

A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System

Consultation Report

19.02.20

Document Control Sheet

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Report Title	A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System – Consultation Report
Project Number	B355363A
Document Number	1
Status	Final
Revision	4
Control Date	19.02.20

Record of Issue

Issue	Status	Author	Date	Check	Date	Review	Date
1	Draft	SP	31.01.20	JP	31.01.20	SA	31.01.20
2	Draft	SP	05.02.20	JP	05.02.20	SA	05.02.20
3	Draft	SP	10.02.20	JP	10.02.20	SA	10.02.20
4	Final	SP	19.02.20	JP	19.02.20	SA	19.02.20

Approved for issue by	Date
MM	19.02.20

Distribution

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 The overall picture

Colchester is the largest employment centre in North Essex with significant proposed housing and business growth.

The historic town has 50,000 people commuting in and out daily, more than any other borough district in Essex.

More than half the people leaving Tendring are commuting into Colchester and, as such, congestion is already a major issue for the town's residents and businesses.

To cater for future housing growth in this part of Essex, it is necessary to provide a Link Road between the A120 and A133 as well as a Rapid Transit System.

This project was the subject of a successful Housing Infrastructure Fund bid covering the construction of the Link Road and elements of the RTS (and terminals) as well as one out of two possible 'Park and Choose' sites.

The A120 and A133 provide vital transport links across this part of Essex. The A120 connects towns from east to west as well as linking into the A12 - a major freight route through Essex and Suffolk - with the A133 as the main commuter route from Clacton-on-Sea into Colchester.

The A120-A133 Link Road would run from the A120 in the north and A133 in the south. It is required to provide additional highway capacity to serve proposed development areas and provide some relief to the existing local road network, thus generating capacity in the wider strategic network.

It comprises over 2km of dual carriageway with a grade separated junction where it meets the A120 and at grade junction at the A133 end.

Linking the A120 and A133 with a new road will unlock land to provide housing and will improve connectivity locally and within the wider region.

It will also serve new Park and Choose sites and relieve traffic going to the University of Essex and its Knowledge Gateway technology and research park. Both are major employers and key contributors to the local and UK economy.

The RTS is an essential part of the growth strategy and has the potential of unlocking further new homes. The RTS links the University of Essex, through the Knowledge Gateway employment zone to Colchester Town Centre and key destinations including the rail stations and hospital.

Provision of a high-quality RTS with dedicated sections and priority measures at key junctions will provide reliable and improved journey times. The solution will provide a public transport alternative and is fundamental to the planned longer-term modal shift strategy.

1.2 Consultation

In order to support route selection a proactive engagement approach is being adopted to enable the general public to input into the decision-making process.

As part of this, during a six-week period - **Monday 04 November to Monday 16 December** - Essex County Council (ECC) consulted on route options for the proposed Link Road between the A120 and A133 (Link Road) and proposals for the new Rapid Transit System (RTS) to run between North Colchester and the proposed future growth area on the Colchester/Tendring border.

During the consultation there were seven public events held locally to allow stakeholders to view and discuss the proposals and meet different technical leads from the project team.

Approximately 200 people took part directly by attending the events and the consultation received **136 responses** in total.

1.3 Link Road

Four Link Road options were put forward for the consultation - Option 1A, 1C, 1D and 3.

All comprised between 2.1 and 2.3km of a dual carriageway, a grade separated junction at the A120 and at-grade junction at A133.

The first three options are varying versions of each other. Option 3 included an intermediate roundabout and also provided direct access to Bromley Road.

Two alternative locations for the A133 at-grade junction were also provided as part of the Link Road consultation.

From comments at the consultation and subsequent analysis, it was found that there was a clear preference for Link Road Options 1C and 1D over Option 3 and Option 1A, with 1C identified as the Option that had least impact on residents, communities and woodland.

There was also notable opposition to Option 3 in response to open questions and email responses which could not be identified with closed questions alone.

The analysis of responses indicates that there was on the whole no significant preference for either the eastern or western A133 junction options. However, the Western option is further away from Elmstead Market village and was seen as affecting fewer residential properties.

Frequently discussed topics included the scheme options, impact on the community, resident and businesses, the scheme design, the environmental impact, planning, transport and walking, cycling and horse riding (WCH).

Tendring District Council, Colchester Borough Council and North Essex Garden Community (NEGC) indicated that they preferred Option 1A, C and D to Option 3. They also had a major concern about Option 3 because it ran through a large part of the potential development area and, therefore, impact on the ability to deliver their planned homes.

1.4 Rapid Transit System

The RTS comprises four sections. Section A, B, C and D.

Section A was not part of the consultation as it already had planning approval. However, it was included in the consultation materials for information because the proposed RTS Section A was a variation of the approved plan. Section D was also not part of consultation as it sits within the new growth area and will be developed as part of a wider masterplan.

Three options were put forward for consultation on Section B - Option 1, Option 2 and Option 5. In addition, 3 options were provided for Section C- Option 1, Option 2 and Option 3.

The largest group of respondents (30%) chose Option 5, as the best for Section B. Responses considered the RTS concept, the scheme design, environmental impact, planning, transport and walking cycling and horse riding (WCH).

There were generally no clear preferences indicated for Section C options. However, the University of Essex preferred option 1, because it provided access to its campus.

1.5 Conclusion

The consultation showed majority agreement that Colchester needed new infrastructure with most people agreeing that the schemes would have a positive impact and support housing and business growth.

The consultation indicated some clear preferences in relation to the link road options, while responses to the RTS options were less conclusive.

This is further explained in the following report which sets out in detail:

- The proposals that were subject to the consultation
- The approach to and publicity for the consultation
- Specific questions asked during the consultation
- Feedback and analysis from the consultation
- Materials used in the consultation

2 Introduction

2.1 Background Information

Earlier this year ECC successfully bid for 'Housing Infrastructure Funding' to help support planned housing growth across the county.

Essex's bids total more than £500 million and cover vital transport infrastructure improvements across Essex. To enable the delivery of sustainable planned growth, it is necessary to provide improved transport infrastructure to support additional traffic flows and enhance the connectivity of future developments. In August 2019 it was announced that the A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System scheme had been successful in securing funding, supporting the growth proposed on the eastern side of Colchester.

Colchester is the largest employment centre in North Essex with significant proposed housing and business growth. It currently has 50,000 people commuting in and out of the borough daily, more than any other borough or district in Essex. More than half the people leaving Tendring are commuting into Colchester and congestion around peak times can be a major issue for the town's residents and businesses. The A120 and A133, which pass to the north and south of the proposed new community provide vital transport links across this part of Essex. The A120 connects the Port of Harwich and towns from east to west, as well as linking into the A12 - a major freight route through Essex and Suffolk - with the A133 as the main commuter route from Clacton-on-Sea into Colchester.

2.2 The schemes

Linking the A120 and A133 with a new road will unlock land to provide housing and business space, improving connectivity locally and within the wider region. It will serve a new Park and Choose site and manage traffic congestion going to Colchester Town Centre, the University of Essex and its Knowledge Gateway Technology and Research Park.

The Link Road will connect two major roads, the A120 and the A133. It manages congestion by increasing highway capacity on the strategic road network, providing a direct connection between the A120 and the east of Colchester. This removes the need for traffic to travel through the centre of Colchester along heavily used routes such as Ipswich Road.

The Link Road will help facilitate proposed housing and business growth, serving as the primary highway access to the proposed new community. It will provide connectivity and manage traffic flows on the local and strategic road network as the development grows, distributing traffic onto the A120 and A133. It will also function alongside the RTS to allow the movement of people into and out of any new development.

The consultation looked at two separate options for the Link Road with different variants on the following:

- A120 Junction positions.
- A133 Junction positions.
- Option 1A, 1C, 1D and Option 3.

A Rapid Transit System (RTS) that will prioritise public transport on a key route through Colchester. It will enable housing and business growth, allowing new and existing residents to benefit from frequent, high-quality, reliable transport connecting to the key destinations within the town. This type of system has been proven successful in other towns and cities such as Belfast, helping create a shift away from car travel.

Within the consultation the RTS was split into 4 sections, A, B, C and D.

Section A was not consulted on in this round as the proposal had already been adopted in the emerging Local Plan and previously achieved planning permission and developer contributions. Section A begins at the Park and Ride at Junction 28 on the A12. It routes south to the centre of Colchester town meeting Section B at the Albert Roundabout.

Section B continues the route from Middleborough and travels through Colchester Town Centre, extending eastward out towards The University of Essex. Three options were consulted on.

Section C Section C extends from Greenstead Roundabout to the proposed new community east of Colchester. It splits into three options towards the University, using the current A133 down to the link road and routing directly into the new development site from Clingoe Hill. All three would finish at a new Park and Choose site and it is likely that they will all be taken forward and used in phased delivery.

Section D would cover the RTS routing within the proposed new development. The interaction with the remainder of the route and the existing network cannot be finalised until the plans are confirmed. The section D route would be designed alongside any future development masterplan for the proposed community.

The system will also service a new **Park and Choose** site on the proposed new community east of Colchester and help to better connect future growth areas with the rest of the town. Park and Choose uses the principle of Park and Ride with the ability to function as a hub for different types of sustainable and active transport in order to access the nearby town centre and employment sites. These sites could incorporate ride sharing, e-bikes, bike lockers and stands, footpath developments, and other environmentally friendly modes and measures.

3 Consultation

The consultation was launched on **Monday 04 November** and ran for six weeks, closing on **Monday 16 December**.

The consultation was held with the aim of giving all interested parties the opportunity to inform the decision-making process, and was targeted at local residents, businesses, stakeholder groups and those that use the local road network.

At this stage of the process, viable route options for both the Link Road and RTS have been identified or disregarded, and the consultation material explained this filtering process.

Presenting identified route options along with the pros and cons for each option and the accompanying technical information provided the public with the opportunity to give their views and provide insight that can further help the detailed design.

At this stage all options being considered were viable with no preference stated.

3.1 Events

During the consultation there were seven public events held locally to allow stakeholders to view and discuss the proposals and meet different technical leads from the project team. Recognising the proposals were of interest to a number of nearby villages and communities, venues were selected in areas accessible to a number of the local villages. Details of the public consultation events are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Public information event calendar

Location	Address	Date	Time
Wivenhoe House	University of Essex Colchester Campus, Park Rd, Wivenhoe, Colchester CO4 3SQ	Tuesday 12 November	1pm-8pm
Greenstead Community Centre	Hawthorn Ave, Colchester CO4 3QE	Friday 15 November	1pm-6pm
St Johns Church and Community Centre	St John's Church, St John's Cl, Colchester CO4 0HP	Thursday 21 November	1pm-8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	United Way, Colchester CO4 5UP	Saturday 23 November	10am-5pm
Wivenhoe House	University of Essex Colchester Campus, Park Rd, Wivenhoe, Colchester CO4 3SQ	Monday 25 November	1pm-8pm
William Loveless Hall	High St, Wivenhoe, Colchester CO7 9AB	Tuesday 03 December	11:30am-6pm
Colchester Community Stadium	United Way, Colchester CO4 5UP	Monday 09 December	1pm-8pm

3.2 Promotion of consultation

To support the consultation a number of channels were used to promote the events and encourage participation. The approach taken has been shared and approved with Homes England as one of the key partners in the allocation of the Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF).

Website – All the information shown at the events was available through the scheme website Essex.gov.uk/link-road-and-rapid-transit. This included background to the scheme, a summary of the proposal, the need for the scheme, how to get involved, project timeline, the event information (including venue, address, date and time), A PDF web copy of the consultation brochure, and supporting documents such as options technical notes and Environmental Risk Assessments.

Brochure – The consultation brochure took the technical options reports for both the Link Road and the Rapid Transit System and summarised them in a non-technical format for the public to read. It introduced the project and explained options which had been disregarded, defined each viable option and set out the positives and negatives to ensure that stakeholders could make informed comments in their feedback. The consultation questionnaire was included at the back of the brochure with a freepost address for those that wanted to complete a hard copy.

Supporting documents – The supporting documents were uploaded to the scheme website. Reading the supporting documents was not a requirement to providing feedback to the consultation. Instead these were provided to give context to how the technical teams developed options. All the information presented in these reports were summarised into the consultation brochure. These documents were also available at the events as physical reference copies and were used to facilitate conversation with stakeholders.

Email to stakeholders – At the launch of the consultation an email was sent to a list of identified stakeholders. Stakeholders were identified through a mapping exercise and categorised as political, community, business, walking, cycling and equestrian based groups, emergency services, environmental, heritage, traffic generators, equality, diversity and inclusion groups, transport organisations.

Libraries / Community Centres / Town Hall – Copies of the consultation brochure were delivered to several deposit point locations, enabling those unable to access the website the opportunity to participate. Details of the deposit points are shown in the table below. These details were sent to identified stakeholders such as community groups and charities, businesses, local authorities, parish councils and local councillors.

Table 2: Public brochure deposit points

Location	Address
Brochures available for reference	
Colchester Library	Trinity Square, Colchester, CO1 1JB
Prettygate Library	Prettygate Road, Colchester, CO3 4EQ
Greenstead Library	Hawthorn Avenue, Colchester, CO4 3QE
Hythe Community Centre	1 Ventura Dr, Hythe, Colchester CO1 2FG
Old Heath Community Centre	D'Arcy Rd, Colchester CO2 8BB
The Community Hall Abbots	39 Ladbrook Dr, Colchester CO2 8RW
Colchester Town Hall	High St, Colchester CO1 1PJ
Brochures available to pick up	
Colchester Town Hall	High St, Colchester CO1 1PJ

Social media – On Twitter the Essex Highways account was the primary channel used, with information posted ahead of each event. Boosted posts were also used to amplify reach. Partners were also asked to share information, these included:

ECC, Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council, University of Essex, North Essex Garden Communities Ltd, South Essex Local Enterprise Partnership, Haven Gateway Partnership and the Essex Chamber of Commerce each posted or shared about the consultation / events. The ECC Facebook page was also used to promote the individual events.

Press release – the consultation launch was accompanied by a press release to the local press and was covered by the East Anglian Daily Time and the Colchester Gazette. A follow up was posted in the Gazette to announce an additional date added in Wivenhoe. The Gazette also covered the consultation and events via their social media accounts.

Newspaper advertising – Through the consultation four quarter page adverts were placed within the Colchester Gazette on the 8/11, 20/11, 22/11 and 3/12 to advertise the consultation events and the available feedback options.

Landowner letters - One-to-one meetings with the Project Manager and ECC'S Council's land agents were offered to landowners directly impacted by the options. This saw 8 landowners attend, as well as two residential properties who had requested a meeting at an earlier stage. These meetings took place on **Thursday 28 November 2019** and gave those impacted an opportunity to introduce Lambert Smith Hampton as the ECC's land agent.

ECC customer contact centre – A contact centre brief was developed and sent to the Essex Contact Centre for their phone operators to use if they received any calls regarding the scheme or consultation.

Letters to stakeholders – In response to feedback from residents close to one of the options given at our first event the team sent out a letter to addresses close to the scheme inviting

them to come to the events and provide their feedback. These letters were sent on **15 November 2019 to 19 addresses** identified as being within 200m of the potential scheme boundary whom had not been contacted previously as a directly impacted landowner letter.

Respondents by area

Figure 1: Map showing respondents by postcode

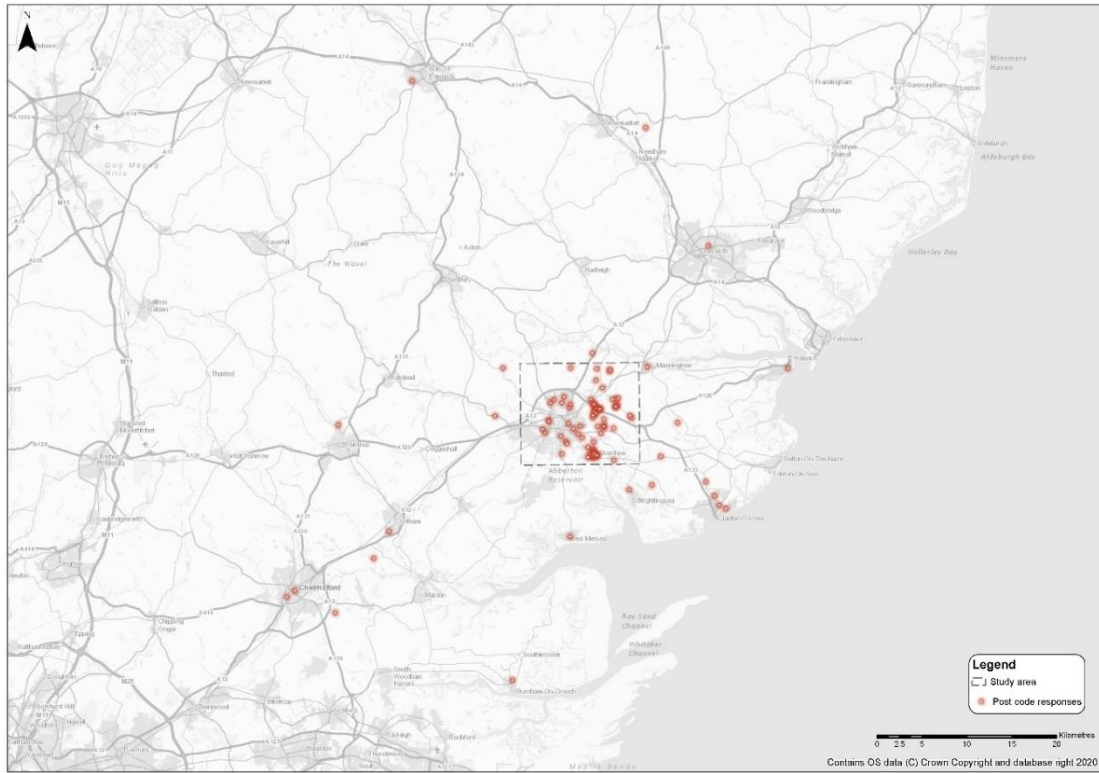


Figure 2: Map showing respondents by postcode (zoomed view)

3.3 Questionnaire

The questionnaire contained 18 questions regarding the two schemes. There was a mixture of closed questions to allow for the capture of information and open questions to gather respondents' views.

Personal information and demographic questions were also included to aid understanding of who had responded.

The responses and feedback given will feed into the process of route selection and also enable the technical teams to progress the more detailed design work.

3.4 Methods of responding

The consultation had three official channels which were open to responses.

1. **Online questionnaire:** Available on the scheme website essex.gov.uk/Link-Road-and-Rapid-Transit.
2. **FREEPOST address:** Detailed in the brochure and on the website for anyone to send in paper copies of the response form located at the back of the brochure or their own letters without charge.
3. **Email address:** Detailed in the brochure and on the website.

3.5 Data protection, confidentiality and anonymity

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The following statement was published in the consultation brochure and on the ECC website prior to respondents being asked for their personal information:

"This questionnaire is for you to provide information to be used by the A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System project. Under the GDPR we have a legal duty to protect any information we collect from you. The information will only be used for the purposes of this project and will not be kept longer than is necessary to do so, up to a maximum of five years. We share this information with our partners Jacobs and Ringway Jacobs but we will not share your personal details with any other agency unless we have concerns that you or another individual may be at risk of harm or if it is required by law. We do not collect personal information for commercial purposes.

If you would like to find out more about how Essex County Council uses personal data, please go to www.essex.gov.uk/link-road-and-rapid-transit or call 03457 430 430.

Essex County Council has a Data Protection Officer who makes sure we respect your rights and follow the law. If you have any concerns or questions about how we look after your personal information, please contact the Data Protection Officer at DPO@essex.gov.uk or by calling 03457 430 430 and asking to speak to the Data Protection Officer."

Collecting responses

To ensure that personal information and responses were kept secure access to the data was held solely by the project engagement team. Responses online were logged on an access-controlled site, any responses via email were directed to an access-controlled inbox, and responses to the FREEPOST address were sent directly to the same team.

The spreadsheet of responses on which the analysis is carried out is password protected on an access-controlled server.

Personal and demographic information in this report is anonymised.

Diversity and Equality

The following statement was published in the consultation brochure and the ECC website prior to respondents being asked for demographic information:

In order to ensure the continued development of our Diversity and Equality practices, everyone that we work with is asked to complete the information below. You are not obliged to answer any of the questions, but the more information you supply, the more effective our monitoring will be. If you choose not to answer questions, it will not affect your participation. The information you supply below is confidential and will be used solely for monitoring purposes.

4 Data analysis and interpretation of data

4.1 Sample

The target population for the questionnaire were people who live, spend leisure time, work and/or travel in and around Colchester and Tendring however it was open to all interested parties.

It should be noted that those who respond to a consultation are a self-selecting sample, made up of those who have chosen to respond. Responses provide a picture of views and issues of those who respond. This provides an invaluable insight into concerns and issues around a proposal, but these views may be skewed to a particular viewpoint and should not be considered a representative sample of the population.

Notwithstanding this, all comments have been noted and considered, this rationale has been communicated for transparency and to illustrate how statistical significance is measured.

4.2 Quantitative analysis

Quantitative data analysis will be done on closed questions. This is data where numerical value and percentages can be applied to respondents' answers. It is relatively straightforward to compare and contrast opinions and preferences with closed questions.

4.3 Qualitative analysis and Insight

Qualitative data analysis will be done on open questions. This is data where no numerical value can be applied as each answer is different. In order to effectively assess responses, themed codes have been applied which pick out key re-occurring concerns or opportunities.

These codes are used to guide reporting and to give an understanding of the comparative regularity and frequency of themes and issues being raised. The codes are not intended to be, and would not be appropriate for, carrying out statistical comparisons.

