

Executive Report

Ward(s) affected: All Wards

Report of Strategic Services Director

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Priority List of Highway and Transport Schemes Critical to Local Plan Delivery

Executive Summary

Infrastructure interventions require a holistic approach to highways and transport. This requires a plan to address the existing problems and to accommodate any future growth. It will need to recognise changes in society, travel patterns, congestion, pollution and health and in most respects should put health first.

In looking at the borough of Guildford, the plan needs to have regard to growth in traffic, worsening pollution, accident rates, the need for modal shift – buses/trains, the need for better active travel – cycling/walking, and should take into account the existing issues on the A3 and the emerging work and evidence from the Guildford Economic Regeneration (GER) Programme evolving town centre masterplan.

Addressing the above issues needs to be our overall priority for highway and transport schemes going forward. Further work will be carried out through the review of the Local Plan, the GER Programme.

Currently, available funding is likely to be directed towards housing delivery and growth in employment. It is therefore important that the Council aligns its priorities with those of other strategic bodies such as Surrey County Council, Highways England and Network Rail in order to develop deliverable business cases and bid for any available infrastructure funding to aid delivery of these schemes.

Corporate Programmes has highlighted five highway and transport schemes that are likely to be critical priorities to the delivery of the Local Plan maintaining its housing trajectory and continuing to be up to date. These five priorities are dependent on other agencies wholly or partly funding the projects and are where the Council will need to work with them to secure delivery. They have been named 'priority schemes' and are in no particular order in this report.

On 11 March 2020 the government published the Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2). These are prepared every five years and the latest strategy deals with funding for the period 2020-

2025 but also mandates Highways England to investigate schemes that could be funded in the period 2025-2030 (RIS3).

The RIS2 does not now include an A3 Guildford scheme but does include a requirement to develop a scheme for the RIS3 pipeline known as A3/A247 Ripley south. The details of this improvement have not been formulated by Highways England and officers assume that this scheme relates in part to potential new north facing slips at the A3/A247 junction at Burnt Common.

As the A3 through Guildford scheme no longer forms part of the Government's Road Strategy Local Plan Policy ID2(2) requires the Council to review its transport evidence base to investigate the consequent cumulative impacts of approved developments and Local Plan growth including site allocations on the safe operation and the performance of the Local Road Networks and the Strategic Road Network. The final sentence of the Policy is important in that it states that "*The outcome of this review will determine whether development can continue to be completed in accordance with the Local Plan trajectory or will determine whether there needs to be a review of the Local Plan.*"

The highway and transport Schemes that are likely to be critical to the Local Plan (in no particular order) are as follows:

- SRN2 – M25 Junction 10/A3 Wisley Interchange 'Road Investment Strategy' scheme
- NR2 and NR3 New rail stations at Guildford West (Park Barn) and Guildford East (Merrow)
- SMC 1-6 - Sustainable Movement Corridor
- SRN7 and SRN8 - A3 northbound on and off slip roads at A247 Clandon Road (Burnt Common)
- LRN19 – New road bridge and footbridge scheme to enable level crossing closure on A323 Guildford Road adjacent to Ash railway station

The Report sets out a commentary as to why we consider these schemes to be important. We have also highlighted some of the difficulties that the schemes may create in terms of wider issues that would need resolving as part of their future delivery. Some of the schemes have funding from various sources whilst other schemes have no funding.

We have also provided commentary on the highway and transport schemes that are likely to be delivered by the developers of the Strategic Sites.

We have had a meeting with Surrey County Council to discuss the priorities which they were very receptive to and supportive of and they are looking to align them with their own priorities moving forward.

We have not gone into any detail regarding the Guildford Economic Regeneration Project (GERP) in this report, but we note that there may be significant infrastructure requirements to achieve the transformational change that that Project is proposing.

The Executive Advisory Board considered the five priorities on 9 August 2021. They raised a number of comments and the main recommendations are included at Section 12 of this report.

