

A120 Braintree to Marks Tey Improvement



Public Consultation

February 2005

Introduction

The Highways Agency plans to provide an improved route for the A120 between Braintree and Marks Tey. This brochure summarises the need for the improvement and outlines the proposals.

There will be an exhibition at which representatives from the Highways Agency and its Consulting Engineers, Hyder Consulting, will be available to answer your questions. Details of the venues and dates are given on the back of this brochure.

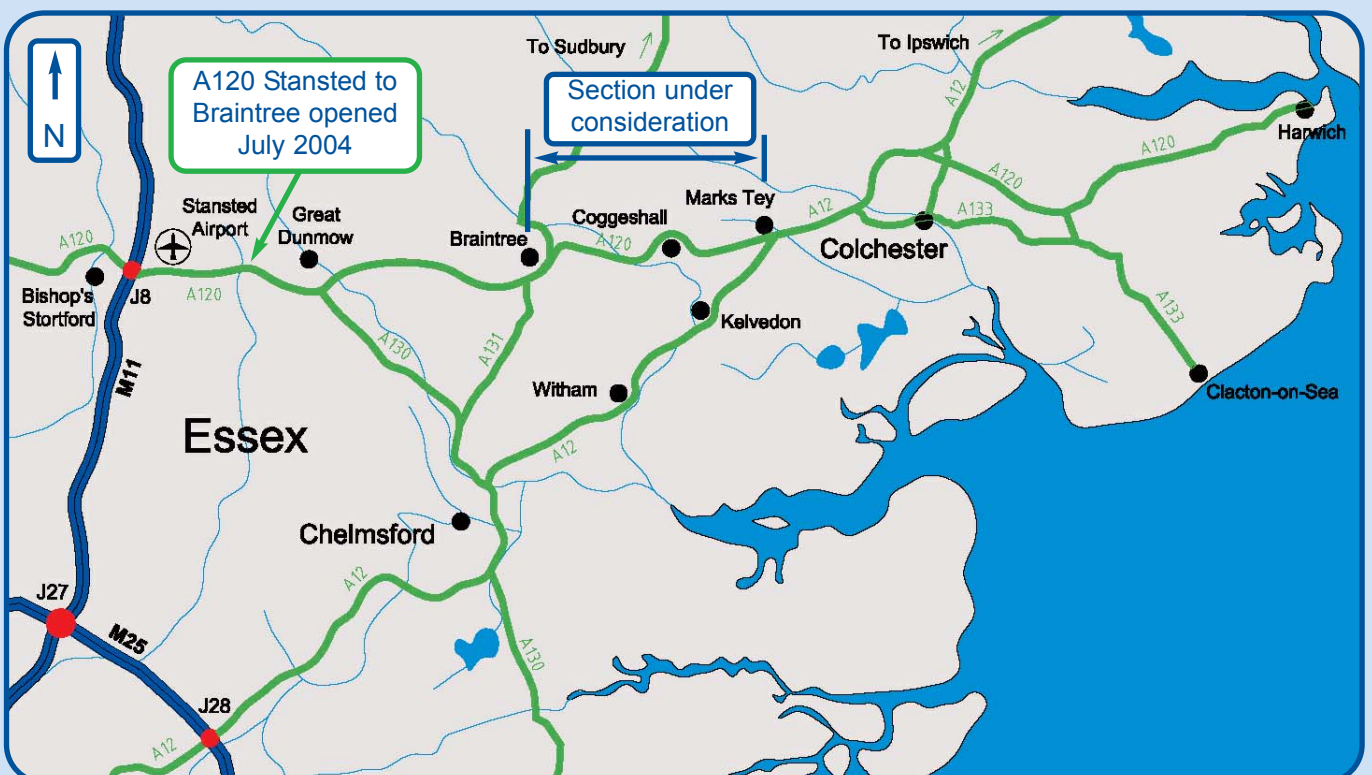
Please note that since the studies are at a preliminary stage, the information, layouts and maps in this leaflet can only be regarded as illustrative.



The Need for the Project

The A120 is an important strategic route between the M11 motorway in the west and the port of Harwich in the east, forming part of the Trans European Road Network (Dublin to Brussels). The section of the A120 between Braintree and Marks Tey currently carries approximately 20,000 vehicles/day and is a single carriageway road. It is estimated that by 2012, this section may carry approximately 25,000 vehicles/day and this could increase to around 30,000 vehicles/day by 2027. However, single carriageway roads can typically carry a maximum of only 23000 vehicles/day.

To the west, an improved dual carriageway route for the A120 from the M11 to Braintree was recently completed. The new junctions feature overpasses or underpasses in order to minimise delays and provide safer junctions. To the east, the section of the A120 around Colchester is already a dual carriageway, with overpasses or underpasses at junctions. The section of the existing A120 from Braintree to the A12 Trunk Road at Marks Tey passes through the village of Bradwell and several hamlets. There are tight bends at the Coggeshall Bypass and a poor safety record at certain locations. There are numerous driveways and local roads with direct access to the A120, which cause congestion and safety problems, particularly at peak times.