5 Respondents and responses

5.1 Responses by channel

- Online questionnaire – 86
- Physical brochure questionnaire (by FREEPOST/Email/to hand at event) – 8
- Email – 42
 - Total 136

5.2 Event debriefs

Each event included a staff debrief in order to identify key conversations and information gathered by staff at the events. Below is a top three of the most common discussions:

- Concern with Link Road Option 3 from many attendees from Jubilee Lane, Bromley Rd and Ardleigh due to the impact on nearby residences, community and businesses.
- Some stakeholders concerned how the RTS will interact with existing infrastructure to become 'Rapid' as described.
- Some wanted clarity around the A120 junction and why existing infrastructure was not factored into the design.

5.3 Parish Councils and community groups

As well as members of the public there were responses from three Parish Councils; Great Bromley, Ardleigh and Elmstead.

All comments made related specifically to the Link Road. Although out of the scope of this consultation the responses highlighted concerns more related to the Local Plan process and whether the Link Road would form the boundary of the proposed new development.

The environmental impacts were also highlighted, particularly the importance of protecting woodland at Strawberry Grove.

One Parish Council had specific queries in relation to the use of existing infrastructure and the structure of the consultation. In response to this ECC officers attended a Parish Council meeting to take further questions.

There were six responses from community, heritage or action groups including, Crockleford and Elmstead Action Group, Colchester Civic Society, Wivenhoe Society, Colchester Natural History Society, Colchester Cycling Campaign, and the Transport and Health Science Group.

A response was also provided by the University of Essex and two responses from local developers.

These organisations / bodies all raised points on both the Link Road and RTS proposals, with the positioning of junctions, impact on existing communities, congestion, maintaining protected lanes and an increased focus on walking and cycling all highlighted.

These responses will feed into the design process and have formed part of the qualitative analysis undertaken.

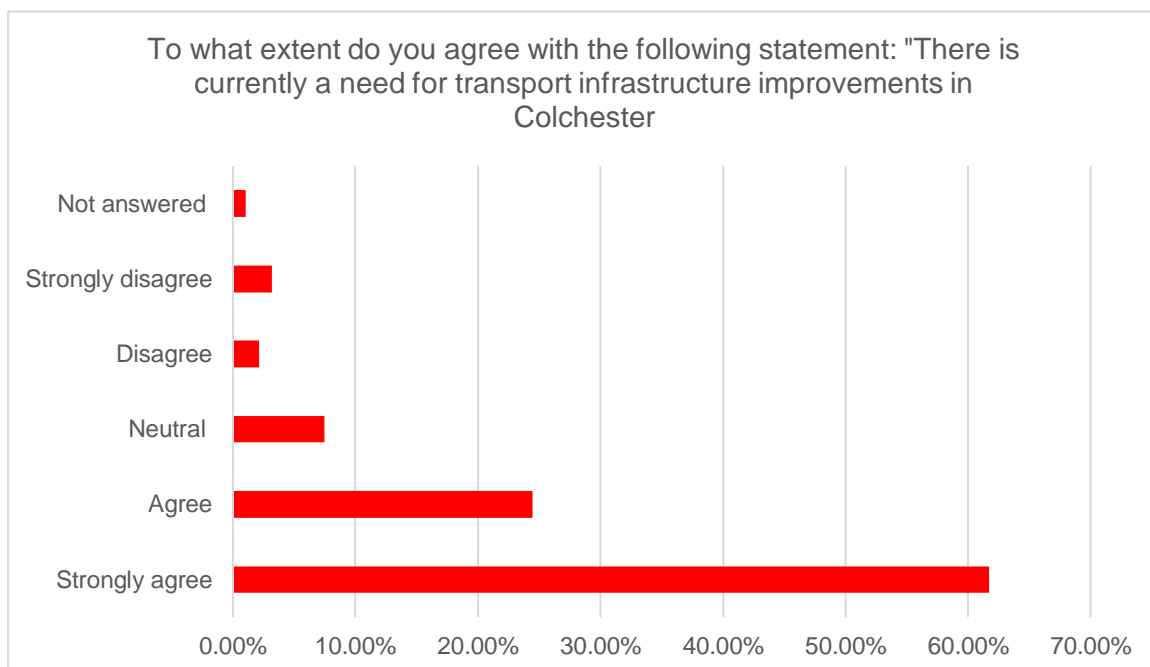
6 Responses to closed questions

The graphs and tables below summarise the responses to the closed questions in the questionnaire. In total, 94 responses were collected across multiple channels.

6.1 Whole Scheme

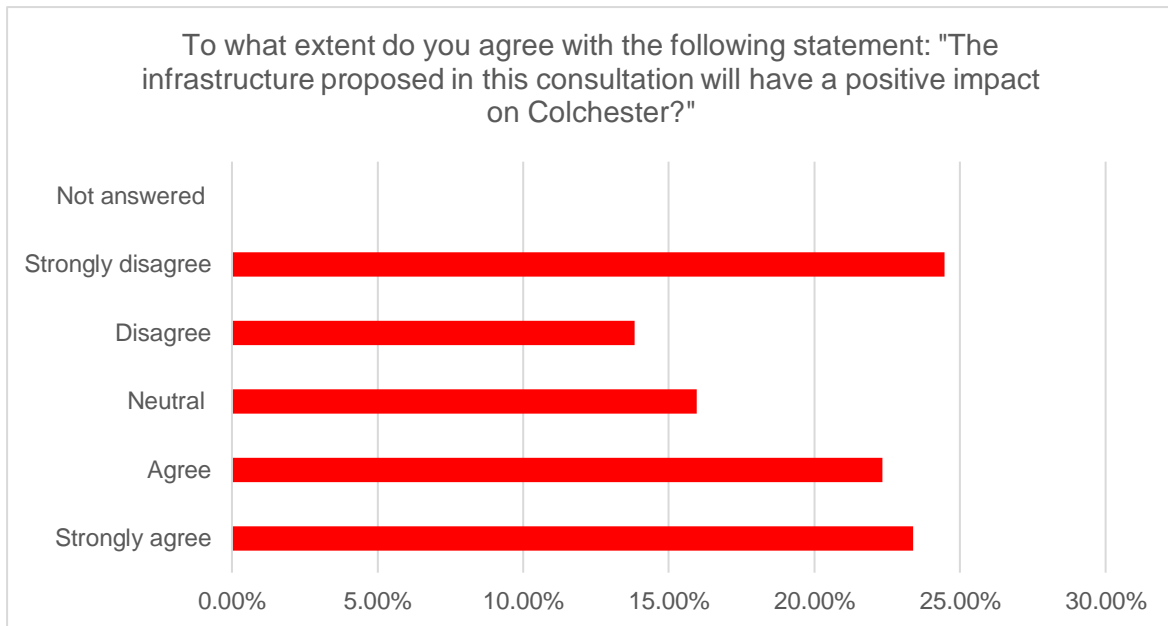
Question 1: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "There is currently a need for transport infrastructure improvements in Colchester"?

Of the 94 responses received, 86% of these respondents agreed or strongly agreed that there is currently a need for transport infrastructure improvements in Colchester. Respondents that disagreed with the statement were represented by a much smaller number of only 5%. 8% of respondents remained neutral and with only 1% opting to not answer.



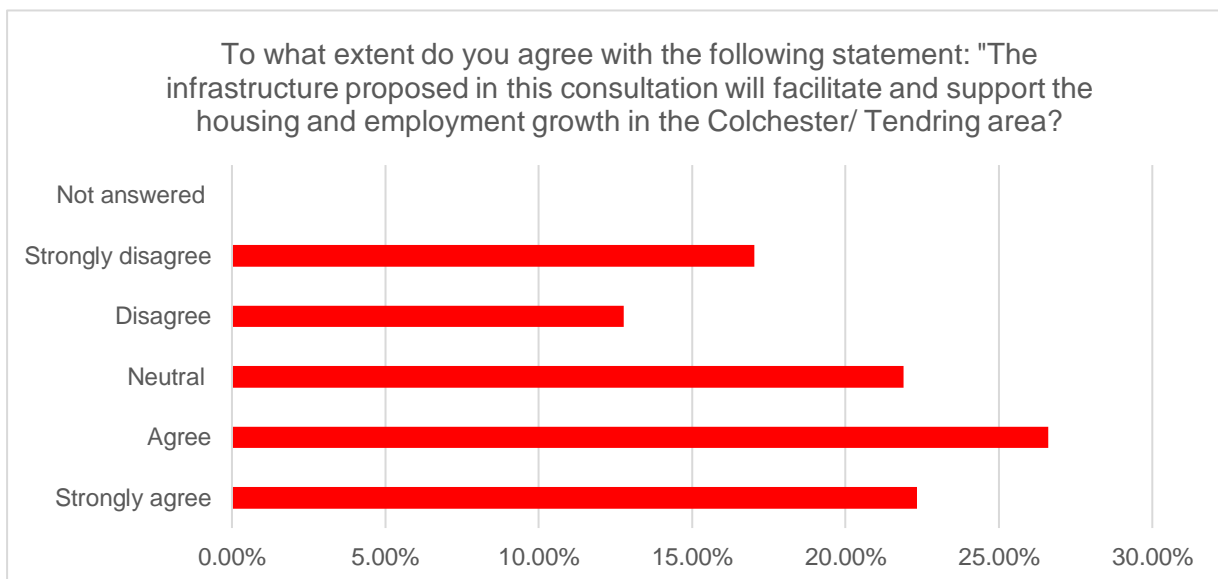
Question 2: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The infrastructure proposed in this consultation will have a positive impact on Colchester"?

This question is pertaining to the scheme as a whole. Of the responses, 46% agreed or strongly agreed that the infrastructure proposed will have a positive impact on Colchester. 38% of respondents disagreed with the statement, with 25% stating that they strongly disagree. The remaining 16% identified as neutral.



Question 3: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The infrastructure proposed in this consultation will facilitate and support the housing and employment growth in Colchester/Tendring area"?

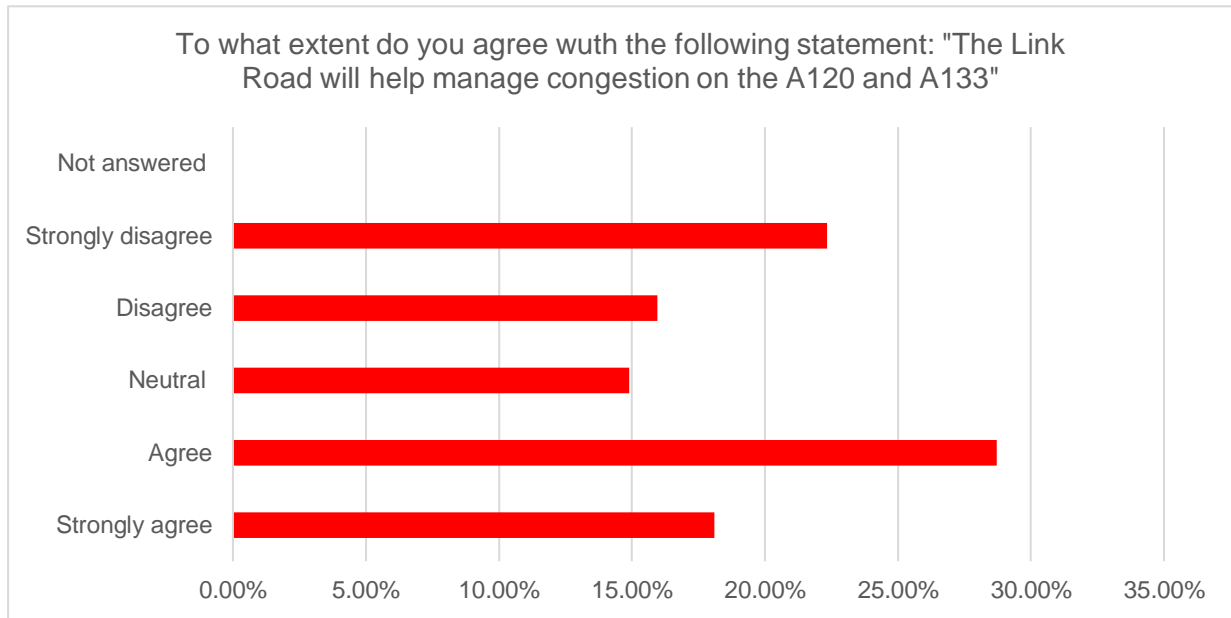
49% of respondents agreed that the infrastructure proposed in the consultation will facilitate and support the housing and employment growth in Colchester and Tendring. 30% of respondents disagreed with the statement and 21% regarded themselves as neutral.



6.2 Link road

Question 1: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The Link Road will help manage congestion on the A120 and A133"

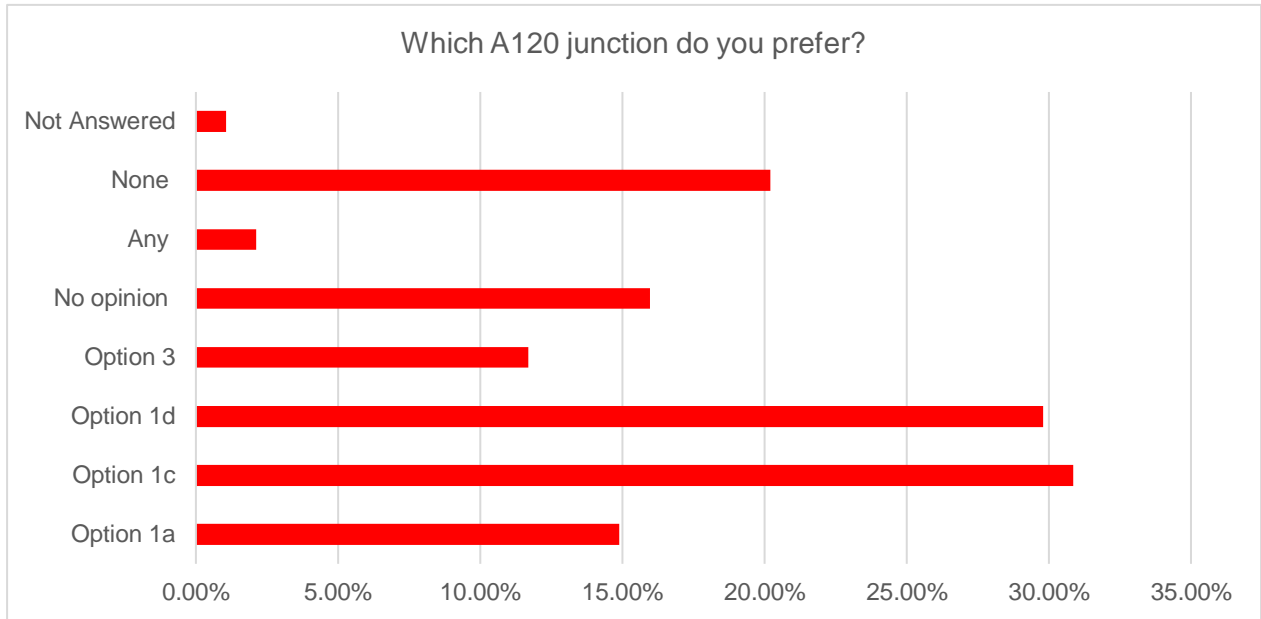
47% of respondents agreed that the Link Road will help manage congestion on the A120 and A133 whilst 38% of respondents disagreed with the statement, and 15% were neutral.



Question 2: Which A120 junction do you prefer?

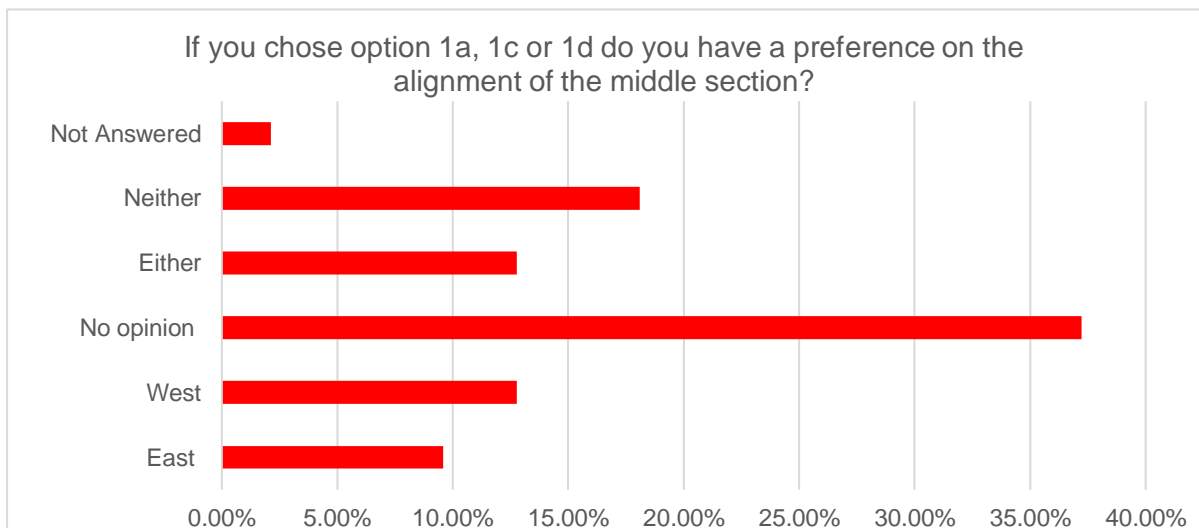
When answering this question, respondents had the opportunity to indicate which of the link road options they preferred, option 1a, option 1c, option 1d or option 3. Respondents were able to select more than one answer if they wished. Respondents were also able to tell us whether they did not have a preference or disagreed with all proposed options.

- 88% of respondents indicated having a preference of one of the four options proposed during the consultation.
- 31% of respondents preferred option 1c,
- 30% preferred option 1d,
- 15% of respondents preferred option 1a,
- and 12% of respondents preferred option 3.
- 16% of respondents also said that they had no opinion, 20% selected that they preferred none of the proposals, 2% indicated that they preferred any of the options for the link road.



Question 3: If you chose option 1a, 1c or 1d do you have a preference on the alignment of the middle section?

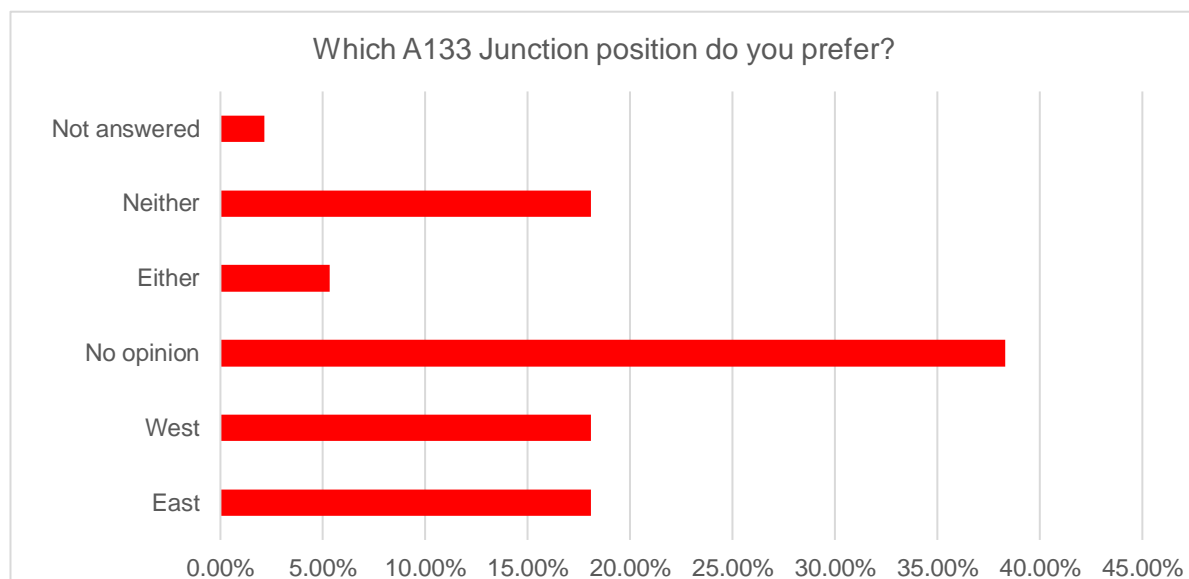
37% of respondents indicated not having an opinion on the alignment of the middle section. 13% of respondents preferred either the west or east alignment. 12% of respondents indicated that neither option, east or west, were a preference. Another 9% of respondents indicated that they preferred having the middle section aligned with the east, whilst 13% indicated having a preference towards the middle section being aligned with the west. 16% of respondents chose not to answer this question.



Question 4: Which A133 junction position do you prefer?

38% of respondents indicated not having an opinion on the position of the A133 junction. 18% of respondents indicated that neither option, east or west, were a preference. Another 18% of respondents indicated having a preference for the A133 junction to be positioned to

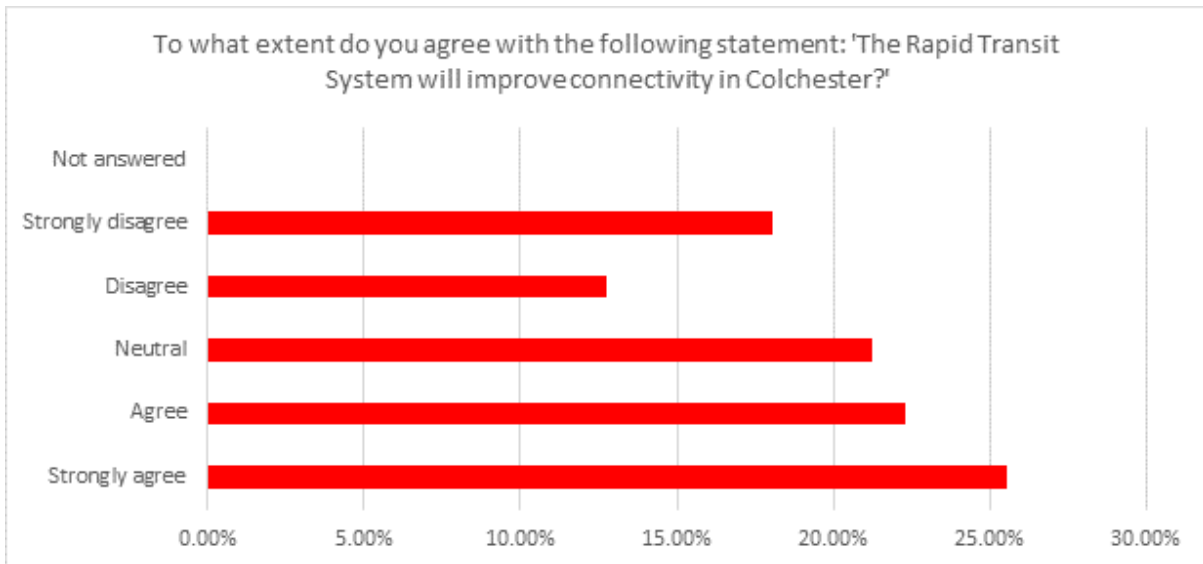
the east whilst 18% indicated a preference for the junction to be positioned to the west. Only 5% of responses indicated either option, east or west positions of the A133 junction, was a preference.