The Executive is asked to approve the highway and transport infrastructure schemes set out in the Report that are considered to be priorities and therefore critical to Local Plan delivery as currently envisaged. The Executive is also asked to consider the Executive Advisory Board's recommendations set out in Section 12. Should the Local Plan be reviewed or amended, the list of schemes may also require amendment accordingly.

Recommendation to Executive

That the Executive approves the priority list of highway and transport schemes likely to be critical to Local Plan delivery as described in this report.

Reason(s) for Recommendation:

The approval of the five priority schemes will enable officers to set up regular discussions with Surrey County Council (SCC) and Highways England (HE) on transport infrastructure priorities so that progress can be made in terms of the delivery of the schemes as well as modelling the impact of the schemes in any future transport review likely to be undertaken by SCC. If SCC and HE agree to these priorities it will also assist in terms of lobbying central Government for funding towards these schemes as well as assuring that S106 contributions are made, when appropriate, as planning applications come forward, or that the Council can justify imposing a Grampian condition restricting the amount of development that can come forward in the absence of a particular scheme.

Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication? No

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Corporate Programmes Team has highlighted five highway and transport schemes that are likely to be critical priorities to the Local Plan maintaining its housing trajectory and continuing to be up to date. They have been named 'priority schemes' and are in no particular order in this report.
- 1.2 The approval of the five priority schemes will enable officers to set up regular discussions with Surrey County Council (SCC) on transport infrastructure priorities so that progress can be made in terms of the delivery of the schemes as well as modelling the impact of the schemes in any future transport review likely to be undertaken by SCC. We have had a meeting with SCC to discuss these priorities and they were supportive of them. It will also assist in terms of lobbying central Government for funding towards these schemes as well as assuring that S106 contributions are made, when appropriate, as planning applications come forward, or that the Council can justify imposing a Grampian condition restricting the amount of development that can come forward in the absence of a particular scheme.

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 Approval of this report will assist with delivering several fundamental themes of the Corporate Plan 2018-2023. In particular, under 'Place Making', approving the five priorities will assist with 'delivering the Guildford Borough Local Plan and providing the range of housing that people need, particularly affordable homes' and 'making travel in Guildford and across the borough easier'.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Guildford Borough Council Local Plan was adopted on 25 April 2019. The Plan covers the period 2015-2034. The section entitled Infrastructure and Delivery contains Policy ID2 which is named 'Supporting the Department for Transport's "Road Investment Strategy"'. The Policy states the following:

POLICY ID2: Supporting the Department for Transport's "Road Investment Strategy"

- (1) Guildford Borough Council is committed to working with Highways England to facilitate major, long-term improvements to the A3 trunk road and M25 motorway in terms of both capacity and safety, as mandated by the Department for Transport's "Road Investment Strategy". As such, promoters of sites close to the A3 and M25 and strategic sites will need to take account of any emerging proposals by Highways England or any other licenced strategic highway authority appointed by the Secretary of State under the Infrastructure Act 2015.
- (2) In the event that there is a material delay in the anticipated completion and or a reduction in scope of the A3 Guildford (A320 Stoke interchange junction to A31 Hog's Back junction) "Road Investment Strategy" scheme from that assumed in plan-making, or cancellation of the scheme, Guildford Borough Council will review its transport evidence base to investigate the consequent cumulative impacts of approved developments and Local Plan growth including site allocations on the safe operation and the performance of the Local Road Networks and the Strategic Road Network. In the case of material delay in the anticipated completion and or a reduction in scope in the A3 Guildford scheme, the review will consider the period up to the revised date of completion of the scheme. This review will be undertaken with input as appropriate from Surrey County Council and Highways England or any other licenced strategic highway authority appointed by the Secretary of State under the Infrastructure Act 2015. The outcome of this review will determine whether development can continue to be completed in accordance with the Local Plan trajectory or will determine whether there needs to be a review of the Local Plan.

