

# A127 Economic Growth Corridor Task Force

December 2020

Via Microsoft Teams



# Welcome and Apologies

# Agenda

1. Review of Previous Actions
2. Timeline / Project Milestones
3. Working Group Update
4. Project Updates
  - a) Re-Trunking
    - i. Revamped A127 webpage
    - ii. Draft Brochure
    - iii. Next steps
  - b) Interfacing Projects
    - i. A127 Major Road Network bids  
(Warley, Halfway House, Fortune of War and Pound Lane)
    - ii. Basildon Air Quality
5. Any Other Business and Future Items

# Review of Previous Actions

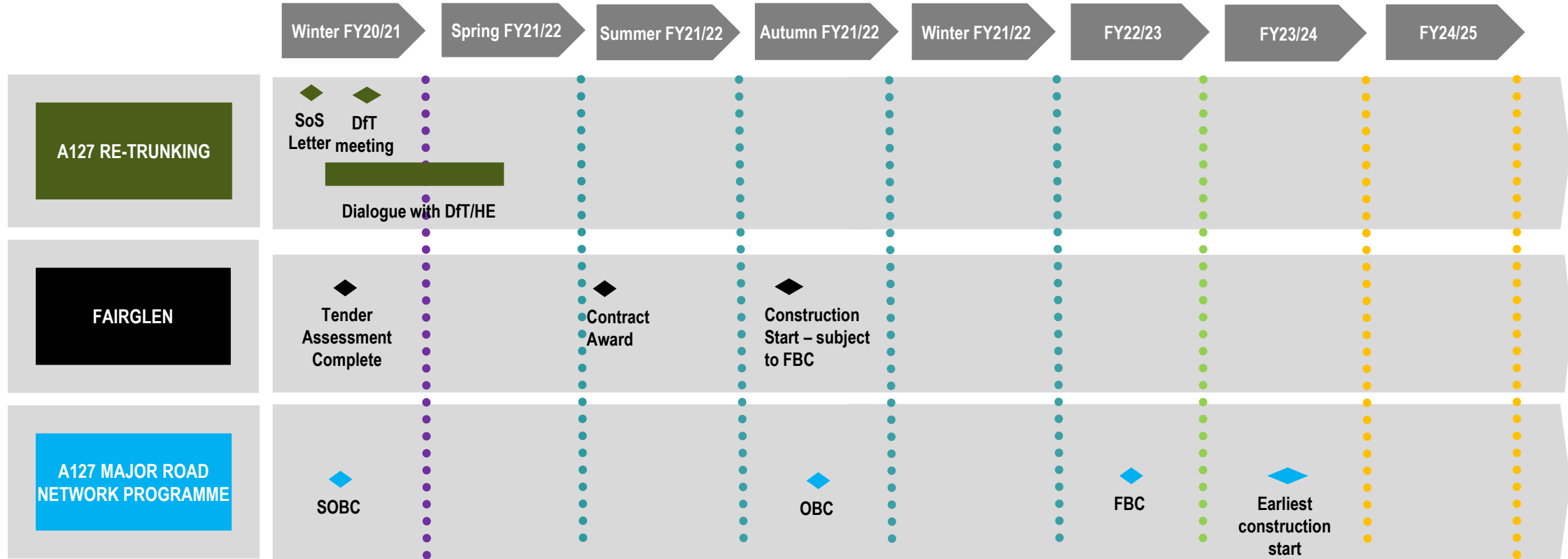
## *Previous Task Force Meetings:* **Completed**