6.3 Rapid Transit System

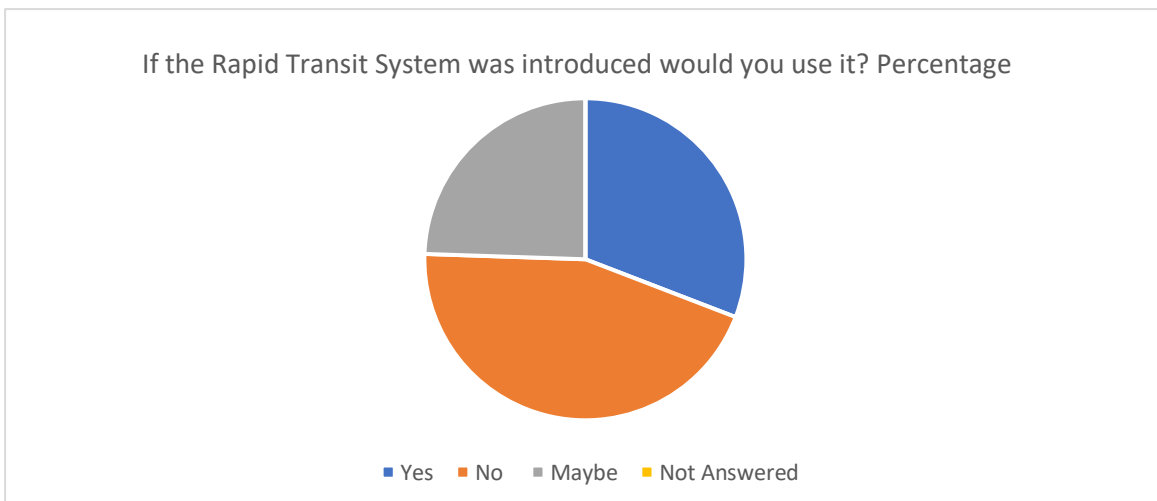
Question 1: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The Rapid Transit System will improve connectivity in Colchester"?

48% of respondents agreed that the rapid transit system will improve connectivity in Colchester, with 26% of those strongly agreeing. 31% disagreed with the statement of which 18% strongly disagreed. 21% of respondents indicated being neutral.



Question 2: If the Rapid Transit System was introduced would you use it?

The majority of respondents indicated that they would or might use the Rapid Transit System if it were introduced (55%), with 45% of respondents indicating that they would not use it.

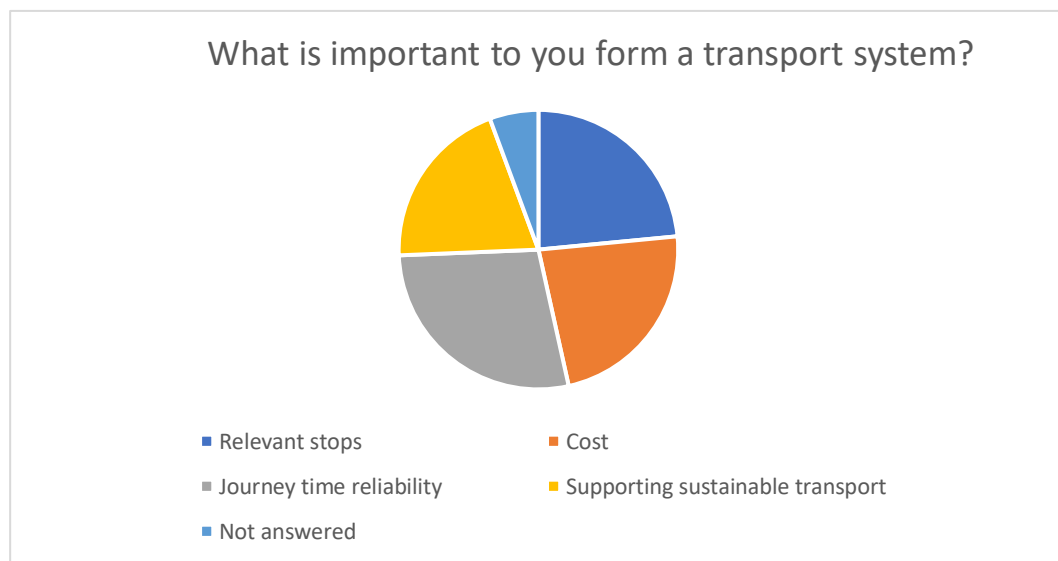


Question 3: What is important to you from a transport system?

For this particular question, respondents were given four potentially important elements of a transport system and were instructed to tick all options that applied to them. The four

options were relevant stops, cost, journey time reliability and supporting sustainable transport. Journey time reliability featured in 64% of responses to this question with relevant stops and cost featuring in 54% of responses. Supporting sustainable transport featured in 46% of responses. 13% of respondents chose not to answer this question.

- Relevant stops – 54%
- Cost – 53%
- Journey time reliability – 64%
- Supporting sustainable transport – 46%
- Not answered – 13%



28 respondents included a suggestion under other.

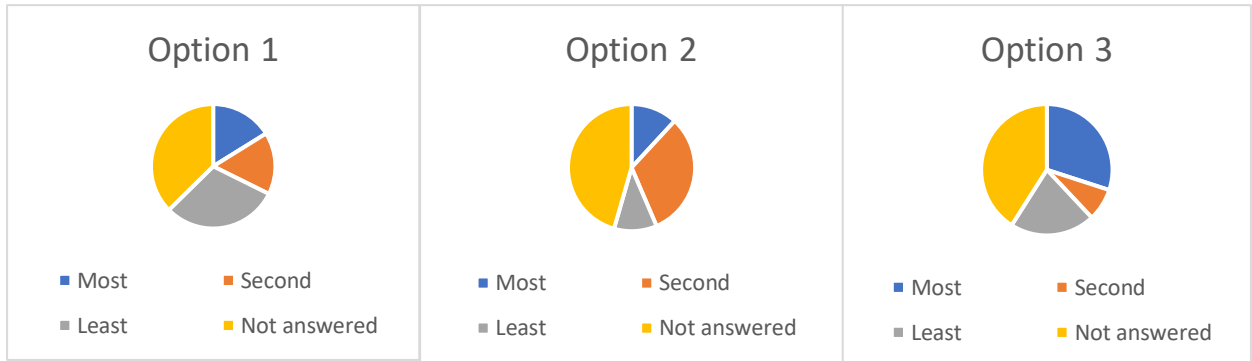
They included:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| - Links with North Station, the town and residential areas | - Speed of transit | - Environmentally friendly vehicles (electric) |
| - Electric vehicle charging points at the stops | - Ability to transport bicycles | - Good links with existing public transport for communities such as Wivenhoe or Bromley Road |
| - Links to cycle and car parking | - That it doesn't add to congestion around the network | - Intermodal hubs |

Question 4: Please indicate your most preferred and least preferred option for the Rapid Transit System Section B.

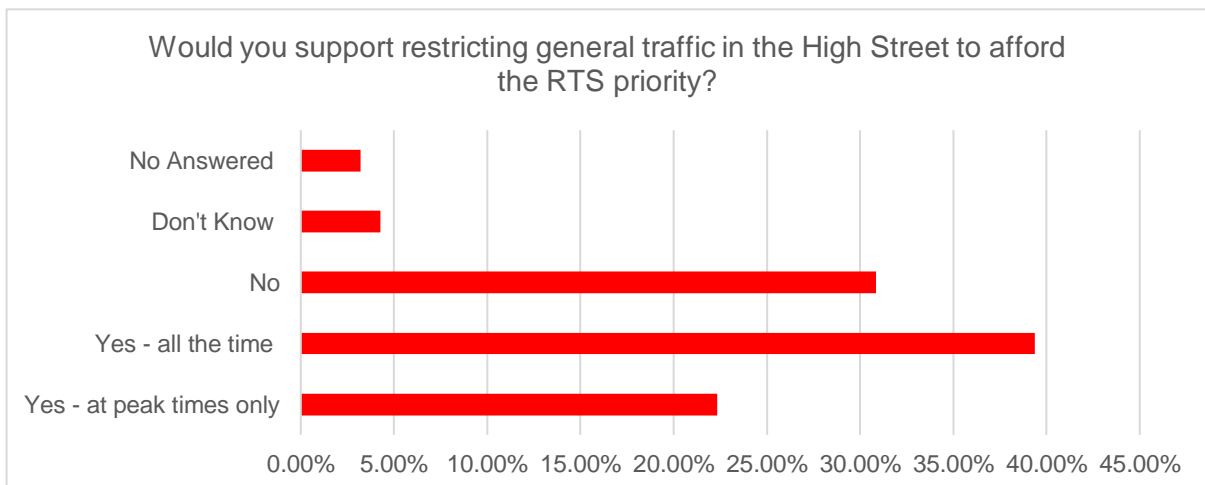
Within this question respondents were asked to list by way of preference their preferred route options. This saw Option 5 selected as the most preferred route 30% of the time in comparison to 16% for Option 1 and 12% for Option 2.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 5
Most	16%	12%	30%
Second	16%	32%	8%
Least	30%	11%	21%



Question 5: Would you support restricting general traffic in the High Street to afford the RTS priority?

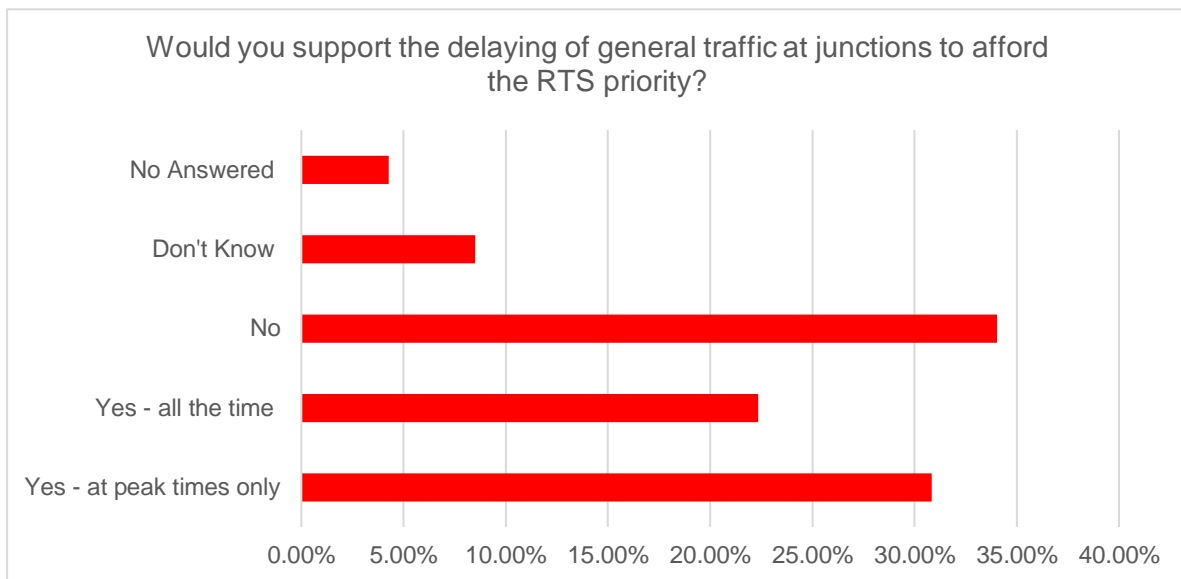
53% of respondents indicated that they would support restricting general traffic in the High Street to afford the RTS priority all the time. Of those 31% of respondents indicated they would support the restriction of general traffic in the High Street to afford the RTS priority at peak times only, whilst 22% of respondents indicated that they support restricting the general traffic all the time. 34% of respondents indicated that they would not support the restriction of general traffic in the High Street at all to give the RTS priority. 9% of respondents indicated that they did not know whether they would support the restriction and 4% did not answer this question.



Question 6: Would you support the delaying of general traffic at junctions to afford the RTS priority?

53% of respondents indicated that they would support the delaying of the general traffic at junctions to afford the RTS priority. Of those 31% of respondents indicated they would support the delaying of general traffic at junctions to afford the RTS priority at peak times only. 22% of respondents indicated they would support the delaying of general traffic at junctions to afford the RTS priority all the time.

34% of respondents indicated that they would not support the delaying of general traffic at junctions to afford the RTS priority. 9% of respondents indicated that they did not know whether they support the delay of general traffic and 4% did not answer this question.



Question 7: For the system to be 'rapid' we need as few stops as practicable, what would you consider the top 5 most important locations?

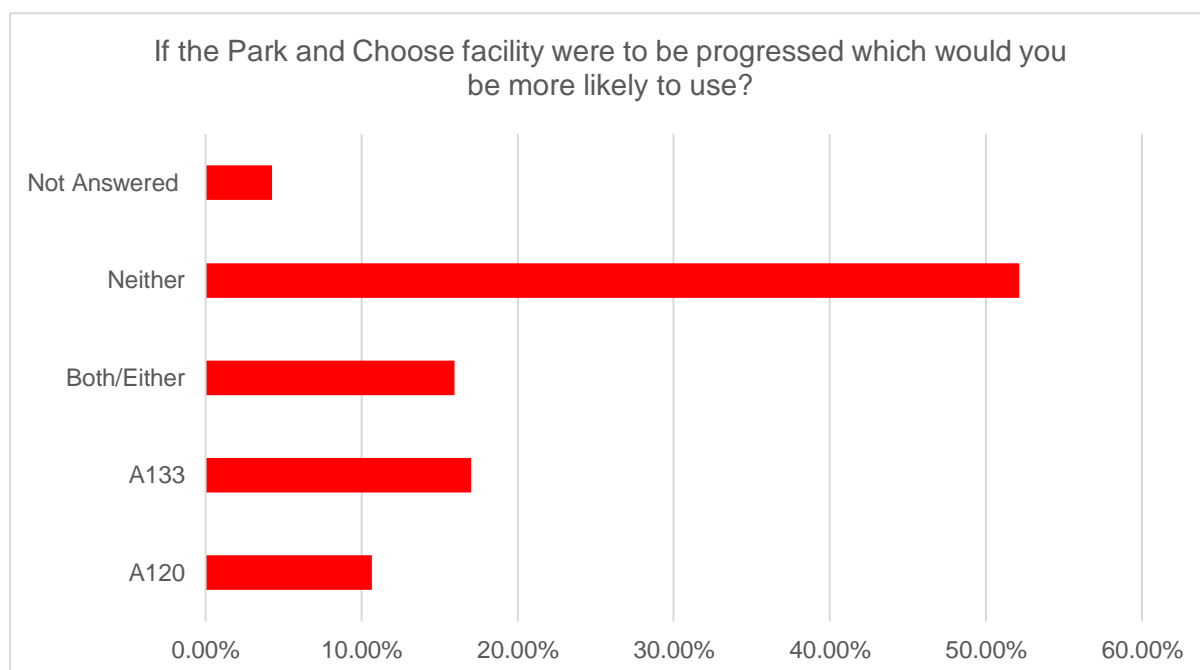
For this question respondents were asked to put forward where they felt would be the more important locations. The following came up most frequently.

- Town railway station, North railway station and Hythe railway station
- University of Essex
- Town Centre/High Street
- Park and Ride & Park and Choose
- Hospital
- Bus station

6.4 Park and Choose

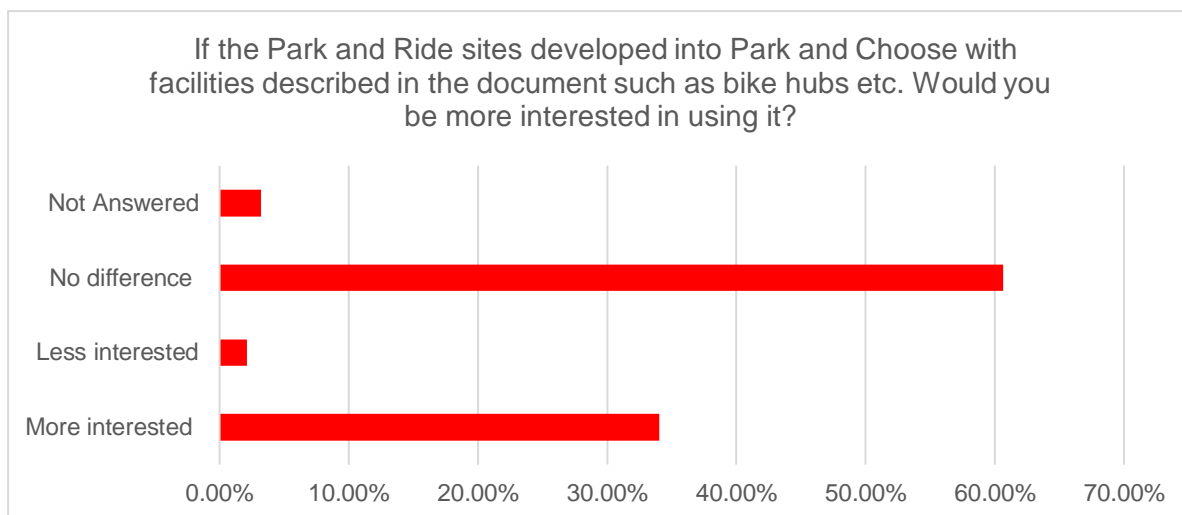
Question 1: If the Park and Choose facility were progressed which would you be more likely to use?

The majority of respondents to this question indicated that if the Park and Choose were progressed they would use neither the A120 or the A133 (52%). 16% of respondents indicated that they would use both/ either the A120 or the A133. Another 17% of respondents indicated that they would just use the A133, whilst only 11% indicated they would just use the A120. 4% of respondents did not answer this question.



Question 2: If the Park and Ride sites developed into Park and Choose with facilities described in the document such as bike hubs etc. Would you be more interested in using it?

61% of respondents indicated that there would be no difference in their interest in the Park and Ride sites if they were developed into Park and Choose facilities as described in the brochure. 34% indicated that they would be more interested in the Park and Ride sites if it were developed into a Park and Choose, whilst only 2% indicated that they would be less interested. 3% of respondents chose not to answer.



7 Responses to open questions

Quotes have been used from responses but will be kept anonymous, any details which may identify an individual has been removed/omitted. Any other text removed will be due to relevance to the theme being discussed. Responses below will be as close to verbatim as possible to ensure clear and transparent reporting on stakeholder feedback.

If a response is not used this does not mean that the feedback has not been considered. When appropriate it will be made clear if a particular comment was common amongst responses.

7.1 Do you have any further comments on the proposed options for the Link Road?

This question gave respondents an opportunity to raise any issues, concerns or comments etc. about the Link Road scheme that hadn't been covered in the closed questions.

This report has been presented in relation to the most common and relevant themes given in responses. These included comments on the scheme options, impact on the community/residents/businesses, the scheme design, the environmental impact, planning, transport and walking, cycling and horse riding (WCH).

Scheme options

Where responses referenced any of the proposed options directly this information was captured in the coding. Options 1C and 1D were the more supported options in the open responses whereas Option 1A was the least mentioned and Option 3 received the greatest number of comments against it.

It was pointed out in support that – *"All the options remove the risk of queueing of waste lorries on the A120 slip-road as sometimes occurs in peak hours."* (#018)

Some respondents replied against the various Option 1 variants often citing the impact on the Strawberry Grove woodland area and concerns with their impact on heritage sites as demonstrated below.

"Option 1A: roundabout location will destroy the Strawberry Grove wooded area."

"Option 1C: will come closer to listed building and sandwich the wooded area into a no-mans land making it inaccessible and eventually unkept."

Option 1D: does take it away from the woods but will still have an impact..." (#044)

"Option 1A destroys too much of the woodland" (#104)

Responses commented on Option 1A specifically because of the impact on the Strawberry Grove woodland area.

"Option 1a is to be avoided on ecological grounds...Once the A120 was built access from the Bromley Road (walking the land) was prevented. I remember a wood with sunny glades, lots of bluebell, including pink and white and plentiful daffodils. Now it must be a haven for wild life which needs to be preserved. This is why I do not support option 1a." (#031)

"[Option 1A] ...will remove a long term 'woodland' area known as 'Strawberry Grove' heavily impacting on the wildlife within this woodland, We appreciate this maybe a route and not against its growth within the area but it will destroy the local area and more positively the PROW." (#111)

Option 1C and 1D received support for being further away from the majority of residential properties, providing more protection for wildlife and being shorter and therefore perceived as being more cost effective than Option 3.

"My two preferred options (1C or 1D) would not affect as many properties and provide more protection to wildlife in the area." (#060)

"I would prefer to see option 1C. it seems the least intrusive on woodland and current use of the land." (#135)

"...we feel that the only option we could support would be 1C. Of all of the options we feel it would have the least amount of impact on the environment, preserving Strawberry Grove with minimal effect on the waste transfer station and A120 services. It would also ensure that the scattered rural community on Bromley Road would be minimally affected by the link road proposals." (#112)

Option 1C in particular was supported because it did not disrupt the operation of the Waste Transfer Station or the A120 Service Station and because it would be less likely to have an impact on the ancient woodland or affect as much wildlife habitat than Option 1A and 1D.