- 3.2 The Reasoned Justification for the implementation of this Policy is set out below:

Reasoned justification

- 4.6.17 The implementation of the three RIS schemes during the Plan period, alongside other critical infrastructure, is required in order to be able to accommodate future planned growth both outside and within the borough. It is therefore important that the promoters of sites close to the A3 and M25 and strategic sites work closely with Highways England to ensure that their layout and access arrangement(s) are consistent with Highways England's emerging schemes.
- 4.6.18 The A3 Guildford scheme is subject to feasibility study and then progression through Highways England's Project Control Framework during Road Period 1. This may require consequential alterations or improvements to junctions that either connect with the Strategic Road Network or are affected by changes in traffic flows.
- 4.6.19 The evidence at the time of the Examination of the Local Plan was that, without the implementation of the A3 Guildford scheme, the cumulative impacts of the quantum and distribution of development in the Local Plan could be considered to become severe during the second half of the plan period. Nevertheless, the evidence also indicates that individually, site allocations may be able to be occupied in whole or substantial part without creating a severe impact on the Strategic Road Network as there are potential alternative transport measures that may reduce or limit the impact of additional traffic on the A3. A review will determine whether the proposed transport measures or additional transport measures can mitigate the cumulative impacts of development traffic on the A3 either during the period that the A3 Guildford scheme is delayed, in response to a reduction in its scope or in the event of its cancellation. If a review determines that transport measures are not able to mitigate a severe impact on the A3 then a review of the Local Plan is likely to be required.

- 3.3 The growth planned for in the Local Plan is contingent on the implementation of a range of major transport schemes which are set out in the Infrastructure Schedule in the Local Plan. However, some of the schemes are more important than others in terms of unlocking strategic sites.
- 3.4 At the time of the preparation of the Plan, the Road Investment Strategy 1 (RIS1) 2015-2020 had mandated Highways England to develop for the next road period an A3 Guildford scheme - improving the A3 in Guildford from the A320 to the Hogs Back junction with the A31, with associated safety improvements. The Council was not aware of the detail of the scheme at the plan preparation and it was agreed with Surrey County Council (SCC) that certain assumptions would be made in the supporting transport modelling work as to what the scheme could comprise. This included the widening of the A3 from two to three lanes in both directions from the A31 junction to the A320 junction.

What has Changed Since the Plan was Adopted?

- 3.5 On 11 March 2020 the government published the Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2). These are prepared every five years and the latest strategy deals with funding for the period 2020-2025 but also mandates Highways England to investigate schemes that could be funded in the period 2025-2030 (RIS3).
- 3.6 The RIS2 does not now include an A3 Guildford scheme but does include a requirement to develop a scheme for the RIS3 pipeline known as A3/A247 Ripley south. The details of this improvement have not been formulated by Highways England and officers assume that this scheme relates in part to potential new north facing slips at the A3/A247 junction at Burnt Common.
- 3.7 As the A3 through Guildford scheme no longer forms part of the Government's Road Strategy, Policy ID2(2) requires the Council to review its transport evidence base to investigate the consequent cumulative impacts of approved developments and Local Plan growth including site allocations on the safe operation and the performance of the Local Road Networks and the Strategic Road Network. The final sentence is key in that it states that "*The outcome of this review will determine whether development can continue to be completed in accordance with the Local Plan trajectory or will determine whether there needs to be a review of the Local Plan.*"
- 3.8 It is noted that Policy ID2(2) requires the Council to investigate both the impacts on the safe operation and the performance of the Local and Strategic Road Network.
- 3.9 In addition, the Government published on 6 August 2020 a White Paper entitled "Planning for the Future" which if it becomes legislation will have wide reaching impacts on the planning system.

