable to development in Essex and Uttlesford policy areas. For transport impact purposes and a robust assessment of the 3000 and 5000 dwelling scenarios following the LDF/RSS route, it is assumed a figure of only 20% in relation to jobs and working age residents. For the 5000 dwelling Eco-town scenario a figure of 30% has been assumed. In practice though it is expected that the number of residents living and working within the market town will exceed these amounts and we anticipate it to be in the region of up to 50% for Eco-town scenario.


For the purposes of the TA it is anticipated that 3000 and 5000 dwellings would be completed in 2022 and 2030 respectively and the TA includes a sustainable transport strategy, vehicle access strategy, servicing strategy, parking strategy together with Travel Plan proposals.

A transport strategy has been set out for the new market town with an emphasis on use of the more sustainable modes of travel of non-motorised transport forms and public transport. By design, the new market town will be highly permeable for pedestrians and cyclists, with an attractive walking and cycling environment. A road network will be provided that consists of a series of streets within the new market town, which will be complementary with the urban design and designed to keep vehicles at low speeds and to prioritise other road users such as pedestrians and cyclists.

Pedestrian routes from the proposed development to the existing village of Elsenham and nearby settlement of Henham will be improved, with new footways and crossing points installed as required. Improved linkages with key employment, school destinations and links from other facilities, including the Green Ring, will be provided, with new pedestrian and cycle routes to connect to the new sustainable market town at Elsenham. These include a cycle route alongside the B1051 to Stansted Mountfitchet.

A public transport strategy for the market town has also been designed to maximise rail and bus patronage. The public transport strategy has been developed in consultation with the Local Bus Operators, Essex County Council Public Transport Team, and Network Rail. In particular, Network Rail's Business Plan 2009 - 2014 sets out priority improvements to all stations between Cheshunt and

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Cambridge, including platform lengthening to cater for an increase in carriages from 8 to 12 by 2011. On this basis Network Rail have confirmed that they do not consider that there will be any capacity issue with the new town in place.

It is envisaged that an innovative design approach and exemplary level of investment will deliver a significant increase in the public transport use. A frequent high quality bus service will be provided, with direct links to the key destinations of Bishop's Stortford, Stansted Airport and Stansted Mountfitchet. Quality infrastructure, including bus stops and shelters and interchange facilities together with bus priority will be provided where appropriate, and the option to introduce Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) on the route will be considered. The existing Elsenham bus service is likely to continue to operate, albeit with some minor changes to its routing.

Improvements to Elsenham rail station will be put in place to transform the existing station into a new public transport interchange. The station will become a focal point of the proposed market town with a new station entrance and forecourt. An integrated interchange would be designed with the proposed bus services serving the rail station and connecting with the mainline railway services.

Access to the site will be taken from Henham Road (B1051) with a primary access point just east of Elsenham Cross and a secondary access to the Mill Road junction. Further access points will be provided onto Old Mead Road/North Road and these will allow local traffic to travel through the site and will also provide for journeys to and from the market town towards local destinations north of Elsenham. The majority of traffic generated by the new town will use Hall Road and Parsonage Road to connect to the B1256 at Takeley to access the wider strategic road network, such as the M11 and A120.

A new road will be provided to bypass Elsenham Cross and provide a direct connection from the market town to Hall Road. This would be introduced towards the start of the development implementation. To ensure that Hall Road is suitable to cater for the additional traffic, widening to 6.5m where possible, as agreed with ECC, and safety improvements are proposed along the route. The existing level crossing at Elsenham Station is currently proposed to be closed to vehicular traffic, and this will be diverted through the site via the access points along Old Mead Road and North Hall Road. Additional highway measures are proposed to ensure vehicular traffic follows the assigned routing through Hall Road to access the M11/A120 junction in preference to the B1051 through Stansted Mountfitchet.

In order to manage goods delivery vehicles in a sustainable way and to minimise their impacts as residents and businesses become active within the new market town, a services strategy is proposed. This would be managed by the Elsenham Co-operative Ltd and would link to the Travel Plan.

A parking strategy for the new market town has been designed to strike a balance between ensuring that the on-site provision does not encourage the use of the car without compromising the opportunity for the market town to become a vibrant and commercially successful settlement. All parking provision will be provided in accordance with both national and local policy. Indeed, in recognition of the sustainability credentials of the market town, some parking will be provided at a level that is significantly below the relevant maximum standards.

The sustainable transport strategy will be supported by a Travel Plan. The Travel Plan will seek to reduce the number of car movements through a comprehensive set of travel planning initiatives that will be implemented. These will ensure that the estimated trip characteristics are achieved. Then they can be used to further reduce the number of vehicle trips generated by the new market town.

Following detailed impact assessment of the development traffic flows on the local and strategic road network, a number of mitigation measures have been proposed, where necessary, taking into account all road users as well as safety issues. These include signals at "Toot Toot" bridge on North Hall Road and safety improvements to its junction with the B1383, improvements to junctions and streetscape in Stansted Mountfitchet, upgrading the Takely crossroads and M11 junction 8 and installation of signals at the Hall Road/Coopers End junction. The proposed measures have been developed to keep with the character of the local area and also incorporate appropriate landscaping to seek to reduce any environmental impacts, subject to highway design standards and the requirements of the Local Highway Authority.