"Option 1C will not need any land or cause problems to the operation of the WTS or service station. Option 1C will be better for environmental reasons as it will not destroy any of the ancient woodlands and affect less wildlife habitat" (#064)

Some respondents preferred Option 3 citing the increased access into Colchester, and the reduced impact on heritage listed sites and impact on woodland in the area than the other options being offered.

"Option 3 allows easy (relatively) access from the A120 to Greenstead and Longridge and St Annes." (#032)

"[the scheme] should absolutely not negatively impact on woodland, ponds or other wild areas for nature to thrive. This is why I think Option 3 looks like the best choice." (#017)

"I feel that Option 3 appears to be more beneficial ... Not only does it avoid all woodland but also takes the northerly part of the road further away from the parish church of Elmstead Market..." (#101)

However, many of the respondents felt that this was the least preferred option due to its potential impact on local residents through noise and air pollution as well as being the longest and perceived likely most expensive option. Brought up often was also the impact of Option 3 on Bromley Road with respondents concerned about the anticipated traffic levels it would bring to a road they already considered congested.

"I do however believe that option 3 looks chaotic and would cause a negative impact on several residents that live nearby..." (#025)

"[The respondent] ...strongly object to Option 3 which will lead traffic directly into the Bromley Road with a roundabout where the Bromley Road currently passes over the A120." (#116)

"...option3 will be both too costly and cause disruption on a vital road link during construction." (#104)

"...option 3 would create too much convergence, chaos and delays in the merging of three roads (A120/Trunk Road/Bromley Road)." (#115)

This mirrored the data from Q2 which indicated that only 11% of responders ticked that they supported Option 3, compared to 30% and 29% for 1C and 1D respectively.

There were also respondents who noted their support or opposition to the Link Road in general.

In support it was raised that the Link Road would enable the proposed Garden Community development, with another noting that it was something they had been waiting to progress.

"The proposed link road would be beneficial due to the proposed housing development nearby." (#025)

"Long awaited." (#043)

Comments against the Link Road were largely focussed on the impact of the scheme on local residents and the anticipated increase in traffic. Some respondents also questioned the necessity of the Link Road with current traffic movements. Another comment wondered if the Link Road would be beneficial if it required access roundabouts to the proposed new development therefore reducing the benefits of a fast link between strategic roads.

*"All options will have a detrimental affect on our lives and our property."
(#030)*

"I cannot understand why a second road linking the A120 and A133 is required, being a mere 3 miles from the existing A120/A133 Link road at Frating." (#050)

"...We do not believe the new link road is necessary due to the presence of the roundabout in Frating...Additionally, as this link road cuts through the proposed garden community, it will need to transport residents in and out of the large residential area which means that there will be roundabouts all the way along it, not conducive to a fast link road." (#057)

Community

Many respondents made comments regarding the impact of the scheme on the local community. This includes the impact on people, residents, community and businesses. The safety, health and wellbeing of residents was mentioned a number of times as well as community severance and village roads not being suitable for Link Road traffic.

"...the current local population will see their quality of life significantly reduced." (#021)

"The community will be transformed from a rural idyl to an urban sprawl with large increases in pollution levels." (#028)

"...impact on our health and wellbeing and not being able to live comfortably in our home and enjoy our garden." (#057)

"Any increase in volume of traffic must be matched by increased safety precautions to ensure that residents and other road users' safety is not threatened." (#122)

The only option directly referenced in regard to concerns about community was Option 3.

"The objection to Option 3 is on the grounds of ... Effect on health and well-being of residents...Effect on local amenities and infrastructure which is suitable for small community villages rather than fast link transport roads...Safety of the residents." (#080)

"[Regarding Option 3] It will break up the Bromley Road community: the lives and homes of the residents in Jubilee Lane and Bromley Road, including the Wheatsheaf house, will be totally disrupted and devastated by traffic and traffic works." (#037)

"[Option 3] would be taking traffic into all areas beyond and funnelling much more heavy traffic towards slough lane. The impact on this area would be catastrophic with a devastating impact on all of the residents lives currently on Bromley road and the surrounding country roads." (#112)

"[Objection to Option 3] Effect on local amenities and infrastructure which is suitable for small community villages rather than fast link transport roads... [and] Safety of the residents" (#116)

It is clear from these responses that respondents are concerned with any proposal which impacts on community.

There were also several comments on the link between the Link Road and proposed new community. These have been noted, but it should be recognised that they are out of scope in terms of this road infrastructure options consultation. The information collected through this consultation will only be used to identify and further design the preferred route. Any views given, negative or positive, will not be used outside of this consultation and will not be used as a measure of support for or against the proposed new development.

"The link road seems completely pointless other than the means to encourage more unwanted housing." (#029)

"I am not in favour of the proposed Link Road because of its purpose to facilitate the new town they are trying to build on our doorstep. A town which is not needed or wanted by existing residents and which will do nothing to help local housing needs as the houses will be bought by London commuters and be too expensive for most locals." (#048)

"I strongly believe that this link road should be built even if the proposed Garden Village does not go ahead." (#101)

Design

Responses on the design of the scheme focussed mainly on access, the necessity of it being a dual carriageway, intermittent junctions along the road and the connection onto the A133.

"The link road should have as few junctions as possible, so that the quickest available journey time can be achieved." (#056)

"If this project is to go ahead it must be a completely separate transit system, only linking major routes such as the A133 and A120 with no 'off

shoots' onto the existing country lanes and roads in the Crockleford area."
(#065)

"The new road should avoid giving access to Bromley Road, which will encourage rat-running on the rural road network, which is ill-equipped to handle a higher level of traffic." (#133)

"How does the project justify a dual lane link road when minimal traffic will use the South East bound lane." (#050)

"Size of the trunk road (dual carriageway in both directions) is disproportionate to the needs of the area" (#080)

"I write to express my deep concerns regarding the propose dual carriageway which is totally disproportionate to the needs and character of the area." (#107)

"Looking at the maps you show I think that the new road could be re-aligned more westerly further away from Mount Pleasant and Turnip Lodge cottages with the new roundabout further along the A133." (#040)

"The A133 junction should be to the east of Brook Cottages. There is no need for a roundabout junction on the A133. A traffic light controlled junction would be perfectly adequate, would require less land, would be much less disruptive to existing A133 users during its construction and would cost less. (#071)

"It appears that terminating the southern end near the A133/B1027 traffic lights is not considered an option. Yet this would utilise the existing main roads as feed-in arteries. If traffic from Wivenhoe is to use that junction and turn east bound then that junction needs considerable improvement." (#104)

"The consultation states that a reason for the link road to be built is because of the significant number of journeys into Colchester from Tendring District. If this was the case then why not utilise the already half constructed slip road and bridge on the A120 directly between Elmstead and Great Bromley!?" (#058)

It was also raised that current plans appeared to show the proposed access to the Waste Transfer Station redirected to a private road.

"would like to ensure continued access to the WTS. the access road planned to it looks like it would be on a private road. This access is currently not available. We currently have bulkers, dustcarts, road trains and cages using the site but other HGVs use the access to go through to the landfill/ quarry out the back past bromley road" (#052)

Some respondents raised the relationship between the Link Road and other local roads.

"[Option 3] would also create a huge amount of additional traffic along the entire length of Bromley Road and Colchester Road which is not conducive for a narrow, winding country lane." (#113)

"even with Elmstead Road being realigned, I feel strongly that the link road with this roundabout will increase the volume of traffic on the road which currently is hardly wide enough for two small vehicles." (#101)

The response went onto suggest alternatives:

"Improve the width of Elmstead Road throughout its length from the A133 to the B1027 with a suitable roundabout at the junction with the B1027.

"Or close Elmstead Road between the A133 and the B1027 making it 'Access Only'... Traffic for Wivenhoe or the University would then have to proceed to the existing traffic light junction where Colchester Road meets the A133.

"Or make Elmstead Road restricted access to light vehicles but with the need to improve the junction at the B1027. Unsuitable vehicles would then have to proceed to the 'University traffic lights' as above." (#101)

Environment

The environment and environmental impacts of the different options were key themes in many responses; in particular the impact on woodland

"Avoiding woodland is important, difficult to justify destroying woodland when we are all desperate to plant more trees." (#001)

"[The scheme] Should be done in a way which uses the funds efficiently without upsetting natural environment." (#008)

"I think this new road is needed for access into the east of Colchester, and to reduce the congestion at the A133 roundabout, but should absolutely not negatively impact on woodland, ponds or other wild areas for nature to thrive." (#017)

Other responses focussed on the impact on local wildlife

"[comment regarding respondents area of residence] ... where there are a handful of buildings and open countryside and farmland, making it an ideal habitat for wildlife." (#106)

"...any extra traffic through the village will have a huge negative impact on the wildlife and they will simply be driven out by the extra noise and light pollution." (#106)

"Over the past few years I have enjoyed a considerable amount of wildlife in and around my property... This Link Road along with the A120 will create a boundary to all wildlife from entering the area from the east and the Garden Community, along with the current Crockleford Hill development, will destroy the Salary Brook." (#103b)

And heritage

"Option 1C is also far enough away from the historic Elmstead Church, which should be protected as it is a repository of history of the area stretching back for hundreds of years." (#115)

"[Option 3] ...takes the northerly part of the road further away from the parish church of Elmstead Market, a place much frequented by the Elmstead residents" (#101)

Many opposed Option 3 on the basis of noise and air quality.

"Option 3 is absolutely outrageous building a roundabout right next to peoples house's, It's bad enough the A120 is getting busier everyday with the constant noise and air pollution, but to put it right outside our house's is crazy when option 1D does not appear to have residence near to it." (#036)

"The glossy documentation states that their intentions are environmentally friendly yet Option 3 would create significant noise and air pollution for ...residents of Jubilee Lane." (#103)

"[Option 3] such an increase in traffic would result in an unacceptable level of noise and pollution for the many residents whose properties are close to the road." (#113)

It was also noted that Options 1C and 1D may be preferable as they reduce the impact on existing communities and the local environment.

"[Options 1C or 1D] ...would not affect as many properties and provide more protection to wildlife in the area." (#060)

"Option 1C would also avoid the destruction of the Strawberry Grove wooded area and protect the largest residential area to the west of it from noise and air pollution. It would also keep the four woods to the west side of the road grouped together, which is better for wildlife as birds and insects fly from one forest to another." (#115)

"Option 1C would benefit local wildlife by preserving Strawberry Grove and maintaining a virtually unobscured link with the surrounding wooded areas to the west." (#113)

One response raised concern with the proposed route across Turnip Lodge Lane which has been identified as a protected lane.

"We are concerned... that the currently proposed route crosses a protected lane (Turnip Lodge Lane). This is protected on grounds of the historic landscape and archaeological significance, as well as its biodiversity. We ... are particularly concerned at the potential loss of the botanical richness of the verges, hedgerows and associated habitat." (#105)

Planning

Common comments about planning covered the planning process/nearby applications, traffic movements, and how the project interacts with the proposed new development area. Although it should be noted that some comments around other planning decisions are not within the scope of this consultation

"All of them [the options] will bisect the proposed settlement." (#047)

"The location of the roundabouts and slip road are not within the boundary of the TCGBC" (#038)

"It is stated that the Link Road will provide the eastern boundary to residential development so the further to the west that it is built the less space for housing. Having residential development both to the east and the west of the link would not accord with Garden Community principles as it would sever the settlement and reduce cohesion." (#114)

"Recently, planning permission for well-designed houses on the corner of Spring Valley Road have been rejected by Tendring Planning Department. The following quote is their objection: Tendring Council "feel that the erection of any dwellings would cause visual harm to the appearances of the local landscape and character and contribute to the gradual erosion of the countryside." 19/01349/FUL (#037)

Transport

Comments regarding transport mostly focussed on traffic planning, current infrastructure provision and public transport.

"If you have the link road as proposed, then traffic from both the B1027 and B1028 aiming to access the A12, will turn right, across the flow of traffic into Colchester on the A133, and try to get on the link road. This will cause even more delays than the area has now." (#050)

"We are of the opinion that the majority of traffic that travels along the A133 is heading towards Colchester and not bypassing the town..." (#057)

"Traffic from Wivenhoe and Arlesford and Thorrington will be to the Link Road but how does it get there in a safe and efficient way." (#093)

Comments also touched on current congestion of the roads and how the Link Road would only move the problem.

"I'm concerned that this link road will just move the problem to the A120/A12 junction, which can already become very congested at peak times. How will this be mitigated?" (#054)

"I am concerned that the proposed Link Road will funnel existing traffic from Wivenhoe and traffic generated by the new housing onto Colchester Northern Bypass which is already overloaded." (#073)

"Will the A133 (Clingoe Hill stretch) cope with the potential increase in volume of traffic from the south bound A12 and eastbound A120 using a new link road to the A133 as a clockwise 'ring' road when this stretch is already unable to cope with the volume of traffic coming into Colchester just from the A133?" (#014)

"With the increase of traffic any new roads would not reduce congestion - this will inevitably increase, leading to more grid lock and pollution when it reaches the 'bottle neck' at the Greenstead roundabouts. The eastern approach to Colchester cannot deal with the amount of traffic on the roads at the moment." (#074)

"The A120 will not reduce congestion. It may do so temporarily but it will unveil demands for relocation which are currently suppressed by congestion. In this way it will encourage more traffic until congestion over a few years rises back to previous levels." (#134)

"It was thought that the proposed link road would exacerbate severe congestion on Clingoe Hill and near the University of Essex, with a large impact on rural lanes." (#118)

While others saw a benefit especially during peak hours.

"This will reduce congestion in evening periods on the St Andrews Avenue from Ipswich Road junction right through to the Greenstead roundabout." (#032)

"...such a link road is long overdue in its development. The routes into Colchester and beyond are now frustrated by the ever-increasing number of vehicles accessing the University of Essex. Travelling out to Frating or to Great Bromley to access the A120 adds many miles to the journey." (#101)

"We would consider that the A120/A133 Link Road is essential in better connecting the East of Colchester to the major road networks and must be

provided prior to the development of the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community." (#132)

There were also concerns raised about the impact on the wider local infrastructure and the impact on public transport.

"The new road would also be used by commuters to get to Wivenhoe Station and direct trains to London - neither the station or roads through the village can cope with this." (#074)

"I am extremely concerned about the current bus service to Wivenhoe. Currently we have a 10 minute service. This is because the busses come to the Station to turn around. When the bus company approached the university some years ago about building a turning point, they were turned down. The reason we have such an excellent service is because of turning around. Given the choice I don't believe that they will continue to do this. The access is not ideal over the railway bridge and around the station round about but Wivenhoe residents appreciate the regular service." (#023)

"You should be spending your time looking at ways of improving existing transport links such as the railway." (#029)

Walking, cycling and horse-riding (WCH)

Many who raised WCH within their responses were disappointed that more information was not given on these topics within the brochure and at events. There was concern over which of the options would be better for WCH issues and that the 50mph 2 lane dual carriageway excludes cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

"I suspect that one or two of options 1a 1c 1d or 3 will provide better links to cycle and walking networks, but the consultation has excluded that information, and any comment thereon." (#066)

"The public consultation document talks about integrating the link with existing cycling and pedestrian provision but provides no details at all about how this would be done or whether funding would actually be provided. In the light of past experience, cyclists and pedestrians are likely to be highly cynical. At best they are likely to anticipate poor-quality and unsafe provision of the sort they see day after day in Colchester and its surrounding area." (#082)

"Carringtons Road is regularly used as an organised running and cycling race route and the road itself is mainly occupied by tractors, other large agricultural vehicles, horse riders, dog walkers and bikes just as much as cars." (#106)

Many called for more attention to be given to WCH in proposals.

"Future plans should seek ways to move away from car-dependent housing & infrastructure." (#068)

"No more road, more cycle paths, more train and bus lines. Carbon neutral or road reserved for buses, taxis and electrical car. Give priority to cyclists and pedestrians, improve public transport, not more cars which equals more pollution." (#027)

"Foot/bike crossings and tunnels (to the highest) standards, must be planned from the start." (#133)

And some responses raised the issue of safety and access for WCH.

"Option 3 proposes a roundabout on Bromley Road that is potentially extremely dangerous to cyclists who use this road as a relatively quiet escape route eastwards out of Colchester." (#082)

"Consideration must be made for numerous crossing points and cycle ways if it's to be the heart of a new development." (#045)

7.2 Do you have any further comments on the proposals for the Rapid Transit System?

This question gave respondents an opportunity to raise any issues, concerns or comments etc. about the RTS scheme that hadn't been covered in the closed questions.

This report has been presented with headings that relate to the most common and relevant themes given in responses. These included comments on the RTS concept, the scheme design, environmental impact, planning, transport and walking cycling and horse riding (WCH).

RTS

There were some respondents who gave general comments on Rapid Transit System.

"We strongly support the development of a rapid transit system. We strongly support the idea that this should be the core of a comprehensive public transport. system including, eventually, driverless shared taxis at the edges of the system. This is an exciting and comprehensive vision which we commend." (#134)

"A transport system from a new P&R is essential and it would be beneficial to reducing congestion and providing a transport hub. It would be advantageous as a limited stop service University, Hythe and town centre but Rapid Transport System it will not be, so change the title now." (#104)

"Rapid Transit System seems a brilliant idea, and I am fully behind your scheme, and I would encourage much, much more of it all over Colchester and surrounding areas" (#115)

Some respondents had concerns or issues with the RTS. These included issues with the current Park and Ride system, the belief that local people would not give up their car use and whether the system would be 'rapid' as claimed.

"This A120 Consultation effectively proposes extending the Park and Ride, from Head Street to a new facility adjacent the new link road. This will require twice the number of buses, and a significant investment in route management (as described in this consultation). Will it be a more popular route? I doubt it." (#066)

"People with cars want to use them. Average car ownership per household in the east of England is 1.4. A rapid transit system will not solve the problem.

Town centres no longer serve people's requirements and politicians need to understand that the public will not be forced out of the cars unless the alternatives are free" (#012)

"It is sheer folly to think the residents of the new town will use it in preference to private cars." (#048)

"This is a BUS and as such will not by its very nature be 'rapid'." (#048)

"To call a bus route a Rapid Transit System is stretching the truth to far." (#074)

"You will never get a rapid bus system around Colchester town centre and the opportunity has been lost for a rapid system to the town centre" (#104)

Some responses questioned how the system would work in practice with details such as ticketing, scheduling and ownership, while others focussed on pricing and incentivisation.

"In order to maintain the "rapid" nature a ticketing system of either prepaid tickets or touch and go should be available and ideally single pricing for any stop on the RTS." (#018)

"Any pricing should be subsidised and it should run both early and late, otherwise many will just use the car parks." (#022)

"The fares need to be affordable for everybody - the system needs to be publicly owned for this to be achieved." (#040)

"This should be an inexpensive form of transport in order for people to use it. High fares will not encourage regular users, so this should be safeguarded." (#015)

"The fares need to be affordable for everybody - the system needs to be publicly owned for this to be achieved." (#040)

"Who will own/run the RTS. I expect it will be put out to tender and if any of the existing bus companies in this area still are going it will go to one of them. They will not be prepared to run it without a profit so fares will be exorbitant and no one will use it. They will all get into their cars" (#103)

"There must very frequent provision and car drivers must be rewarded to use public transport with reduced costs of parking outside the town" (#026)

"Transport is too costly. I fear that if they want people to use public transport, there must be an incentive" (#119)

"Modal change will be hard to achieve in Colchester with all carrot, no stick. Claims similar to those for the RTS were made for park and ride – and, considering the capital and revenue expense, this has spectacularly failed in its aim of supporting the town centre and reducing overall traffic levels." (#133)

Some highlighted frequency and reliability as key issues.

"For this to work it requires a regular and reliable service that its not prone to the existing traffic problems of Colchester." (#015)

"Must be better than a bus route. High quality and high frequency with short and reliable journey times to get people out of their cars." (#054)

"For this to work the system must be reliable, clean, good value and above all not subject to any delays along the route." (#041)

Some of the responses set out how to improve the proposal including providing different routes at peak times which avoid town centre congestion and opening dedicated bus lanes to other bus services.

"If there are dedicated bus lanes, what not make them available to the existing bus routes so that existing residents benefit from the investment?" (#071)

"Another improvement could be to have different routes at different times of the day. For example at 7am there would be little if any demand for the town centre, but a large demand for the railway station." (#071)

Design

A selection of responses had comments on the design of the scheme including the potential use of bus gates and preference to avoid the level crossings.

"...people in the south of the town will find it harder to go north and return south if east st brook st Ipswich rd are allocated bus gates (#004)"

"Although most of the routes are generally okay, they should avoid level crossings where possible and bridges or tunnels should be constructed where feasible. (#010)"

"If route 5 were to be chosen, then a number of actions occur to us which might be considered to reduce the volume of traffic in East Street. These include removing the bus gate at Hythe Crossing to allow an alternative route to Greenstead Road and Harwich Road from Magdalen Street and even introducing a no right turn at the bottom of Brook Street to push all outbound traffic through the two river and rail crossing at the Hythe, or via Cowdray Avenue" (#109)

"The route of the Link Road should not be determined in any way by the RTS in the Development Area, but the RTS should fit around the best Link Road scheme." (#131)

Others had concerns over what impact the RTS would have on current road capacity.

"If segregated lanes for the rapid transport system are to be introduced then this should not be at the detriment of current road capacity as this will force traffic into a smaller space." (#015)

"It at all possible the RTS should avoid main road arteries in Colchester so as not to interfere with deliveries or holding up road traffic." (#018)

"The existing buses can be slow (and unfortunately not always reliable) but as far as existing residents are concerned the Rapid Transit buses will only increase connectivity if these are seen as superior to the existing provision in terms of improved journey time." (#114)

Whereas another response thought that current road infrastructure should be used for the RTS lane rather than new segregated lanes.