Transport Evidence Base used for Local Plan

- 3.10 The three key transport documents that formed the evidence base for the Local Plan are as follows:

- Strategic Highway Assessment for the Guildford borough Proposed Submission: Strategy and Sites (SCC, June 2016);
<http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=21342&p=0>
- Addendum to Guildford Borough Proposed Submission Local Plan “June 2016” Strategic Highway Assessment Report: High level review of potential traffic impacts of key changes in the Guildford borough Proposed Submission Local Plan: strategy and sites “June 2017” Guildford Borough Council, June 2017;
<http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=24635&p=0>
- Study of Performance of A3 Trunk Road Interchanges in Guildford Urban Area to 2024 under Development Scenarios (Mott MacDonald, April 2018).
<http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=27376&p=0>
and
<http://www.guildford.gov.uk/newlocalplan/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=27505&p=0>

3.11 Highway and transport Schemes that are likely to be critical to the Local Plan (in no particular order).

PRIORITY - SRN2 – M25 Junction 10/A3 Wisley Interchange ‘Road Investment Strategy’ scheme

3.12 This scheme is currently at Development Consent Order (DCO) application stage and has been through an Examination and the Inspectors have submitted a report to the Secretary of State (SoS). However, the SoS has delayed the decision twice on the scheme with a revised decision date of 12 November 2021 as more information and clarification is sought on environmental matters.

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/m25-junction-10a3-wisley-interchange-improvement/>

3.13 At a high level, the scheme involves the widening of the A3 between Ockham and Painshill junctions to four lanes, the construction of an enlarged roundabout at the A3/M25 junction and the stopping up of the majority of the access points to the A3 along the section to be widened. This includes the closure of the Wisley Lane left-in/left-out junction which serves RHS Wisley. Wisley Lane will be served by a new road on the south side of the A3 known as the Wisley Lane diversion which will connect into the Ockham roundabout junction. A new bridge will be constructed over the A3 to connect the Wisley Lane diversion to Wisley Lane.

3.14 In addition, the Old Lane junction which connects onto the A3 southbound slip from the A3/M25 junction will be improved to a merge which should enhance road safety and provide more capacity.

3.15 The Council appeared at the Examination alongside SCC and raised concerns about a number of matters, but the key concerns were the impact of additional traffic flows on B2215 Ripley and through the various rural lanes surrounding the A3. The Council and SCC requested that the scheme funds a substantial package of measures to reduce the impact of the additional traffic on Ripley High

Street and we are waiting to see whether the Inspectors and the SoS agreed with the evidence submitted.

- 3.16 The proposals have been developed in part to accommodate the level of growth proposed in the Council's Local Plan. In particular, the former Wisley Airfield site is dependent on the improvements to widen the A3 northbound and improve the northbound slip from the Ockham roundabout. Also, the improvements to Old Lane to road safety and capacity will enable some southbound trips from the site to use this junction to access the A3 rather than routing through Ripley along the B2215 to access the south facing slips at Burnt Common.
- 3.17 If the DCO is not allowed by the SoS then it will bring into question the delivery of the former Wisley Airfield housing allocation. The only potential way that this scheme could come forward would be for the developer to fund substantial improvements to the northbound carriageway of the A3 between Ockham and the A3/M25 junction, as well as improving the A3/M25 roundabout junction. This could cost tens of millions and delay the housing delivery for the site. Also, it is not known how this additional cost would affect the viability of the site.
- 3.18 This is considered to be a high priority for the Local Plan proposed level of growth because of the strategic nature of the improvement and the amount of housing it will potentially unlock.

PRIORITY - NR2 and NR3 New rail stations at Guildford West (Park Barn) and Guildford East (Merrow)

- 3.19 In the absence of the A3 through Guildford scheme (SRN1), it will be critical to manage down the amount of traffic generated by the strategic sites at Blackwell Farm and Gosden Hill to make them sustainable communities that are not reliant on car-based trips using the A3. The Council and the developers will need to demonstrate to the satisfaction of Highways England that these allocations will not have a severe impact on the safe and efficient running of the A3, particularly the section between A31 and Stoke Interchange where there are only two running lanes in each direction and there is daily congestion and road safety issues.
- 3.20 Although detailed analysis has yet to be completed, anecdotally the new rail stations would not only serve the strategic sites at Blackwell Farm and Gosden Hill, thereby reducing their car borne trips but also serve the wider communities who either currently travel by car or use more distant rail stations potentially driving to park. In particular, the Guildford West station would serve the Royal Surrey County Hospital, the University of Surrey, the Surrey Research Park and the community of Park Barn which includes primary and secondary schools. Many visitors or employees of these sites use the car to access the sites and the main longer distance routes taken include the A3 through Guildford. The Guildford East Station would also serve the communities of Merrow and Burpham where the closest stations on the same line are at London Road and Clandon.
- 3.21 The land for the Council's preferred location for the Guildford West station is owned by Network Rail, Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH) with land on the