### *Task Force 6 (October 2020):*

- TF6 Meeting Minutes uploaded onto A127 Webpage - **Completed**
- Invite a representative from OSE to future Working Group meetings - **Completed**
- Update A127 Webpage to provide a public-friendly roadmap of the re-trunking journey – **Completed**
- Report back to Members on proposed cycling improvements at Fairglen – **In progress Evidence of justification for exclusion of northern footbridge being compiled**
- Future timelines to display Re-trunking at the top level - **Completed**
- Ensure Rail Infrastructure was an agenda item at future Working Group meeting – **In Progress – Next Working Group invite and agenda being developed**
- Develop timetable for future meetings **Partially Complete** – Timetable produced for Task Force and Working Group up to April 2021 – Hold invites yet to be issued

# Timeline / Project Milestones

# Combined A127 projects milestone tracker



# Working Group Update

# Working Group Update

- Working Group meeting No.2 held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020
- Key points raised in response from Roads Minister
  - The Government recognises the importance of the road network in South Essex to road users, the economy of the area and the communities who live along and around it. In the case of the A127, its regional significance is such that it is part of the Major Road Network (MRN).
  - It is desirable from DfT that roads are managed at the appropriate level this means preferring roads to be locally managed by authorities accountable to local people, and only trunking those routes that perform a clearly strategic national role.
  - Consideration is needed of the future role of the A127 and A13 in particular, but may also encompass other roads such as the A130 and the most appropriate way of bringing Basildon and Southend onto the SRN,
  - **A collaborative approach to this work is the right way forward. As a first step DfT officials, alongside colleagues from Highways England, meet with ECC to exchange ideas and information.**
  - Any decision to proceed with trunking relies on a substantial file of evidence about asset condition, traffic flows, local growth plans, environmental and air quality conditions, aspirations for route enhancements, and consideration of the best location for the new SRN boundary.
  - Intentions to continue to pursue MRN funding for priority schemes is correct.
  - Further caution that trunking is no guarantee that issues on a given route can be addressed any faster than if they remain part of the MRN.



# Working Group Update

- Actions

- Draft and submit response letter to the Roads Minister
- Engage with DfT officials to commence collaborative approach for consideration of future network management in Essex
  - ☑ Initial correspondence issued to DfT 25.11.2020
  - ☑ Positive response received from DfT offering the opportunity to feed into the development of the overall network extent programme in early 2021
- A130 & A13 key strategic corridors – consideration of including these or combinations in trunking programme

# Project Updates

# Re-trunking

- Initial web update made [www.A127.co.uk](http://www.A127.co.uk)
- Sections include:
  - Importance of A127
  - Future of A127
  - Timeline
  - Problems
  - Task Force
  - Current projects
- Further updates to be made once process, timescales and campaign details are agreed

The screenshot shows a website page titled "A127 Economic Growth Corridor". It features a navigation bar at the top with a back arrow and the title. Below the navigation bar, there are two columns of text boxes. The left column is titled "Why is the A127 economic growth corridor so important?" and contains text about the corridor's role in the region, its current state, and future plans. The right column is titled "What next for the A127?" and discusses the need for further investment and the role of the task force. Below the text boxes, there are three aerial photographs showing different sections of the A127 road. At the bottom of the page, there is a purple box titled "Timeline" which lists key events from 1925 to 2025.

**Why is the A127 economic growth corridor so important?**

The A127 links the coastal towns through South Essex, providing a vital link between London and SouthEast and connecting large centres of population and industry with coastal tourism hotspot.

More than 25,000 vehicles a day use some sections of the A127 - making it the busiest non-motor road in Essex and second from north of the UK.

South Essex already boasts major ports and an international airport, while two nationally significant infrastructure projects (HS2/PC) are on the way - the proposed London Tilbury Crossing and a Crossrail terminal.

It is also a national priority growth area and there is an ambitious vision for the future, including the creation of over 100,000 new jobs by 2025, the construction of 15,000 new homes by 2025 and a 2.1% extra income in the area's contribution to the UK economy.

**What next for the A127?**

Although some junction improvements are already planned, far greater investment is needed to upgrade the A127 and unlock South Essex's huge economic growth potential.

However, within Essex County Council and Thurrock Council, the highest authorities for the roads - have the budgets required to the scale of improvements that are so badly needed.