"Thought should be given to removing a lane of traffic to accommodate mass transit, rather than widening existing routes." (#081)

Some responses thought that an RTS would be impractical due to the narrow streets in Colchester.

"...the RTS won't be needed. In addition, how can the RTS be routed through Colchester with it's narrow streets, especially near East Gates, and Coggeshall?" (#021)

"Option 3 or Option 5 routes along Cowdray Avenue are the only ones capable of providing RAPID transport without detriment to private motorise. The other options simply will not work between town centre and greenstead..." (#093)

"I have serious concerns re the space on Clinghoe Hill for an additional lane." (#043)

Other responses gave scheme alternatives.

"There is another option for Section B that you have not considered. Use Elmstead Road to get from the University to the Greenstead roundabout. This means removing the "narrowed" section so vehicles can traverse it. A bus gate of some form can be used to prevent abuse. A "cut through" at the roundabout can provide access to St Andrews Avenue. For safety, this part of the roundabout should be traffic light controlled." (#071)

"Consider opening up the centre of Greenstead roundabout as has been done on A414 into Harlow?" (#043)

Environment

Responses on the topic of environment focussed on the RTS vehicle type and the potential impact on environmental indicators such as air quality and noise pollution.

"Any transportation should emit zero emissions, as the town already has terrible air that breaches rules" (#022)

"Buses need to eco friendly - not diesel!!!" (#040)

"Must also be sustainable, i.e. electric/battery powered with zero emissions." (#054)

"Colchester needs a dedicated segregated non diesel RTS." (#090)

A minority felt that the RTS would not be positive for the environment.

"This is neither viable or ecological." (#074)

"Why do you want to add to the already elevated air and noise pollution levels?" (#037)

Planning

There were a number of comments made in the topic of planning. Specifically focussed on stops, transport interchanges and the possibility of designing more than one route.

"In order for the RTS to encourage modal shift it will be important to connect the new Colchester/Tendring Borders Garden Community and the University with the principal interchanges (Colchester North and Town rail stations) and the retail centre of Colchester High Street." (#018)

"Having as few stops as practical will result in the system being of little use to many people. It needs to have a plethora of stops even if this lengthens journey times. Multiple routes are also required. Not everyone wants to go to the above destinations. What about people wanting to travel to the Hythe and Whitehall employment areas or to Several Business and Industrial Parks?" (#071)

"It must link with other transport hubs and specifically train stations" (#084)

One respondent didn't think the RTS should use either of the level crossings.

"The railway crossing on Harwich road near East Gates would have to be moved as the gates shut frequently creating a huge build up of traffic up East hill." (#037)

Some responses questioned any possible traffic/parking restrictions that the RTS may create.

"This will only work if the parking is removed from some of the route and if this happens where will the cars be able to park - Greenstead Road is a classic example!" (#040)

While others supported certain traffic restrictions.

"Support restricting general traffic in the high street provided disabled, taxi, deliveries can be managed sensibly." (#093)

"Priority for buses at some junctions (presumably by traffic lights activated by the buses) would be welcomed by bus users and disliked by other road users. For routes into Colchester from the East there can be delays at all times of the day so any system should not be restricted just to peak hours. Any priority measures should apply to all buses and not just the RT vehicles." (#114)

Transport

Traffic was a key theme in responses, how the RTS integrated with traffic, the impact of the RTS on traffic and the existing capacity in Colchester were all mentioned frequently.

"unless you construct a new road somehow through the traffic in east colchester cannot cope with the additional traffic that will be generated or diverted to allow RTS schemes to proceed." (#004)

"In addition, the rapid transit should not cause increased traffic issues to the town." (#022)

"It is important to note that this system will not reduce traffic congestion in the area and around Colchester, mainly due to the fact that the proposed building of thousands of homes will increase the traffic to completely unsustainable levels in and around Colchester." (#065)

"I don't see this easing the congestion as Colchester is at capacity, the proposed housing development will further clog the system and negate any possible benefits." (#042)

Some responses were concerned with existing transport issues and also how the RTS could integrate with it.

"There are no comments about how it would effect existing transport systems eg in Wivenhoe which is not even shown on the map." (#029)

"Integration and good timetable connections to existing transport links, eg buses from Wivenhoe or to the train stations is important." (#070)

"It must link with other transport hubs and specifically train stations." (#084)

"The benefits of bus priority lanes and lights and whatever fast board prepayment system is chosen, should be extended to all buses in order to improve the usage of public transport generally and also help to reduce the congestion and pollution currently caused by long boarding times, particularly at town centre bus stops" (#109)

Walking, Cycling and Horse riding (WCH)

There were comments in some responses regarding pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders alongside the scheme.

"Please also ensure that there is excellent cycle/pedestrian provision. If all this work is going to take place, then ensure at the same time, cycleways and footpaths are included." (#023)

"This could be one of the most exciting proposals in recent years for Colchester. It could be a chance to develop a sustainable transport infrastructure for the future. We need to look at building cycle routes that could run in parallel or link into the system. We should also look the possibility of trams or trolley buses along future routes" (#045)

"The Rapid Transport System should allow bikes on buses from the beginning. This will extend the user range beyond the narrow "tramway spine". Consideration should be given to front-mounted bike racks, as used in the US, Canada and Australia" (#133)

"We believe that every effort should be made to ensure that rapid transit stations are accessible by cycle, and that as much as possible of the area surrounding the route is brought within one mile on foot of a station" (#134)

8 Response summaries from Statutory Stakeholders

There were six responses from the following organisations, considered statutory stakeholders.

- Environment Agency
- Essex Police
- Natural England
- Historic England
- Anglian Water
- National Grid

These responses noted various points which required attention prior to planning and advised on local heritage, water and environment assets in close proximity to the scheme. Also mentioned as key considerations was the biodiversity of the area, water and flood risk, and climate change.

These responses will feed into the design process and have formed part of the qualitative analysis undertaken.

9 Response summaries from Local Authorities

There were two responses from local authorities, Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council, and one response from the local delivery partner North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC).

All three welcomed the proposals for Link Road and Rapid Transit System, with both seen by the Local Authorities as being strategically important infrastructure.

Tendring District Council (TDC) commented on the importance to minimise any negative impact of the scheme and looked forward to more detailed design and environmental assessments at the next stage of the process.

"The District Council recognises that a sizeable construction of this type will have impacts on its surroundings and urges Essex County Council to select and develop a scheme that will minimise the negative impacts on existing residents and businesses, the natural environment and heritage assets."

TDC supported the RTS and saw CBC and ECC as well placed to evaluate the options. They also noted that the RTS should be designed to make access as attractive as possible for those travelling into Colchester town, the proposed garden community and the University from Tendring.

"...it is considered to be an important element of the transport infrastructure needed to support economic growth and also to improve choice of sustainable transport options."

Colchester Borough Council stressed the need for the schemes to achieve the desired aims without unacceptable negative impacts on the local environment. They noted that consideration should be given to archaeological assessments and the slip road design.

"CBC has reviewed the route options contained in the consultation material in terms of their ability to meet the objectives of serving as primary access for the Garden Community (without encroaching into the developable area), its ability to relate to the design of the garden community, as well as their potential impact on the local environment (residential properties, natural habitats and heritage assets)."

CBC acknowledged the impact the Option 1 variants had on woodland and also the impact of Option 3 on local residents and property. With this they concluded that Option 1C meets the objectives and provided the most easterly proposed layout.

On the RTS Section B CBC noted the conflict with level crossings in both Option 1 and Option 2, as well as the potential for removing on street parking. It was noted that Option 5 presents a wide highway area on St Andrews Avenue however they expressed concern over the possible impact on the Avenue of Remembrance, which is formally designated as a War memorial by the Imperial War Museum.

On Section C CBC noted that consideration should be given to the road layout at Clingoe Hill to manage congestion.

CBC concluded by saying it reviewed the route options to:

"ensure that the RTS is considered from the perspective of a variety of users including existing and future residents, existing public transport users and encouraging modal shift."

NEGC championed a collaborative approach the design of the Link Road in conjunction with the Garden Community masterplanning. Key considerations in the response included noise and visual screening, design decisions and standards, segregated crossing and provision for walkers and cyclists and access points to the proposed Garden Community.

"It is critical for any design that suitable segregated crossing points can be integrated at key locations such as at existing and potential public rights of

way/footpaths. It might also be possible to provide segregated cycle lanes alongside the Link Road in parts of the Garden Community in order to connect residential and commercial areas.”

NEGC noted their opposition to Option 3 due to its position through a large part of the proposed development.

NEGC also noted that due to the level crossings neither Section B Options 1 or Option 2 would be fast or reliable, they therefore supported Option 5.

On Section C NEGC supported a relationship between the RTS and Garden Community access.

“NEGC recognise that a phased approach will be needed but would urge ECC to ensure that from the earliest stages the RTS is (at least) provided up to the site boundary of the Garden Community. Having access to the route corridor for the very first residents on the site will be key to promoting modal shift.”

For the full responses from these stakeholders please see Appendix A: Full responses from Local Authorities.

10 Conclusions from the report

In the 'whole scheme' section of the questionnaire there was majority agreement that Colchester needed new infrastructure.

More people agreed that the scheme would have a positive impact and support housing and business growth than disagreed, however the individual responses were mixed and not conclusive.

10.1 Link Road

From the closed questions there was a clear preference for Link Road Options 1C and 1D over Option 3 or Option 1A. This trend continues in response to the open questions and across the email responses, with 1C identified as the Option that had least impact on residents, communities and woodland.

There was also notable opposition to Option 3 in response to the open questions and email responses which could not be identified with closed questions alone. Responses stated that this was due to the impact Option 3 had on local communities, residents and businesses. They cited an increase in noise and air pollution, as well as a concern for the safety of residents and the perceived cost of this Option over others. The responses also noted that a link with Bromley Road would lead to increased traffic along roads unsuitable for strategic traffic.

Overall the open responses did not think the Link Road would help to manage congestion while the closed question results were mixed. When it came to what they would change about the scheme design many responded to ask for as few junctions as possible along the Link Road in order to help the traffic flow as effectively as possible. There was also more support for the Options which were located along the indicative eastern boundary line of the proposed new development with many citing Option 3's route which would cut through more of the proposed development area as a reason for their opposition to it.

The environment and the impact on it was a theme throughout responses, and a number of respondents highlighted the need to minimise the impact of the road.

Walking and cycling and public transport were also key topics discussed by respondents who wanted more information on how the Link Road would integrate with and provide access for pedestrians, cyclists and existing services and infrastructure, with a feeling that we could use this scheme as an opportunity to plan in greater facilities.

10.2 RTS

A key topic in the responses for the RTS was the belief that people would not switch their mode of transport from car to RTS. This confirmed the results of the earlier question whereby

when asked if they would use a new RTS 45% said they wouldn't and 24% said they might, only leaving 31% of respondents who said they would use it.

Another common response was to avoid level crossings, this shows as the largest group of respondents (30%) chose the only option without a level crossing, Option 5, as the best for Section B. There were responses who had concerns with the RTS, particularly its impact on current traffic / congestion levels as well as those questioning whether it would work on Colchester's narrow streets principally in the Town Centre.

Responses made it clear that how the RTS works in terms of ticketing, pricing, incentives and stops as well as how well it works with reliability and frequency were important to them. Common support was also shown for a sustainable, environmentally friendly vehicle.

Walking and cycling was again raised as a key topic with many suggesting transport hubs which connect the RTS with walking, cycling and other public transport modes.

10.3 Park and Choose

The A133 was the most popular Park and Choose position, although a majority of respondents chose neither position. It should however be noted that from our postcode analysis of responses most feedback came from residents who lived west of the proposed Park and Choose site, closer to Colchester town and therefore may be less likely to use the Park and Choose compared to those living further to the east.

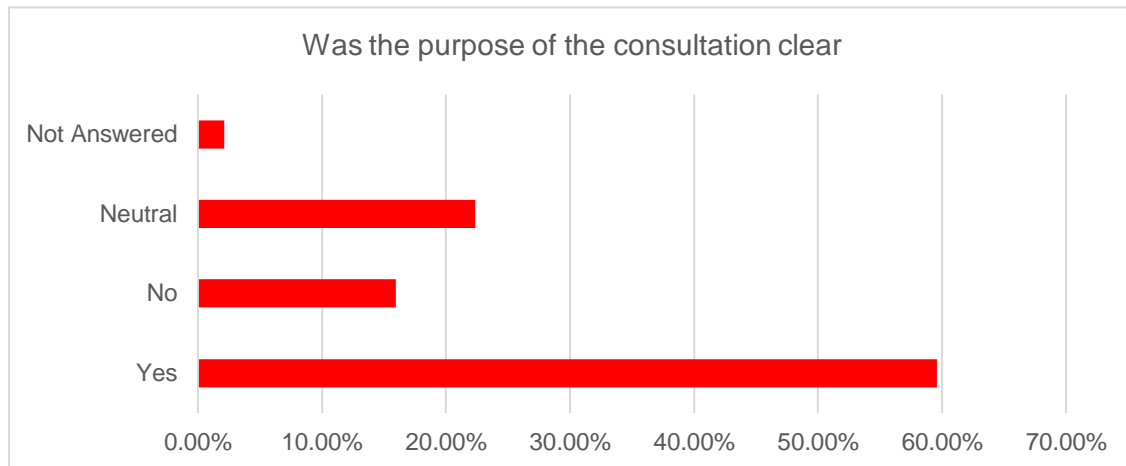
Of the responses given in regards to the Park and Choose the most common regarded the position of the site being of the most benefit to the most amount of people. It was noted that cars would not drive down the Link Road from the A120 or up the Link Road from the A133 just to use the Park and Choose if it added to their overall journey time.

11 Consultation

11.1 Consultation

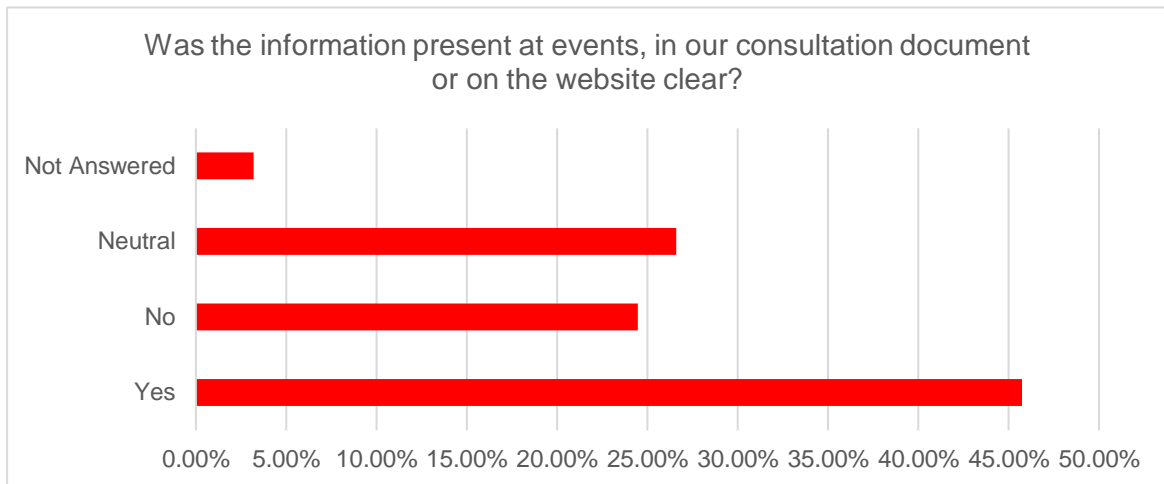
Question 1: Was the purpose of the consultation clear?

60% of respondents indicated that the purpose of the consultation was clear, 22% of respondents were neutral and 16% indicated that the purpose of the consultation was unclear. 2% did not answer the question.



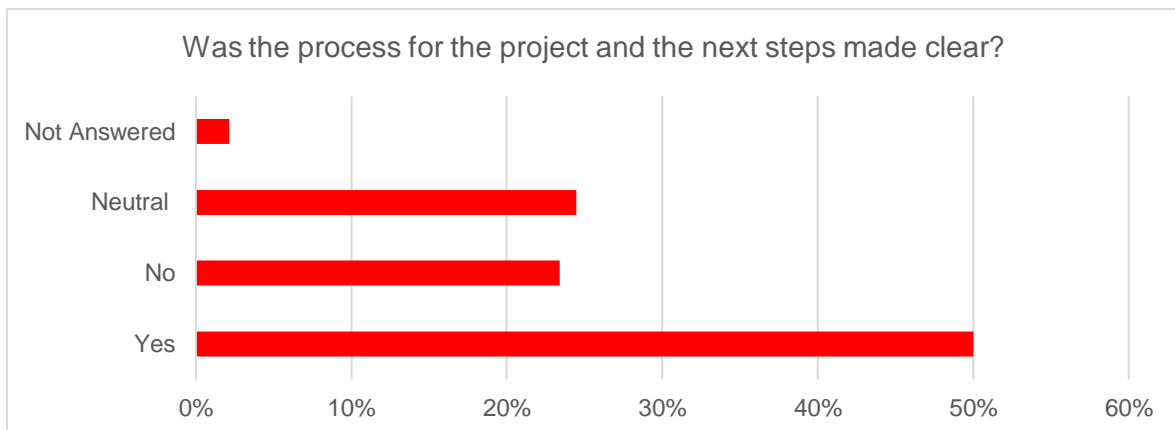
Question 2: Was the information present at events, in our consultation document or on the website clear?

46% of respondents believed that the information at events, in our consultation document or on the website was clear. 27% of respondents were neutral and 24% indicated that the information was unclear. 3% of respondents did not answer this question.



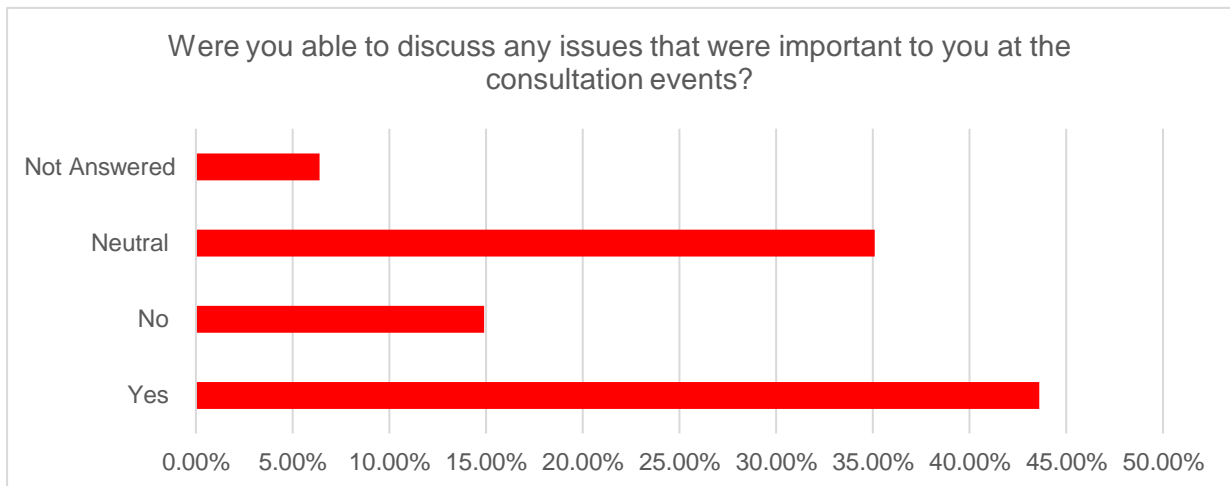
Question 3: Was the process for the project and the next steps made clear?

50% of respondents believed that the process for the project and the next steps were made clear. 25% of respondents were neutral and 23% indicated that the information was unclear. 2% of respondents did not answer this question.



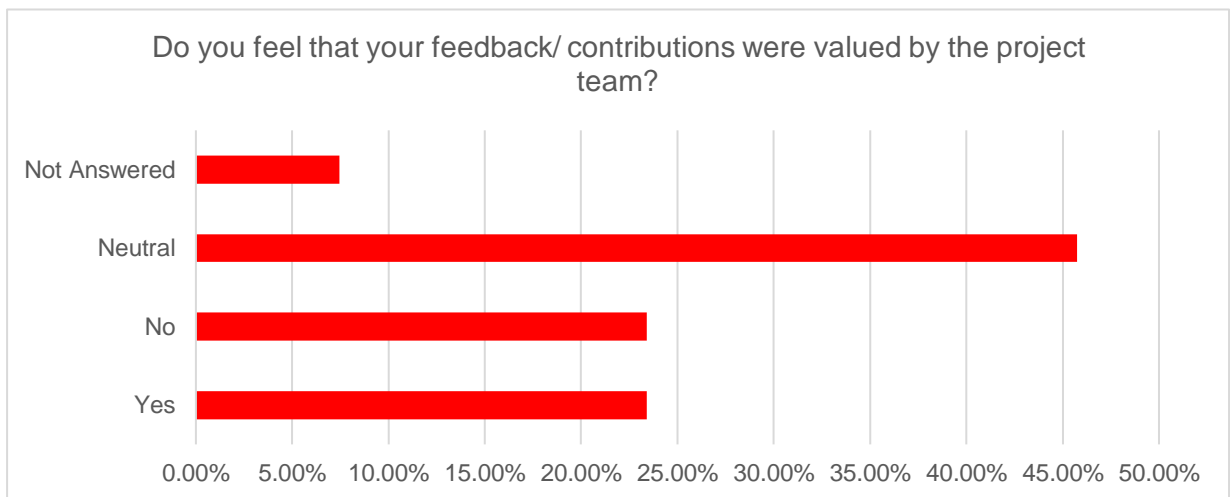
Question 4: Were you able to discuss any issues that were important to you at the consultation events?

44% of respondents indicated that they were able to discuss any issues that were important to you at the consultation events. 35% of respondents were neutral and 15% indicated that they weren't able to discuss any issues that were important to you at the consultation events. 6% of respondents did not answer this question.