Project Objectives

The objectives of the project are to:

- Provide a high standard route, reduce congestion and delays
- Reduce the impact of through traffic on communities along the route
- Improve safety for all road users
- Minimise impact on the built and natural environment
- Improve access to everyday facilities for non-motorised users

Four route options have been considered which are shown on the main plan. Preliminary studies include assessments of the combined economic, social and environmental costs and benefits. The assessments indicate that the greatest benefits and best value would be obtained by the construction of a new carriageway between the Braintree Bypass and the A12 near Feering, together with the widening of the A12 from the new junction to Marks Tey. The length of the proposed new section of the A120 is approximately 14km, with a further 6km of improvements to the A12. The route would pass to the north of Silver End and Feering. The preliminary studies also indicate that the combined benefits of the proposal, shown on the main plan of this document, would significantly outweigh the costs. This option has therefore been put forward as the proposal.

Safety

Records show that there were 329 reported personal injury accidents between 31st December 1999 and 30th November 2004 in the vicinity of the A120 and the A12 from Braintree Bypass to Marks Tey.

Most of these accidents occurred at junctions along the route. The provision of a dual carriageway with overpasses or underpasses at junctions will reduce the potential for vehicle collisions and deliver substantial safety improvements. The proposals would significantly reduce traffic on the existing A120, thereby improving safety along this route.

Environmental Considerations

The proposal would provide benefits to many people living near the existing A120, by taking much of the traffic away from these residential areas. Effective use of low noise road surfacing, along with planting and environmental barriers where appropriate will help to reduce the effects of noise and screen views from properties in the vicinity of the new dual carriageway. These measures will be illustrated at the exhibition.

The proposal would not directly affect any designated areas of environmental interest and the majority of the land taken would be from arable farmland areas, with generally low ecological value. The proposal has been designed to minimise the loss of hedgerows, and any loss would be compensated for by new planting. If any protected species would be directly affected, they would be relocated in a suitable habitat prior to construction. The proposal crosses the River Brain and the River Blackwater, where the potential impact on the river floodplains would be minimised through careful design of structures and drainage. Some public rights of way may need to be diverted or safe crossings provided as part of the scheme.



Exhibition Details

The Exhibition will provide further details of the proposal, including landscaping and other environmental benefits.

Venues and Dates

Braintree

Date: Friday 4th February 2005
Time: 2pm - 8pm
Location: St Pauls C of E Church
St Pauls Parsonage
Hay Lane South
Braintree
CM7 1EY

Coggeshall

Date: Saturday 5th February 2005
Time: 10am - 5pm
Location: St Peters Community Hall
Stoneham St
Coggeshall
Colchester
Essex CO6 0RD

Kelvedon

Date: Friday 11th February 2005
Time: 1pm - 8pm
Location: Kelvedon Institute
78 High Street
Kelvedon

Marks Tey

Date: Saturday 12th February 2005
Time: 10am - 4pm
Location: St Andrews Church
Church Lane
Marks Tey
CO6 1LW

What Happens Next?

After carefully considering all comments and representations the Secretary of State for Transport will seek the views of the Region on how the scheme relates to regional priority. The Secretary of State will then decide on a preferred route and entry into the Targeted Programme for Improvements. Following detailed design and further assessment, draft Statutory Orders will be published under the Highways Act. Only when these Orders are approved by the Secretary of State can land be acquired and the scheme be built. If there are objections to the Orders, a public inquiry will be held and an independent inspector will recommend whether or not the scheme should go ahead.

Provisional Programme

Public Consultation & Reporting	2005
Preferred Route Announcement	2006
Orders Publication	2007
Public Inquiry (if required)	2008
Detailed Design	2010
Construction	2011
Opening	2013

Dates are illustrative only and are subject to approval and availability of funds.

Your Views

Your views are important to us. Please comment on the proposals by completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire (no stamp required) before Friday 20th May 2005. Alternatively you can write to the Highways Agency at the postal or e-mail addresses shown.

The information you send us may need to be passed to colleagues within the Agency or agents acting on our behalf and/or published in a summary of responses received in response to this consultation. We will assume that you are content for us to do this. Please ensure that if you want your name or response to be kept confidential, you state this clearly in your response. (Confidential responses will be included in any statistical summary of numbers of comments received and views expressed.) If you are replying by e-mail, your consent overrides any confidentiality disclaimer that is generated by your organisation's IT system, unless you specifically include a request to the contrary in the main text of your submission to us.

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The Highways Agency Information Line:
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Further copies of this leaflet are available from:
Highways Agency Publications,
Telephone 0870 1226 236.
Please quote reference number: HA30/05

This leaflet has been prepared in accordance with the principles of the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Consultation. A copy of the criteria is available on request or is available on the Cabinet Office's website at:
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/Consultation/Code.asp