Together with our partners, we are therefore building the case for the A127 to be re-developed as a trunk road and managed as part of Highways England's Strategic Road Network - a vital first step in securing the investment it needs.

**Timeline**

1925 - The single carriageway A127 is opened by Private Finance of Gloucester.

1948 - The A127 is widened to a dual carriageway.

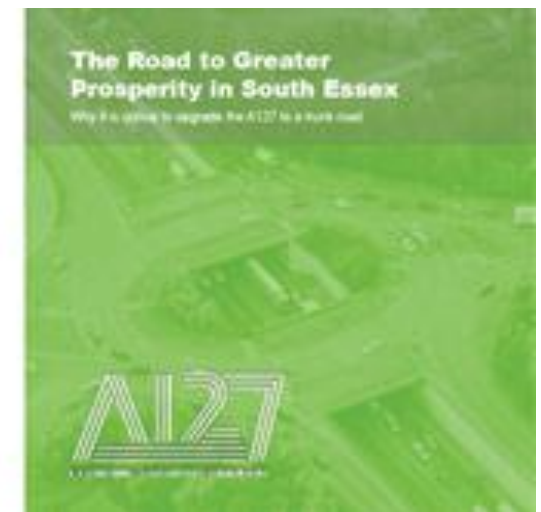
1987 - The A127 is de-trunked, having formerly been classified as a trunk road.

2005 - A Task Force is established to develop a long term vision for the A127 corridor.

2025 - A campaign is launched to make the case for the A127 to be re-trunked in order to attract future investment.

# Re-trunking

- Draft brochure developed
- Currently focused on issues and need for investment in A127
- Challenging to communicate benefits without known preferred scheme(s)
- Content includes current problems, South Essex growth figures, the case for re-trunking and next steps



# Re-trunking

## Next Steps

- Set up meeting with DfT to feed into network extent programme
- Refresh evidence submitted in 2018, based on feedback from collaboration meetings including:
  - A127 asset registers
  - Consideration of alternative trunked routes
  - Traffic Flows
  - Local Growth Plans
  - Environmental and Air Quality conditions
  - Aspirations for route enhancements – previous work to feed in (similar to A120)
  - Consideration of Lower Thames Crossing impact
  - Scale of productivity in South Essex
  - Proportion of HGVs - linked with productivity