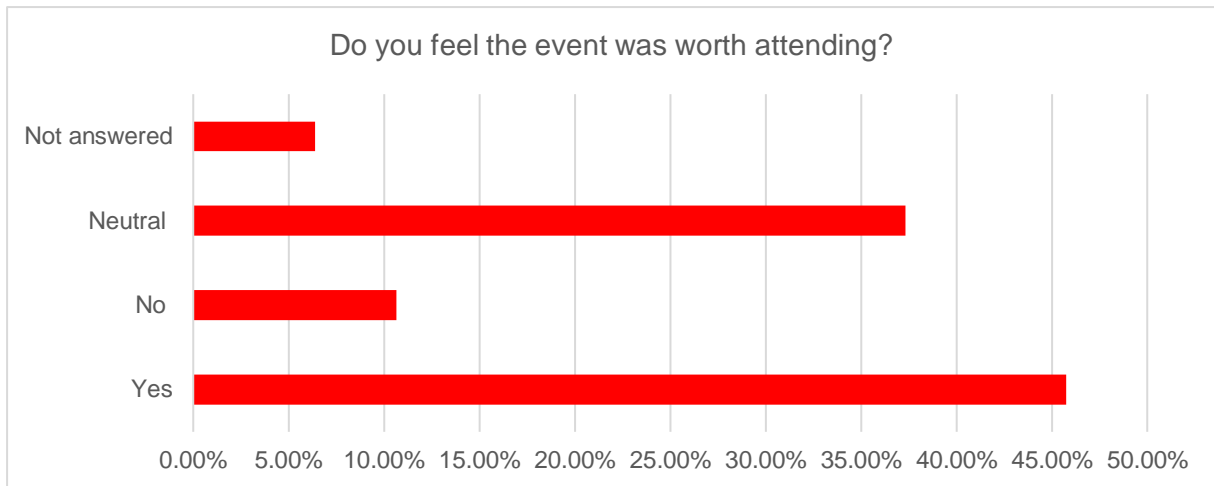
Question 5: Do you feel that your feedback/ contributions were valued by the project team?

46% of respondents indicated that they were neutral as to whether they felt that their feedback/ contributions were valued by the project team. 23% of respondents felt like their feedback/ contribution were valued by the project team and 23% indicated that they felt like their feedback/ contributions were not valued by the project team. 8% of respondents did not answer this question.



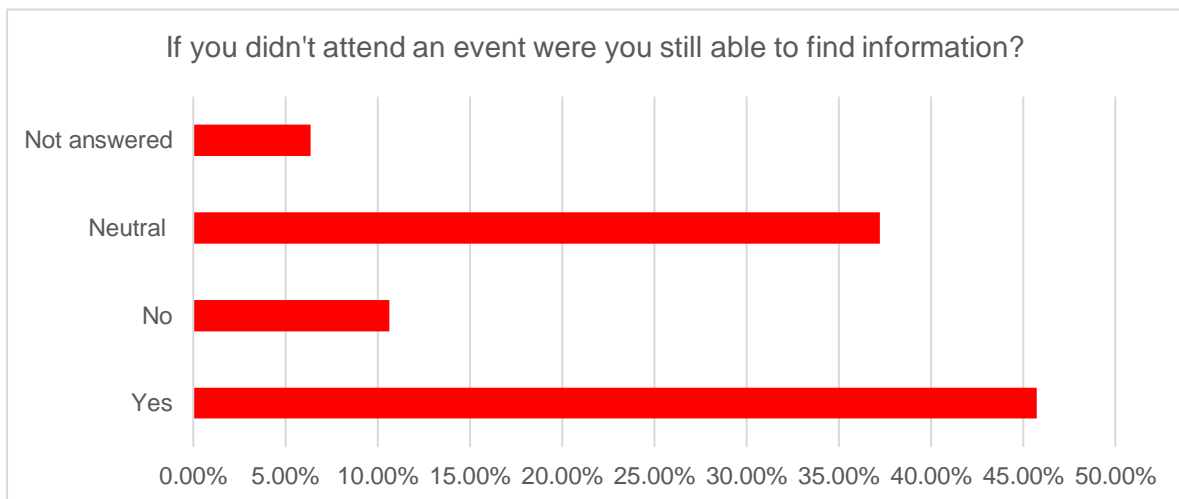
Question 6: Do you feel that the events are worth attending?

45% of respondents indicated that they felt that the events were worth attending. 38% of respondents were neutral and 11% of respondents indicated feeling that the events weren't worth attending. 6% of respondents did not answer this question.



Question 8: If you didn't attend an event were you still able to find enough information?

29% of respondents indicated that they were able to find enough information despite not attending an event. 24% of respondents were neutral and 20% of respondents indicated they felt they weren't able to find enough information elsewhere. 27% of respondents did not answer this question.



11.2 Do you have any comments on the event venue?

While the majority of respondents felt that the events were worth attending, a number made comments on the set up / venue.

Wivenhoe House and the Stadium were both highlighted as being good venues to use.

"Wivenhoe House is a good choice with plenty of room and light.....and parking..!" (#033)

"Wivenhoe House. It was OK, no criticisms. Easy access, good parking." (#071)

"The football stadium was a very good venue" (#073)

While some respondents had some concerns regarding the events including the lack of refreshments and the presence of security.

"WIVENHOE HOUSE WAS A VERY PLEASANT VENUE, EASY TO ACCESS WITH GOOD PARKING FACILITIES. HOWEVER, SEATING AND REFRESHMENTS SHOULD HAVE BEEN PROVIDED. THIS WOULD HAVE LED TO A MORE RELAXED AND POSSIBLY MORE POSITIVE AND PRODUCTIVE EXPERIENCE FOR ALL CONCERNED." (#035)

"No refreshments or chairs were provided. There were many emotional scenes by residents opposing option 3 who were gawped at by the consultants and made to feel humiliated...." (#037)

"Tea or Coffee and a seating area would have been good to allow a period of reflection on comments made at the consultation allowing secondary questions. while we were they. Not having this facility we had to visit a second consultation to sort out issued raised after the first consultation." (#064)

"...THE PRESENCE OF SECURITY PERSONNEL WAS SOMEWHAT STRANGE AND THREATENING." (#035)

11.3 Was there anything you would have liked more information on?

As the process has only reached the options stage, more detailed design will take place in the future, and this one of the key themes referenced by respondents, particularly in terms of the RTS.

"Very hard to comment when there is not enough detail on the whole proposed route for the rapid transit system." (#030)

"How many people does each bus carry, how often will they run, what is the length of each bus, how many people can be moved per hour and many other question unanswered..." (#050)

"Estimates of travel time, frequency and indicative cost" (#041)

The importance of demonstrating how cycling and walking would be integrated / be impacted was also highlighted.

"The consultation should have included at least summary details at this stage, rather than deferring them to "a further opportunity ... in the future" (#066)

"Cycling provision" (#082)

"How the route would affect current walking routes and if closures to rail crossings will negate any improvement that the transit system may provide for some" (#019)

11.4 Other comments on the consultation

The majority of comments related to either being unaware of the consultation, or the nature of the consultation, and the connection to the proposed new development

"This isn't about whether there should be a link road, it's about whether the new towns should be built. This is a very misleading survey and could even be considered invalid because the questions are written in such a way as can be misunderstood as support for the new towns." (#021)

"Not sufficiently publicised to those who are affected." (#074)

"YES the whole proposal not keep a secret from the local residence!!" (#036)

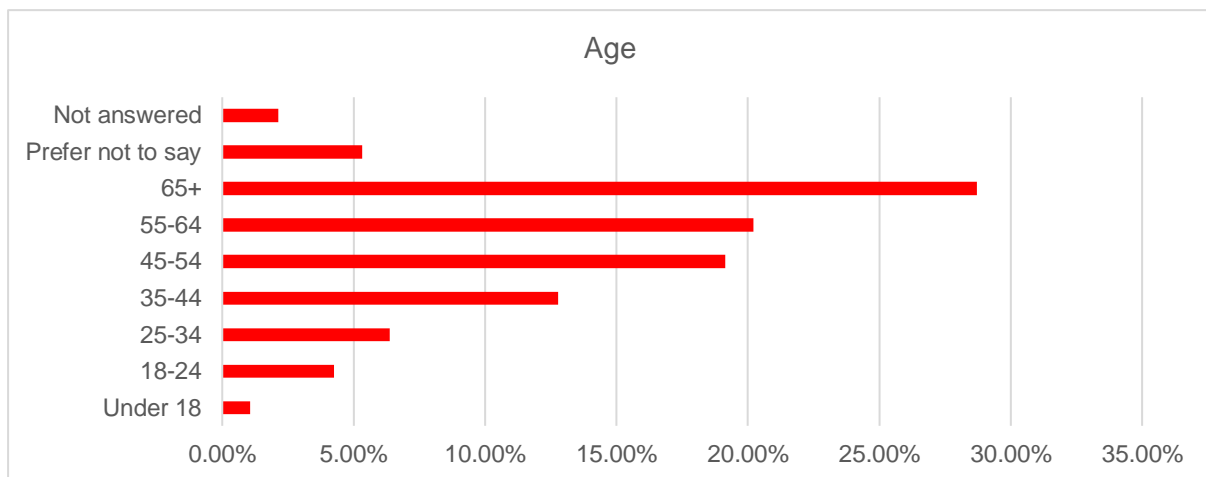
"The local residents of Jubilee Lane and surrounding areas should have been individually informed and consulted before it was published in the local press. The shock of this has been overwhelming and stressful to all the local residents. Our well being and mental health has been adversely compromised." (#037)

12 Demographic questions

Respondents were asked to provide demographic information; however this was not mandatory. The charts below summarise those responses where this information was provided. Data captured included, age, gender, ethnicity, disability questions and carer responsibilities

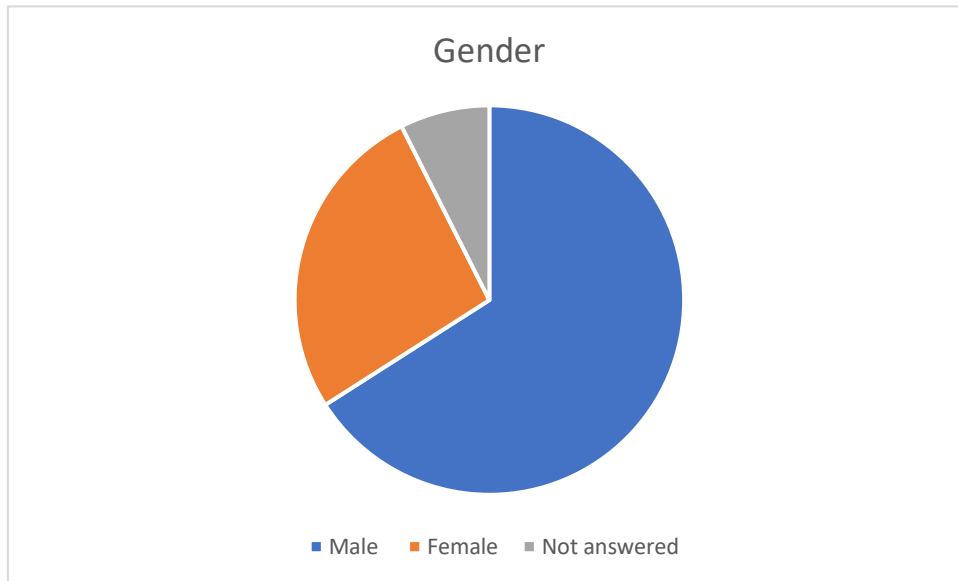
Age

7% of respondents preferred not to state their age or did not answer the question. Where respondents provided this information, the majority indicated that they were over the age of 45 (70%) with 29% of that aged 65+. Of the remaining respondents, 13% were between the ages of 35 and 44, 6% were between the ages of 25 and 34, 4% were between the ages of 18-24 and 1% of responders were under 18.



Gender

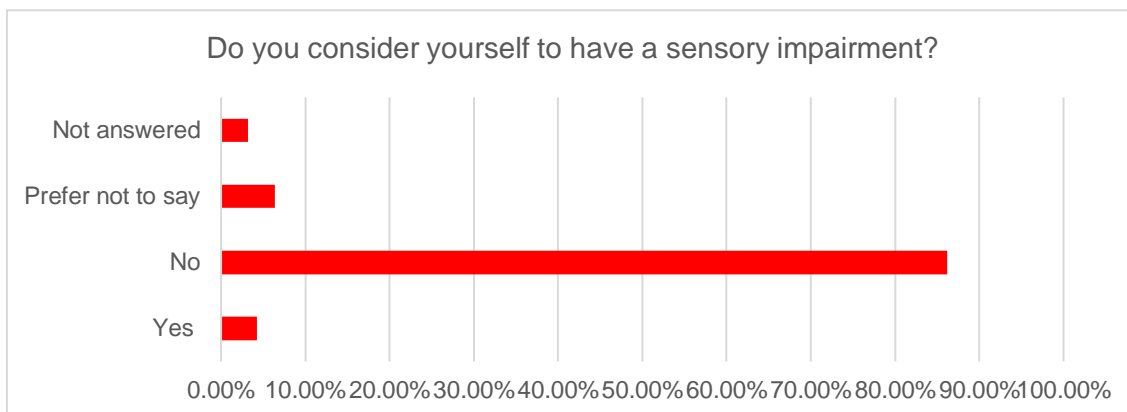
Of those that provided information, the majority identified as male (67%) and only 27% identified as female. 7% opted to no answer the question.



Disability Questions

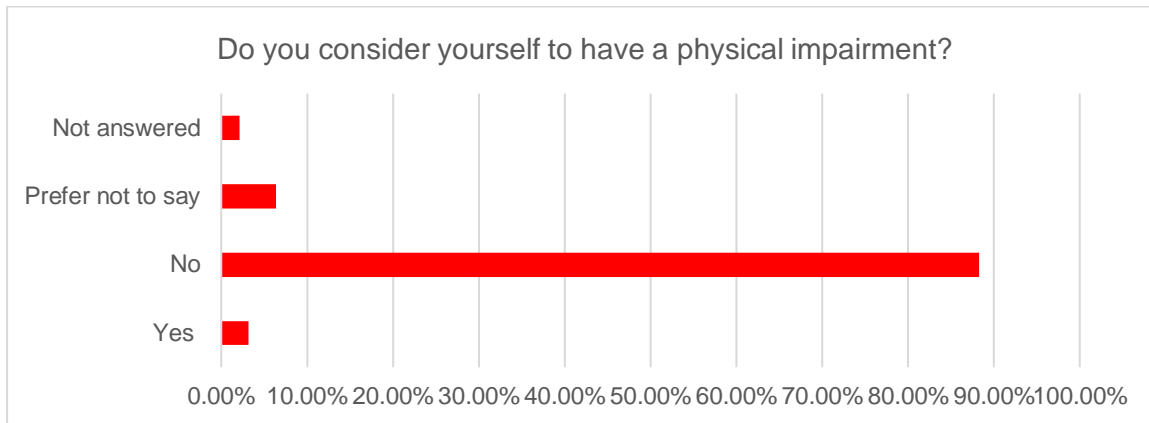
Sensory impairment

The majority of respondents stated that they did not have a sensory impairment (86%), 4% identified as having a sensory impairment and 6% preferred not to say. 3% of respondents did not answer this question.



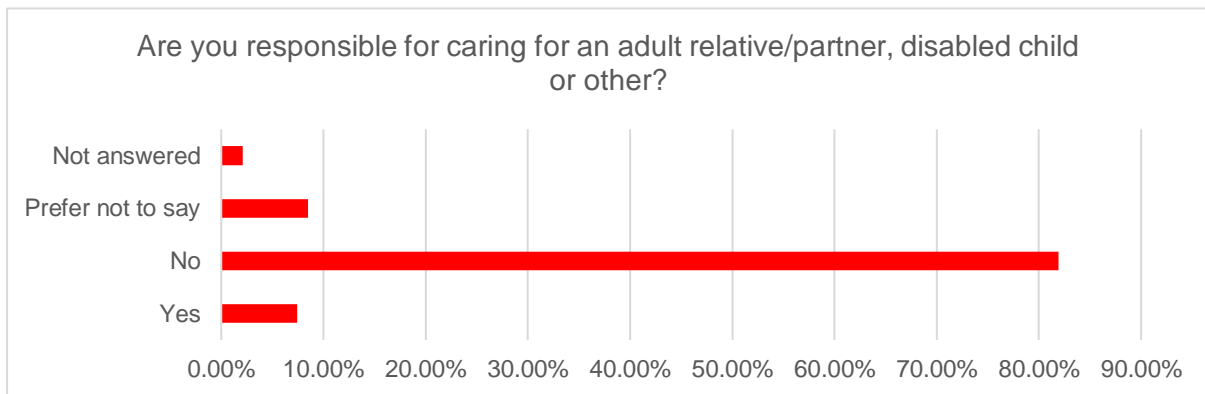
Physical Impairment

3% of respondents identified as having a physical impairment. 88% stated that they did not consider themselves to have a physical impairment and 6% preferred not to say and 2% did not answer the question.



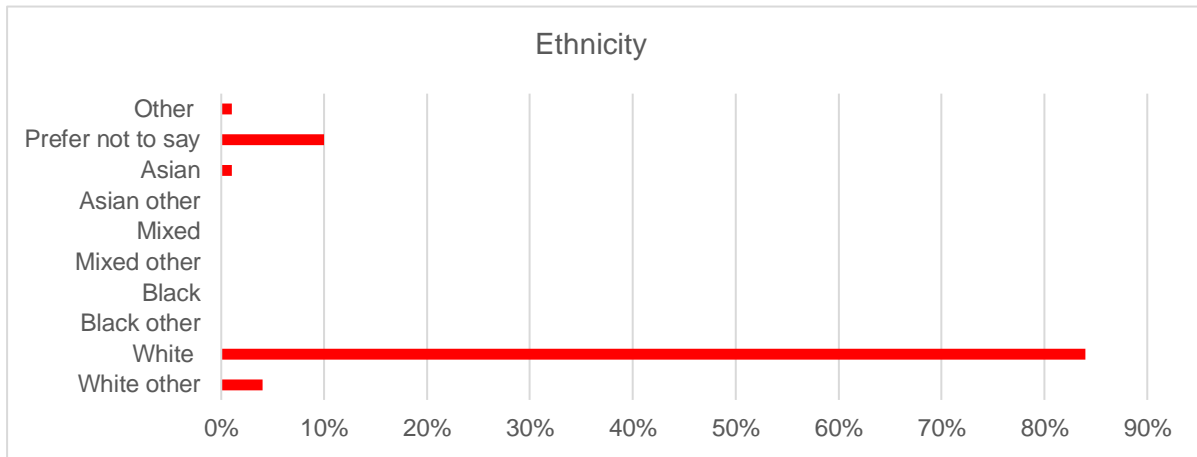
Carer Responsibilities

7% of respondents that answered this question stated that they are responsible for caring for an adult relative/partner, disabled child or other. The majority (82%) indicated that they are not responsible for caring for an adult relative/partner, disabled child or other, and 8% preferred not to say. 2% did not answer.



Ethnicity

Of the total 94 respondents, 93 gave information pertaining to their ethnicity. Of those that indicated what ethnicity they identify with, 88% identified as white including British, English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, Irish, Gypsy/Roma and Traveller of Irish Heritage. Of the 88% who identified as 4% identified as white other. None of the respondents to this question identified as Black including Black Caribbean or Black African and none of the respondents to this question identified as Mixed including White and Black African, White and Black Caribbean, White and Asian. 1% identified as Asian, specifically Chinese. 10% of respondents preferred not to state their ethnicity. Lastly, 1% indicated that they identified as "Other".



Appendix A Full responses from Local Authorities

There were two responses from local authorities, Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council, and one response from the local delivery partner North Essex Garden Communities Ltd.

12.1 Tendring District Council

Tendring District Council welcomes the proposals for a link road between the A120 and A133 and a rapid transit system (RTS) linking into Colchester both of which are vital pieces of infrastructure to assist with movement in North East Essex and in particular to support planned growth in our area. The District Council is pleased to comment on the emerging proposals, continuing the engagement with Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council, that led to the award of government funding for the schemes.

The link road is considered to have an important role in east-west movements into and out from Tendring as well as providing access to the proposed Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. It's construction will improve accessibility thereby bringing economic benefits to the sub-region. The road will need to be designed to achieve both the strategic east-west movement and the local access movements to and from the garden community.

The District Council recognises that a sizeable construction of this type will have impacts on its surroundings and urges Essex County Council to select and develop a scheme that will minimise the negative impacts on existing residents and businesses, the natural environment and heritage assets. It is understood that the consultation options are informed by initial consideration of environmental impacts and look forward more detailed assessment of impacts on the environment, people and businesses being undertaken as the scheme is developed.

The alignment options being consulted on propose a variety of junction positions with the A120 and the A133. Options 1A, 1C and 1D have more easterly junctions onto the A120 than Option 3, which has a junction with the A120 further west. Option 3 raises concerns due to the impact it would have on residential properties, in the Jubilee Lane area, and it runs through the area of search for the proposed garden community. The '1' options have less impact in these regards and Option 1C in particular impacts least on the garden community area. However, the junctions onto the A120 for these options impact Strawberry Grove wooded area and efforts should be made to find a junction solution that will reduce this negative impact.

Two potential positions for the link road junction with the A133 are given for each of the route options. The western option appears to impact less on existing properties and so is likely to be preferable. However, the decision about position of this junction should be informed by consideration of the location of and access to the proposed Park and Choose site as well as impacts on the existing local roads in this area.

Provision of an RTS is supported; it is considered to be an important element of the transport infrastructure needed to support economic growth and also to improve choice of sustainable transport options. The proposed scheme links existing employment, leisure and residential uses, Essex University and the existing transport network as well as providing for links to the proposed garden community, which is welcomed. Colleagues in Colchester, in conjunction with Essex County Council, are well placed to evaluate the options within the town of Colchester. Tendring District Council requests that the system is designed to make access by people approaching the garden community, university and Colchester town from Tendring, as attractive as possible. The location and access to the Park and Choose site will be an key element to achieving this.

The timetable for development and delivery of the scheme, with targets to start construction in 2022 and to complete the project in 2024, is welcomed. The District Council looks forward to working with Essex County Council to assist in realizing this ambitious timetable that will bring benefits to existing and future residents alike.

12.2 Colchester Borough Council

Colchester Borough Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposals and the ongoing continued engagement with Essex County Council on the proposals for the Link Road and the Rapid Transit System. The Borough Council continue to support the proposals for the Link Road and the Rapid Transit System, which is essential to supporting housing and economic growth across the Borough and beyond.

Colchester Borough Council response to A120/A133 Link Road Consultation

The Link Road is regarded as an item of strategic importance to the transport network both within Colchester and the surrounding settlements as well as supporting key east-west traffic movements from within Tendring. Colchester Borough Council (CBC) consider the link road will need to achieve two objectives:

Delivering improvements to the strategic road network which are capable of improving journey times and relieving congestion in Colchester and the surrounding area. The Council recognises the need for the link road to serve a wider than local function and as such its design will need to ensure the efficient flows of traffic to and from the A120 and A133.

Facilitate suitable primary access to the Garden Community, not encroach on to the developable area and ensure that the road is designed in an appropriate way in line with the principles of the proposed Garden Community.

In addition to these objectives CBC also recognise the importance of reducing negative impacts on the local environment including:

existing residents and businesses;

areas of natural habitats including mature woodland; and

heritage assets including below-ground archaeological remains, listed buildings and their settings.

Any future link road will therefore have to demonstrate it can achieve these objectives without unacceptable negative impacts on the local environment. CBC acknowledges the work that has already been carried out in relation to the environmental impacts of the scheme, and that further work will be carried out as the options are developed further.

Furthermore, where new groundworks are required an archaeological assessment should be prepared that assesses the significance of archaeological remains on the route and the potential impact of all groundworks. This includes the proposed park and choose locations which should be the subject of archaeological field evaluation to establish the archaeological significance of these areas. Although the link road is located outside of the Borough, we would expect ECC Place Services to be consulted early on this.

Comments on Route Options

ECC are consulting on two separate options for the Link Road, with different variants on the following:

A120 junction positions

A133 junction positions

All link road options are proposed to be a 50mph two-lane carriageway to carry the flow of traffic that is expected from existing and future growth in the area. The height of the road will vary north to south to blend with existing landscape. The A133 junction will be designed at the level of the current road (at grade) and the A120 junction will be raised over the A120 carriageway with slip roads to join the A120 (grade separated).

Comments are provided below on the options in line with the objectives above and the information provided as part of the consultation.

Option 1A

Option 1A does not significantly encroach on to the Garden Communities developable area. Its location could form the eastern boundary to the potential residential area.

In terms of negative impacts, Option 1A adversely affects the Strawberry Grove wooded area, routed through the middle of the wood and therefore resulting in the loss of woodland. It would also impact on properties in the area including the Grade II Listed Allen's farmhouse.

Option 1C

Option 1C is the most easterly route and therefore would not encroach on to the Garden Communities developable area. Its location could therefore form the eastern boundary to the potential residential area. This is also the shortest route and no land is required from the A120 services or the Waste Transfer Station.

In terms of negative impacts, the proposed slip roads as shown would negatively impact on Strawberry Grove wooded area, removing existing connectivity between the woodland and the natural landscape with potential loss of some woodland. The slip roads as shown appear excessively long. It is considered that this junction arrangement could be reconsidered to assess the potential for the slip roads to be closer to the A120, which although may result in the loss of some of the Strawberry Grove wooded area, would mean that it was not enclosed by roads.

Option 1D

Option 1D is the most westerly of the Option 1 routes and is the longer option. It avoids the areas of woodland, apart from the top corner of the Strawberry Grove wooded area and is further away from the Listed Building.

In terms of negative impacts, the route is further west and therefore has potential to impact on the proposed Garden Community developable area.

Option 3

The northern section of Option 3 runs further westwards than Option 1. The new junction would utilise the existing location of the Bromley Road overbridge, which would be removed and replaced on a different alignment close by. In terms of the relationship to the Garden Community Option 3 is likely to encroach on to the developable area.

In terms of negative impacts Option 3 requires the closure of the existing slip roads to the Waste Transfer Station and traffic may therefore be required to use the local road network. The route also passes close to existing properties and may cause significant impacts on residential amenity. The route would also impact on the Public Right of Way network.

A133 Links

Two locations are proposed for Options 1 and 3 for the junction of the Link Road with the A133. The eastern option would link with Elmstead Road (south of the A133). The second location is slightly to the west of this option. No detail is provided on the impact the two different locations may have on travel patterns. It is considered that further information is required to understand the impact on the local road network. In particular, the eastern

option may result in additional traffic on Elmstead Road south of the A133 and therefore CBC would like to see further detail on the potential increase in traffic on Elmstead Road for this option, and mitigation measures that could be undertaken, prior to a decision being made. The Borough Council would wish to continue the close working and dialogue with the County Council, to further understand the impact on the local road network, particularly on Elmstead Road and links into Wivenhoe, before a decision is made on the location of the junction of the Link Road with the A133.

Conclusions on Link Road Route Options

CBC has reviewed the route options contained in the consultation material in terms of their ability to meet the objectives of serving as primary access for the Garden Community (without encroaching into the developable area), its ability to relate to the design of the garden community, as well as their potential impact on the local environment (residential properties, natural habitats and heritage assets).

In conclusion CBC consider Option 1 as preferable in terms of its ability to meet the objectives. It is considered that Option 1C may be preferable in terms of it being the most easterly proposed layout. However, it is felt that the design of the slip roads in this option are currently too long and result in the area of woodland being left isolated. If this option is taken forward, consideration should be given to redesigning the slip roads to overcome this. CBC considers that continued close liaison with the North Essex Authorities is important to ensure that the road is designed in line with the Masterplan and design principles for the proposed Garden Community, to ensure an appropriate relationship between the road and the future community.

At the southern end of the Link Road, CBC would like to see more detail on the impact on the road network to the south of the A133 before a decision is made on the options.

Colchester Borough Council response to North Essex Rapid Transit System Stage 1 Options Technical Note

The Rapid Transit System (RTS) is a critical piece of transport infrastructure to not only support sustainable transport provisions at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community but also to improve public transport services across the North Essex sub-region. The RTS will achieve this through the provision of a public transport system that links key growth areas at the Garden Communities with established employment, leisure and retail areas including Colchester town centre.

That being the case the future route options of the RTS need to be considered from the perspectives of a variety of users, e.g. future Garden Community residents, existing public

transport users and persuading existing car users to switch to the RTS. These perspectives need to be recognised in decisions made on the route of the RTS as well as other considerations relating to the operation of the service including journey times, number and locations of stops, frequency of service, and integration with the existing transport network (public transport hubs and walking and cycling measures).

The provision of RTS is included in Section 1 of the North Essex Local Plans and as such the North Essex Authorities have published evidence to demonstrate its deliverability. These documents consist of the North Essex Rapid Transit System Study published in December 2017 and the North Essex Rapid Transit System: From Concept to Plan which was published in July 2019.

Comments on Stage 1 Route Options

Essex County Council are consulting on Route Options for the RTS route. The RTS has been split into four sections, where the route varies into different options:

Section A forms the part of the route from the town centre to the existing Colchester Park and Ride site north of the A12;

Section B covers the part of the route through Colchester town centre through to the eastern edge of the existing urban area at Clingoe Hill;

Section C is the part of the route which links the urban edge of Colchester with the University of Essex and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community;

Section D is the routing with the proposed Garden Community.

Section A

Section A covers the existing route of the Colchester Park and Ride service from the parking area to the north of the A12 to Middleborough at the edge of Colchester town centre. Much of this route already has a segregated bus lane in operation. In addition to the existing bus lane on Via Urbis Romanae there is a strip of land located to the west of the Northern Approach Road which has been successfully safeguarded by CBC and ECC for future public transport infrastructure. As this part of the route has been agreed previously it is not being consulted on.

Section B

The Section B route options covers the RTS from Middleborough to Greenstead Roundabout. Due to the nature of the built environment in the Section B area, there are key issues to factor into the evaluation of route options, including:

minimising conflicts with existing uses, including on street parking for residents and businesses;

integrating the RTS with the wider transport network in Colchester (including walking, cycling and other forms of public transport – rail and bus);

maximising the potential for street scene improvements along the route (including new tree planting).

The above points have been factored into CBC's comments on the route options in Section B.

Two options for Section B were considered but are not being taken forward as part of this consultation. These were:

Section B Option 3: adjacent to the rail route between Hythe and Colchester Town Stations. This route was not taken forward at this stage due to number of engineering constraints along the route. However, this route could present a viable option for future improvements of the RTS. CBC considers that this option should be considered in line with a longer-term strategy for using this land for future public transport use. However, it would not support use of this land if it compromised the operation of the Colchester Town railway service.

Section B Option 4: This is a southern route via Military Road. This route is significantly longer than other options and would require land purchase.

The options that are being taken forward are considered below:

Section B, Option 1 - Hythe Level Crossing

This option utilises the existing bus route through the town centre, heads eastbound along the High Street and Southbound along Queen Street, with the westbound RTS route utilising Osborne Street and Head Street. Once southeast of the town centre the route uses Magdalen Street between St Botolph's Roundabout and the Hythe, before following the Hythe Station Road bus lane into Greenstead Road.

Option 1 provides a relatively direct route from Middleborough to Greenstead Roundabout. CBC notes the concerns as to the operation of an RTS which would be in conflict with the level crossing at the Hythe and could result in reliability issues for the RTS. However, it may be that these issues could be overcome, and it is considered that this should be explored before this option is ruled out. In addition to the level crossing conflict CBC also has concerns that Option 1 would require substantial removal of on street parking along Magdalen Street. Any reallocation of road space will have to be carried out in consultation with affected residents and businesses.

Section B, Option 2 - East Gates Level Crossing

This option utilises East Hill, east of the High Street and continues along East Street and over East Gates level crossing to Greenstead Road, before following Greenstead Road to Greenstead Roundabout.

Option 2 also provides a direct route from Middleborough to Greenstead Roundabout albeit with the same concerns as those highlighted in respect of Option 1, above. CBC also notes that the conflict with the East Gates level crossing is more severe than Option 1's conflict with the Hythe level crossing due to the additional train services which run along this section of the railway. As above, it is considered that it may be that these issues could be overcome and this should be explored before this option is ruled out. Again, CBC has concerns that Option 2 would require substantial changes to the road layout including the removal of on street parking. Any proposed changes to existing uses along the route should therefore be carried out in consultation with affected residents and businesses.

Section B, Option 5 – St Andrew's Avenue

This option utilises East Hill, east of the High Street and continues along East Street to the Ipswich Road Junction, before heading north to the A133 / A1232 Ipswich Road / St Andrew's Avenue Junction, and then towards Greenstead Roundabout.

Option 5 runs along the same route as Option 2 but importantly it removes the conflict with the East Gates level crossing by routing up Ipswich Road over the railway bridge. CBC notes that St Andrew's Avenue has benefits as an RTS option due to its relatively wide highway area. However CBC has concerns that the road forms part of the Avenue of Remembrance with extensive tree planting along its sides, the vast majority of which are protected by Tree Protection Order.

Many of these trees were planted to honour fallen servicemen and are therefore considered an important part of the town's history. CBC considers the whole of the Avenue of Remembrance to be a war memorial (as formally designated by the Imperial War Museum: <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/45601>) and therefore any road works which would result in the removal of trees will require careful consideration of this designation. Any further evaluation and feasibility works will therefore require consultation and further consideration by CBC and other interested stakeholders.

From a landscape perspective if Option 5 is taken forward, it would need to be carefully considered as, in addition to the potential loss of an important avenue of trees it may also compromise the setting of the Avenue of Remembrance in other ways, e.g. potential loss of deep grassed verges which form part of the Avenue as the historic setting for the trees.

Section C

This section covers the RTS route from Greenstead Roundabout to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.

Section C Option 1 – University

This route option utilises existing roads (including Boundary Road) within University of Essex's grounds which have existing bus gates and ANPR barrier systems. Boundary Road is a private road and agreements with the University will be required to facilitate their use as part of the RTS. East of the University new road construction would be required to allow dedicated access into the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community by crossing the A133.

CBC recognises the University of Essex as a major stakeholder in both the RTS and the Garden Community and the integration of both with the University will be essential to the future success of the projects. CBC therefore supports the consideration of this option and more widely the RTS utilising roads within the grounds of the University in accordance with any future agreement with the University.

From a landscape perspective Option 1 needs to be carefully considered, as it may have a visual/landscape impact on the Grade II listed Wivenhoe Park. Also, it would potentially involve the loss (breaching) of a number of sections of hedgerows protected by the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 (HR97) to facilitate construction of the link from the University to the B1027. It is recommended that under Appendix K, the Environmental Risk Assessment, when submitted, be informed by a Townscape/Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and HR97 surveys (the latter will need to be undertaken by the LPA (i.e. CBC).

Section C Option 2 – A133

This route will require the installation of RTS lanes along the A133 (configuration and extent to be determined) between Greenstead Roundabout and the proposed junction with the A120-A133 link road. The link road will then provide access to the Garden Community.

CBC considers that this option entails a direct route from the Garden Community to Greenstead Roundabout (without diversion through the University) which offers benefits to the journey times of the RTS. However, CBC recognises that there will need to be careful consideration about the road layout at Clingoe Hill to ensure that congestion is properly managed.

Section C, Option 3 – Direct Access into Proposed Garden Community

This option entails a direct access into the southwestern area of the Garden Community via an access road which will be determined through the future masterplan.

CBC notes that this route is the most direct and therefore will offer the most benefits to RTS journey times however it would also reduce the potential to integrate the RTS with the University which as a significant destination in the area and would warrant a stop on the system. CBC would therefore only support Option 3 if such integration can take place.

Consideration of the access point should take into account potential for land earmarked for other purposes such as future country park along the Salary Brook corridor as it is likely that these two land uses would be incompatible.

As with Option 2 there will need to be careful consideration about the road layout at Clingoe Hill to ensure that congestion is properly managed and that the RTS does not conflict with other traffic.

RTS Town Centre Routing

The current proposals utilise the existing one-way system through Colchester town centre. However, CBC considers that the impact on the town centre, and the potential to alleviate the current challenges of the town centre, should be examined carefully in line with work currently being carried out on the Colchester Transport Strategy and other studies in the town centre including reduction in traffic in the High Street.

RTS Stops/Halts

CBC considers that critical to the operation of the RTS, its use, and growth in Colchester town centre is the location of the stops on the RTS routes. The Council acknowledges that the stops should be spaced far enough apart to ensure that it is rapid. However, CBC considers that, in addition to stops at the stations and the High Street, stops should be considered on Middleborough and at other key potential locations along the route.

Archaeology

In general, the options for the RTS follow existing roads and, therefore, they will have limited impact on below-ground archaeology. However, where new groundworks are required, relating to modifications for the project, there could be the potential for disturbing and damaging archaeological remains. Consequently, an archaeological assessment should be

prepared at the earliest opportunity that assesses the significance of archaeological remains on the route and the potential impact of all groundworks.

Conclusions on RTS Route Options

CBC has reviewed the RTS route options contained in the consultation material to ensure that the RTS is considered from the perspective of a variety of users including existing and future residents, existing public transport users and encouraging modal shift. These considerations relate to the operation of the service including journey times and reliability and the option taken forward should therefore be reliable with consistent journey times. This is particularly relevant to the options that cross the railway line in Section B.

If the route in Section B Option 5 is taken forward, any further evaluation and feasibility works will require consultation and further consideration by CBC and other interested stakeholders to ensure that the scheme does not impact on the avenue of trees along the Avenue of Remembrance.

12.3 North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC)

This correspondence sets out the response from North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC) to the A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System Public Consultation Document and related material that was published for public consultation by Essex County Council in Autumn 2019.

North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC) is a wholly owned public entity between Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council (the Councils). It was established because of the shared desire of the Councils to promote, plan and deliver sustainable strategic growth at scale and over the long term; providing the housing, employment and necessary supporting infrastructure required to ensure the best outcomes for current and future communities of North Essex and beyond.

The centrepiece of the Programme is the creation of three new large-scale cross boundary Garden Communities. These new settlements will act as the catalyst for economic growth and make North Essex an attractive place to live, work and spend time for future generations to come. The proposed Garden Communities will be key to creating a more prosperous North Essex through inclusive economic growth, with new businesses able to compete successfully in national and international markets. The intention is for North Essex to have a diverse and thriving economy, a great choice of job opportunities across many sectors, growing prosperity and improving life chances for all its citizens, today and into the future. The

effective and timely delivery of key infrastructure is an important aspect of the overall approach.

The A120-A133 and RTS proposals form a key part of the proposed Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, providing strategic access improvements and promoting sustainable movement across this part of East Colchester. The two pieces of infrastructure are important planning policy requirements set out within the emerging Shared Section 1 Local Plans for Colchester and Tendring. NEGC has been fully supportive of the provision of the infrastructure, and the opportunity presented by the Housing Infrastructure Fund to support early delivery.

The planning and design of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will have a close relationship with the evolution of proposals for and subsequent implementation of the Link Road and RTS system. As such it will be key to ensure that full consideration is given to the wider approach, influences and implications including that the direct connections should be to the Garden Community and that the local connections should then feed off those direct connections into the Garden Community.

To date and prior to the outcome of the Local Plans Examination in Public, initial conceptual design work has been undertaken to consider the potential development opportunities of the Garden Community site. This has helped to provide some initial understanding of site capacity, layout and the relationship to strategic infrastructure and deliverability. This has helped to inform an initial appreciation of the role of the Link Road and RTS.

Subject to the outcome of the Local Plans Examination in Public, the Councils and NEGC intend to undertake further masterplanning on the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community starting early in 2020. Joint working with ECC and the local Councils will be critical to ensuring that the infrastructure design work comes forward in line with a wider appreciation of placemaking, including how the local connections then feed off the direct connection into the Garden Community, in order to ensure that high quality and successful outcome can be secured.

NEGC has set out its comments on the current consultation below. In doing so, NEGC wish to re-assert that these comments are made ahead of detailed masterplanning work and remain clear that it wishes to evolve the Link Road and RTS proposals through a collaborative and close working relationship with ECC. In particular, NEGC would wish to ensure that decisions made about the character of the link road (e.g. width, speed limit, pedestrian and cycle facilities) are not necessarily constrained by decisions made on the design of the link road at this time.

Comments on Link Road

NEGC are supportive of the delivery of the road and acknowledge its vital importance in terms of:

Providing suitable highway connections to the new Garden Community

Reducing demand along key roads into Colchester such as Clingoe Hill, St Andrew's Avenue and Ipswich Road, offering opportunities to reallocate capacity to Rapid Transit

However, NEGC notes that the Link Road has the potential to cause significant severance within the Garden Community if not located appropriately and designed sensitively. Therefore, as well as providing commentary below on the location options presented as part of this consultation, NEGC would also welcome discussion around the form of the link and its proposed designation as a dual carriageway with a maximum speed of 50mph.

For the reasons set out above NEGC believes that the detailed design of the Link Road, in terms of its location and form, should not proceed in advance of the masterplanning work at the Garden Community, in order to ensure a holistic approach is taken and one that is not overly driven by highway design considerations. Alternative options, including a link road with a lower speed limit and potentially more active uses adjoining, could be considered as part of the masterplanning process. Notwithstanding our desire to consider the form of the Link Road more comprehensively, NEGC has set out its initial comments on the consultation proposals below.

A careful approach will be needed to ensure that appropriate noise and visual screening is incorporated along the length of the new road corridor in order to minimise any noise, air quality and visual impacts. Given the anticipated character of the Garden Community, based upon a strong framework of green infrastructure, NEGC would support a focus on landscape, planting and ecological measures that can set the road into a green and attractive setting and promote biodiversity. An appropriate green buffer should therefore be planned for along the length of the corridor with a mixture of landscaping, planting and earthworks to create a strong and as natural a setting as possible for the route.

In order to integrate the Link Road sensitively into the landscape NEGC would seek to minimise the height of the route corridor as far as possible. This will be important not only for future residents of the Garden Community, but also to minimise impacts on neighbouring properties and settlements such as Elmstead Market. NEGC recognise the need for a grade separated junction at the northern end, and the road will need to rise at this point. NEGC

would however seek for any impacts to be minimised and where possible the route to be at or below grade along the remainder of the route.

A key objective of the Garden Community is to promote active modes, walking and cycling. NEGC acknowledges that, if a 50mph dual carriageway is taken forward in the form envisaged, the design of the Link Road will not be suitable for walking and cycling and safe and attractive crossing points will be challenging to deliver. It is critical for any design that suitable segregated crossing points can be integrated at key locations such as at existing and potential public rights of way/footpaths. It might also be possible to provide segregated cycle lanes alongside the Link Road in parts of the Garden Community in order to connect residential and commercial areas.

NEGC anticipate that the main function of the Link Road will be to enable traffic movements between the A120 and A133, this removing through traffic from within the core area of the Garden Community and providing relief across the wider area. The initial Concept Framework anticipates primary access to the Garden Community along the A133 for which NEGC would like to explore options for the location of the junction along the corridor of the identified route alignment. As part of the masterplanning process an access strategy for private vehicles will be developed that seeks to ensure that active modes and public transport are the first choice for local trips. This may require the link road to accommodate some vehicular trips being made between points in the Garden Community not on roads within the Garden Community due to the application of filtered permeability principles. The Link Road will therefore need to provide at least 1 additional access point into the Garden Community for traffic that requires efficient access to the strategic highways network, but possibly more depending on the internal street network developed through the masterplanning process. Any access points should also consider access into any land that is considered suitable for development east of the Link Road, likely to be at the northern end where employment/commercial may be considered suitable. Access points into the Garden Community should be treated as important 'gateways' with a heightened approach to landscaping and planting.