# Interfacing Projects

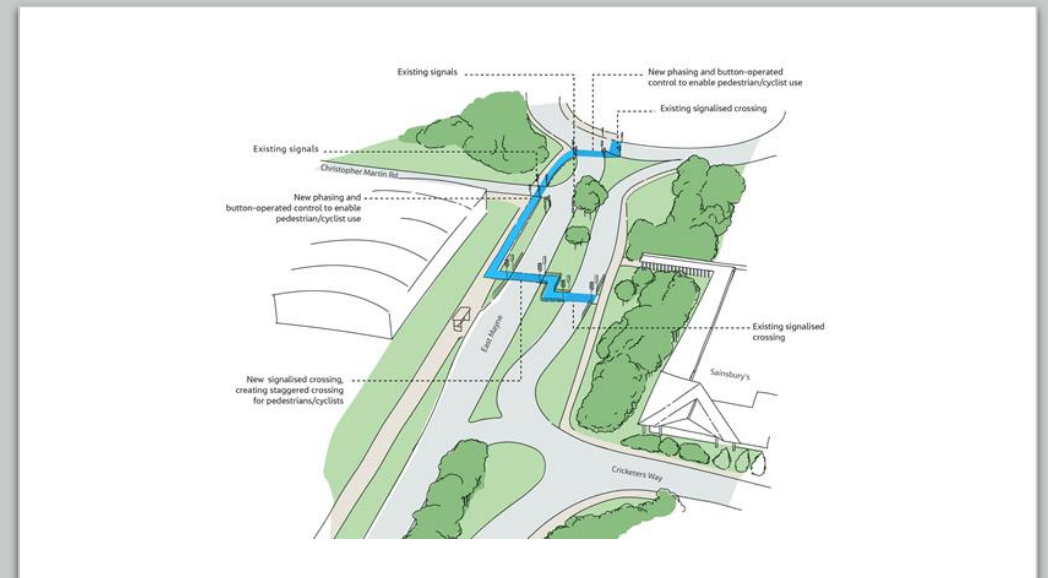
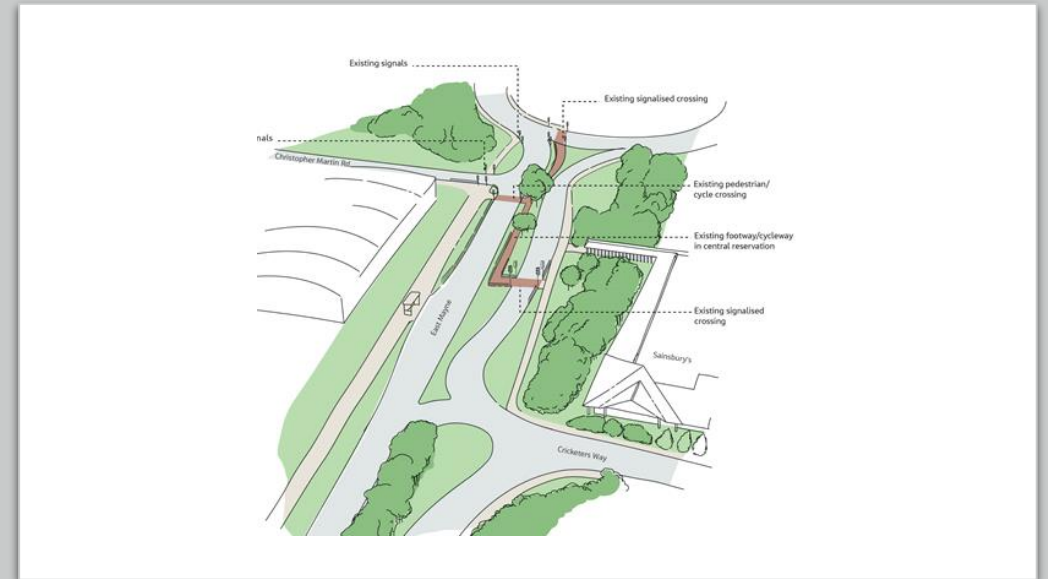
## A127 Major Road Network (MRN) Bid Progress

- Hosted the Problems and Objectives workshop using a virtual whiteboard to maximise interaction with the participants;
  - Over 20 people attended and participated
  - Dozens of problems and a handful of objectives for each junction recorded
  - Currently compiling a refined list of problems and indicative set of objectives before commencing the option generation and appraisal stages
- Completion of South Essex base and forecast models
- Draft response compiled following DfT's review of our option appraisal methodology
  - Involved completion of Local Model Validation Report and Data Collection Report
  - Submission of reports and responses by mid-December, DfT meeting January

# Interfacing Projects

## Basildon Air Quality

- Public engagement on preferred option to resolve air quality exceedances in East Mayne, Basildon
- Proposals focus on reducing people's exposure to pollution and would achieve compliance with legal air quality levels in 2022
- Updating on project, proposed scheme and wider efforts to encourage cleaner travel in Basildon
- Online brochure at [www.essex.gov.uk/airquality](http://www.essex.gov.uk/airquality)
- Survey live until 13 December 2020





**Any Other Business & Future Items**



## Agreement on timeline of future meetings

TASK FORCE	WORKING GROUP
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> Jan @ 9:30-10:30	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 11:30-12:30
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> February 9:30-10:30	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> February 12-1PM
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> April 9:30-10:30	Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> March 1-2PM