In terms of options, NEGC are most supportive of proposals that can achieve the objectives of the initial Concept Framework and provide the maximum flexibility to evolve proposals within the core development area of the Garden Community. As the options move west they start to have greater impact on the potential of the Garden Community site.

NEGC would be most concerned about the route and impact of Option 3. This alignment runs through a large part of the potential development area of the Garden Community and would have the biggest impact on site layout and capacity. NEGC would question whether this alignment enables the site to deliver the number of residential units that the Local Plans and

original HIF bid was based upon. It would cause the greatest potential severance impacts between development either side of the Route.

NEGC would also point out that the consultation suggests certain routes around the A120 to provide suitable access to the services and waste transfer facility. NEGC would point out that access solutions in the northern part of the site will be better considered via the overall masterplanning approach, with access more likely to be integrated into a comprehensive approach to access and movement across the whole Garden Community, and the northern area of the site in particular. Such uses (including the role and function of the services) would be considered as part of the approach to the masterplanning of the site. The access and land use arrangements are therefore anticipated to be superseded by such masterplanning and therefore the proposals set out in the consultation document will be replaced by more appropriate arrangements in due course. NEGC would like to take this opportunity to repeat an earlier point, namely that the direct connections should be to the Garden Community and that the local connections should then feed off those direct connections into the Garden Community.

Rapid Transit System

NEGC are fully supportive of the provision of a Rapid Transit System (RTS) to serve the site, this part of Colchester and the wider network in to Colchester Town Centre through to Colchester Station and the existing Park & Ride site to the north of the town.

The RTS is a key part of the overall sustainable movement strategy and will need to be delivered in a way that can maximise its attractiveness to future new residents. RTS must therefore be affordable, frequent and deliver reliable journey times that are faster than the car. This consultation is not focused on the service pattern of the RTS but rather on routeing, which is a crucial aspect of delivering reliable journey times faster than the car.

NEGC believes that Options 1 and 2 for Section B would not achieve fast or reliable journey times due to the presence of level crossings along each route. The scope to provide grade-separated crossings of the railway line is limited due to the constraints of the urban form in this location. Therefore, NEGC believes these options should be discounted. Option 5 has the potential to deliver fast and reliable journey times as it crosses the railway over an existing bridge on Ipswich Road and would not therefore be subject to delays at level crossings. There is also significant scope to reallocate road space along St Andrew's Avenue, allowing the RTS to bypass general congestion. Additional priority measures would also need to be considered along Ipswich Road and into the town centre. The Link Road may reduce demand along the route of Option 5. NEGC would urge the design team to adopt as a principle that any spare capacity created as a result of reduced demand should be allocated to RTS.

Section C of the RTS system will directly access and serve the proposed Garden Community. NEGC prefer an alignment that will be able to maximise accessibility to the RTS from future residents of the Garden Community. NEGC therefore support Route C Option 3, with a segregated fast route that can be sympathetically integrated into the masterplanning of the Garden Community and provide new communities with good access to new rapid transit services.

NEGC recognise that a phased approach will be needed but would urge ECC to ensure that from the earliest stages the RTS is (at least) provided up to the site boundary of the Garden Community. Having access to the route corridor for the very first residents on the site will be key to promoting modal shift. NEGC would therefore not be supportive of the RTS system terminating at the University, which would be more difficult for new residents from the Garden Community to access and use.

In relation to Park and Choose, a balance will be needed to implement a viable facility that can work from the early stages of development, but also recognising that the Garden Community will be implemented over several decades and influence the nature of local activity over time. NEGC would suggest that the decision should be reserved until further masterplanning has been undertaken, further clarity is available on the potential phasing of future residential and commercial development on the site, and further understanding is available on how much of the network can be implemented from the HIF funding award. Should it be considered appropriate to bring forward early commercial and residential development at the northern end of the Link Road then it may be best to implement the route through to this part of the site and provide Park and Choose at the most convenient location to the A120. However, should initial phases start along the A133 then a Park and Choose site may be best located at the point that the RTS will enter the Garden Community site. The approach could be phased with an initial smaller scale Park and Choose at this location, but with scope for it to be moved later on in the development programme, and the land reused for other purposes.

NEGC look forward to further close joint working on the planning and delivery of both the Link Road and RTS system.

Appendix B Consultation questionnaire

CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

You can complete this questionnaire online at www.essex.gov.uk/link-road-and-rapid-transit

Please feel free to use extra paper if the answer space is not sufficient.

Section one - Personal information

Title: First Name: Last Name:
 Post Code: Email Address:

This questionnaire is for you to provide information to be used by the A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System project. Under the GDPR we have a legal duty to protect any information we collect from you. The information will only be used for the purposes of this project and will not be kept longer than is necessary to do so, up to a maximum of five years. We share this information with our partners Jacobs and Ringway Jacobs but we will not share your personal details with any other agency unless we have concerns that you or another individual may be at risk of harm or if it is required by law. We do not collect personal information for commercial purposes.

If you would like to find out more about how Essex County Council uses personal data, please go to www.essex.gov.uk/link-road-and-rapid-transit or call 03457 430 430.

Essex County Council has a Data Protection Officer who makes sure we respect your rights and follow the law. If you have any concerns or questions about how we look after your personal information, please contact the Data Protection Officer at DPO@essex.gov.uk or by calling 03457 430 430 and asking to speak to the Data Protection Officer.

A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System
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Section two - Scheme as a whole

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'There is currently a need for transport infrastructure improvements in Colchester?'

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'The infrastructure proposed in this consultation will have a positive impact on Colchester?'

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'The infrastructure proposed in this consultation will facilitate and support the housing & employment growth in the Colchester/Tendring area?'

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Section three - Link Road

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'The Link Road will help manage congestion on the A120 and A133?'

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Which A120 junction position do you prefer? (tick all that apply)

- Option 1a
- Option 1c
- Option 1d
- Option 3
- No opinion
- Any
- None

If you chose option 1a, 1c or 1d do you have a preference on alignment in the middle section?

- East
- West
- No opinion
- Either
- Neither

Which A133 junction position do you prefer?

- East
- West
- No opinion
- Either
- Neither

Do you have any further comments on the proposed options for the Link Road?

.....

Section four – RTS

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'The Rapid Transit System will improve connectivity in Colchester?'

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If the Rapid Transit System was introduced as proposed would you use it?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

What is important to you from a transport system? (tick all that apply)

- Relevant stops
 - Cost
 - Journey time reliability
 - Supporting sustainable transport
 - Other (Please specify)
-

Please indicate your most preferred and least preferred option for the Rapid Transit System Section B

	1 - Most preferred	2 - Second preference	3 - Third preference	4 - Least preferred
Option 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Option 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Option 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Would you support restricting general traffic in the High Street to afford the RTS priority?

- Yes - at peak times only
- Yes - all the time
- No
- Don't know

A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System
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Would you support the delaying of general traffic at junctions to afford the RTS priority?

- Yes - at peak times only
- Yes - all the time
- No
- Don't know

For the system to be 'rapid' we need as few stops as practicable, what would you consider the top 5 most important stop locations?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Do you have any further comments on the proposals for the Rapid Transit System?

Section five – Park and Choose

If the Park and Choose facility were to be progressed which would you be more likely to use?

- A120
- A133
- Both/Either
- Neither

If the Park and Ride sites developed into Park and Choose with facilities described in the document such as bike hubs etc. Would you be more interested in using it?

- More interested
- Less interested
- No difference

Section six – Consultation

Was the purpose of the consultation clear?

- Yes
- No
- Neutral

Was the information present at events, in our consultation document or on the website clear?

- Yes
- No
- Neutral

Was the process for the project and the next steps made clear?

- Yes
- No
- Neutral

Were you able to discuss any issues that were important to you during the consultation events?

- Yes
- No
- Neutral

Do you feel that your feedback/ contributions were valued by the project team?

- Yes
- No
- Neutral

Do you feel that the events were worth attending?

- Yes
- No
- Neutral

Do you have any comments on the event venue?

.....

.....

.....

If you didn't attend an event were you still able to find enough information?

- Yes
- No
- Neutral

Was there anything you would have like more information on?

.....

.....

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Section seven – Demographic questions

In order to ensure the continued development of our Diversity and Equality practices, everyone that we work with is asked to complete the information below. You are not obliged to answer any of the questions, but the more information you supply, the more effective our monitoring will be. If you choose not to answer questions, it will not affect your participation. The information you supply below is confidential and will be used solely for monitoring purposes.

Age

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+
- Prefer not to say

Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other, please specify
.....
- Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to have a sensory impairment?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to have a physical impairment?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to have a learning difficulty or disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Are you responsible for caring for an adult relative/partner, disabled child or other?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Ethnicity

White

- British, English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish
- Irish
- Gypsy / Roma
- Traveller of Irish Heritage
- Any other White background, please specify

Black/African/Caribbean, Black British

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black background, please specify

Mixed/multiple ethnic groups

- White and Black African
- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed background, please specify:

Asian or Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background, please specify:

- Not Known
- Prefer not to say
- Any other background, please specify

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Appendix C Landowner letter

Dear [Landowner Name],

Invitation to the A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System landowner one-to-one meeting

Essex County Council would like to invite you to a one-to-one meeting for landowners to discuss the proposed plans for the new A120/A133 Link Road and Colchester Rapid Transit System.

The appointments will be held on **28 November 2019** at the **Colchester Community Stadium, United Way, Colchester CO4 5UP**.

This forms part of a wider public consultation we are holding to gain views on the proposed identified routes for the two schemes.

Information on the two schemes will be available from our website www.essex.gov.uk/Link-Road-and-Rapid-Transit from the launch of the consultation on the 04 November 2019.

As a landowner in the area, we would like to hear your view on these proposals. Our team will also be able to discuss any concerns you may have and how it may affect you and your land. Responses to the consultation will be recorded in a consultation report and will be used to influence our final design.

If you would like to book an appointment with our team on the 28 November 2019 please email LinkRoadandRapidTransit@essexhighways.org. Appointments will be 20 minutes long and will be allocated between 9:30am and 4pm.

If you are unable to attend a one-to-one meeting but wish to get involved, we are also hosting general public consultations at:

Wivenhoe House	Tuesday 12 November	1pm - 8pm
Greenstead Community Centre	Friday 15 November	1pm - 6pm
St John's Church and Community Centre	Thursday 21 November	1pm - 8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	Saturday 23 November	10am-5pm
Wivenhoe House	Monday 25 November	1pm - 8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	Monday 9 December	1pm - 8pm

You can also fill out an online questionnaire accessible from our webpage.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Essex Highways

Appendix D Stakeholder email

Dear Sir / Madam,

Have your say: The A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System scheme

Last week saw the launch of a consultation on the new A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System schemes. This follows a successful funding bid to enable the creation of the new Link Road and for the first stages of an RTS to be implemented linking up key parts of Colchester.

Within our consultation brochure we set out the differing route alignment options for both schemes and are looking for views to enable preferred options to be selected and more detailed design to take place. We would like to invite you to take part in our public consultation as we are keen to hear your thoughts on the proposed idea.

All responses to the public consultation will be recorded in a consultation report and will be considered as part of the options selection process. The closing date for responses to the consultation is **11.59pm on Monday 16 December**.

There are a number of ways you can get involved:

Online - You can find all the information on the consultation and a link to the online questionnaire at: [Essex.gov.uk/Link-Road-and-Rapid-Transit](https://www.essex.gov.uk/Link-Road-and-Rapid-Transit)

Visit a public exhibition - Members of our project team will be available to answer questions and we will also provide paper copies of the consultation brochure and questionnaire to take away. The public exhibitions will take place at the below venues:

Venue	Address	Date	Time
Wivenhoe House	Park Rd, Wivenhoe, Colchester CO4 3SQ	Tuesday 12 November	1pm - 8pm
Greenstead Community Centre	Hawthorn Avenue Colchester, Essex CO4 3QE	Friday 15 November	1pm - 6pm
St John's Church and Community Centre	St John's Church, St John's Cl, Colchester CO4 0HP	Thursday 21 November	1pm - 8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	United Way, Colchester CO4 5UP	Saturday 23 November	10am-5pm
Wivenhoe House	Park Rd, Wivenhoe, Colchester CO4 3SQ	Monday 25 November	1pm - 8pm

Colchester Community Stadium	United Way, Colchester CO4 5UP	Monday 9 December	1pm - 8pm
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Brochure deposit sites - If you are unable to attend the events listed above and you are also unable to download a copy of the brochure from we have a number of information brochures located at deposit points around Colchester. These will be available from **Monday 11 November** at the locations listed below.

Location	Address
Brochures available for reference	
Colchester Library	Trinity Square, Colchester, CO1 1JB
Prettygate Library	Prettygate Road, Colchester, CO3 4EQ
Greenstead Library	Hawthorn Avenue, Colchester, CO4 3QE
Hythe Community Centre	1 Ventura Dr, Hythe, Colchester CO1 2FG
Old Heath Community Centre	D'Arcy Rd, Colchester CO2 8BB
The Community Hall Abbots	39 Ladbrook Dr, Colchester CO2 8RW
Brochures available to pick up	
Colchester Town Hall	High St, Colchester CO1 1PJ

Yours faithfully,
Essex Highways

Appendix E Stakeholder letter

Dear Resident,

A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System Consultation

As you may already be aware we have recently launched a consultation for the proposed A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System. We are looking for feedback on our proposals on the route options for these two schemes.

Information on the two schemes as well as an online questionnaire is available on our website www.essex.gov.uk/link-road-and-rapid-transit. The consultation will run until 11:59pm on 16 December 2019. The feedback gathered from this questionnaire will be compiled into a report and will help us further develop the proposals as well as choose a preferred option for both schemes.

Following feedback from our first event we are writing to inform you about our planned events over the next few weeks. The A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System project team will be at these events to answer your questions and take you through the schemes.

St John's Church and Community Centre	Thursday 21 November	1pm - 8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	Saturday 23 November	10am-5pm
Wivenhoe House	Monday 25 November	1pm - 8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	Monday 9 December	1pm - 8pm

We hope to see you at our events. If this letter has reached you but not your neighbours please let them know about our events.

Kind regards,

Essex Highways

Appendix F Advertisements

Essex County Council

A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System consultation

Investing in the right transport infrastructure can help support sustainable planned growth, manage additional traffic and enhance the connectivity of new and existing communities.

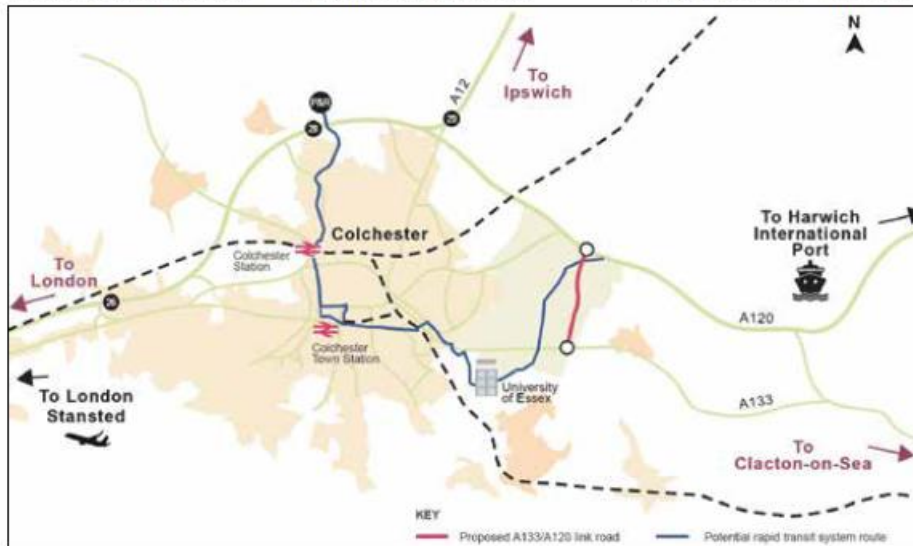
It can also help the local economy by keeping people moving.

In August it was announced that the A120/A133 Link Road and the Colchester Rapid Transit System had been successful in securing funding. Essex County Council are now consulting on route options for these schemes, to enable more detailed design work to be undertaken.

You can find details and have your say at www.essex.gov.uk/link-road-and-rapid-transit

Events will take place at the below venues, dates and times:

LOCATION	ADDRESS	DATE	TIME
St John's Church and Community Centre	St John's Church, St John's Cl, Colchester CO4 0HP	Thursday 21 November	1pm - 8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	United Way, Colchester CO4 5UP	Saturday 23 November	10am - 5pm
Wivenhoe House Hotel	University of Essex Colchester Campus, Park Rd, Wivenhoe, Colchester CO4 3SQ	Monday 25 November	1pm - 8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	United Way, Colchester CO4 5UP	Monday 09 December	1pm - 8pm



Appendix G Website

← A120 to A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System



Background

Earlier this year Essex County Council successfully bid for funding to help support planned housing growth across the county.

Essex's bids total more than £500 million and cover vital transport infrastructure improvements across Essex.

To enable Essex County Council to support sustainable planned growth, it is necessary to provide improved transport infrastructure to support the additional traffic flows and to enhance the connectivity of future developments.

In August 2019 it was announced that the A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System (RTS) scheme had been successful in securing funding.

Our Proposal

We are proposing:

Linking the A120 and A133 with a new road will unlock land to provide housing and business space, improving connectivity locally and within the wider region. It will serve a new Park and Choose site and manage traffic congestion going to Colchester Town Centre, the University of Essex and its Knowledge Gateway Technology and Research Park.

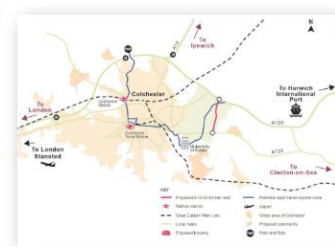
A Rapid Transit System that will prioritise public transport on a key route through Colchester. It will enable housing and business growth, allowing new and existing residents to benefit from frequent, high-quality, reliable transport connecting to the key destinations within the town. These types of system have proved successful in other towns and cities, helping create a shift away from car travel. A recently implemented example of this is the Belfast Rapid Transit Glider.

The system will service a new Park and Choose site on the proposed new community east of Colchester and help to better connect future growth areas with the rest of the town.

Need for the scheme

Investing in infrastructure in North Essex will enable future sustainable growth and greater connectivity within Essex and beyond.

- Significant levels of housing growth in the area
- Increase in employment opportunities
- Congestion, Connectivity and Commuting
- Transformational modal shift



How do I get involved?

Complete the [Online Consultation](#) →

Email: LinkRoadandRapidTransit@EssexHighways.org

Freepost: FREEPOST ESSEX HIGHWAYS ENGAGEMENT TEAM

You have until 11:59pm on 16 December to reply to this consultation via one of the official channels above.

There is no guarantee that any responses after this date will be considered. If they are they will be labelled as late responses.

What is happening next?

Bid announced – August 2019

Public Consultation – Autumn 2019

Planning Application – Autumn 2020

Construction Start – Target 2022

Project completion – Target 2024

Events

Below is a list of drop in public information events taking place over the six week consultation period. The A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System project team will be at these events to answer your questions and take you through the scheme.

Venue	Address	Date	Time
Wivenhoe House	University of Essex Colchester Campus, Park Rd, Wivenhoe, Colchester CO4 3SQ	Tuesday 12 November 2019	1pm-8pm
Greenstead Community Centre	Hawthorn Ave, Colchester CO4 3QE	Friday 15 November	1pm - 6pm
St John's Church and Community Centre	St John's Church, St John's Cl, Colchester CO4 0HP	Thursday 21 November	1pm - 8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	United Way, Colchester CO4 5UP	Saturday 23 November	10am - 5pm
Wivenhoe House	University of Essex Colchester Campus, Park Rd, Wivenhoe, Colchester CO4 3SQ	Monday 25 November	1pm - 8pm
Wivenhoe William Loveless Hall	High St, Wivenhoe, Colchester CO7 9AB	Tuesday 03 December	11.30am - 6pm
Colchester Community Stadium	United Way, Colchester CO4 5UP	Monday 09 December	1pm - 8pm

Appendix H Press release

New transport infrastructure will help 'better connect' Colchester

A consultation in to proposals for a new dual-carriageway between the A133 and the A120, and the first stage of new rapid transit system opens this week.

The plans to help manage future congestion and enable future proposed housing on the east of Colchester will be completed by 2024.

Cllr Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader of Essex County Council and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure said: "Colchester is a town which continues to see significant levels of housing and economic growth and it's vital this we manage this and ensure that infrastructure is provided to not only maintain the network but better connect our communities and businesses."

"We know that around 50% of journeys coming out of Tendring are heading into Colchester, while through the proposed future housing plans there will be additional demand on the network on the eastern side. The Link Road will help alleviate this through moving vehicles from local roads on to the more strategic roads like the A120 and A12.

"However ultimately what we want to do is encourage people out of their cars completely, and the Rapid Transit System will help do this, providing a route which brings together key parts of the town and also links in with new 'Park and Choose' sites offering a range of different transport options and giving people a genuine alternative to their car"

The consultation, which runs until the 3rd December, looks at high level route options ahead of more detailed design.

Cllr Bentley added: "We know that local people are best placed to tell us what is working and what doesn't work in terms of the journeys they make, and it is really important that we get that insight at this point on the various options we have to enable our engineers and designers to take forward and evolve the plans."

For more information on the consultation and dates of drop-in sessions visit www.essex.gov.uk/linkroadandrapidtransit. Hard copies of the consultation can be found at Colchester Town Hall and can be sent to **FREEPOST ESSEX HIGHWAYS ENGAGEMENT TEAM**.

Appendix I Consultation Brochure