Park Barn side owned by GBC. It is considered that RSCH would benefit greatly from a new railway station at this location due to the numbers of staff that live in the Blackwater Valley area which would be served by the station.

- 3.22 The land for the Guildford East station is owned by Network Rail, the owner of Gosden Hill and Surrey County Council (if an access is to be provided from the Merrow Depot site side).
- 3.23 These stations are therefore considered to be more strategic than just serving the sites of Blackwell Farm and Gosden Hill.

PRIORITY - Sustainable Movement Corridor (SMC1-6)

- 3.24 This is also considered to be a high priority in the absence of the A3 through Guildford scheme (SRN1). Again, it will be critical to manage down the amount of traffic generated by the strategic sites at Blackwell Farm, Gosden Hill and Weyside Urban Village to make them sustainable communities that are not reliant on car based trips using the A3. The Council and the developers will need to demonstrate to the satisfaction of Highways England that these allocations will not have a severe impact on the safe and efficient running of the A3, particularly the section between A31 and Stoke Interchange where there are only two running lanes in each direction and there is daily congestion, road safety and environmental issues.
- 3.25 The Local Plan has requirements on Blackwell Farm, Gosden Hill and Weyside Urban Village to make proportionate contributions towards the delivery of SMC1 (west), SMC5 (north) and SMC6 (east). The reasoned justification for these schemes is set out in Local Plan Policy ID3:

“4.6.25 The planning process for new developments provides the opportunity to maximise the use of the sustainable transport modes of walking, cycling, and the use of public and community transport, and opportunities for people with disabilities to access all modes of transport. This is consistent with the NPPF. For the average person cycling has the potential to substitute for short car trips, particularly under five kilometres, and walking for trips under one kilometre.”

4.6.26 The Sustainable Movement Corridor will provide a priority pathway through the urban area of Guildford for buses, pedestrians and cyclists, serving the new communities at Blackwell Farm, SARP and Gosden Hill Farm including the new Park and Ride site, the new Guildford West (Park Barn) and Guildford East (Merrow) rail stations, the Onslow Park and Ride, both of the University of Surrey’s campuses, the town centre and Guildford rail station. The aim is for journeys to be rapid and reliable by bus and safe and direct on foot and by bike. The Sustainable Movement Corridor will be implemented in sections during the plan period, largely on existing roads and with the urban extensions at Blackwell Farm, SARP and Gosden Hill Farm, and some sites in the town centre, required to make provision for the corridor. The route sections of the proposed Sustainable Movement Corridor are listed in Appendix 6. The Council will bring forward a Sustainable Movement Corridor Supplementary Planning Document.”

- 3.26 Although phases of the SMC have been developed or implemented by the Council with Local Economic Partnership (LEP) funding, the rest of the routes have not been developed in any detail, with some initial feasibility work undertaken several years ago. A note was prepared for the Local Plan Inspector setting out more detail on how the SMC could work.
https://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/29537/GBC-LPSS-025-A-GBC-note-on-SMC-traffic-on-A3-and-Wisley-SNCI/pdf/GBC-LPSS-025-A_GBC_note_on_SMC_traffic_on_A3_and_Wisley_SNCI.pdf?m=636867962546200000
- 3.27 The SMC has the potential to assist with managing down car usage both on the outskirts of the town where the A3 is used by local traffic but also within the town centre.
- 3.28 The SMC schemes within the town centre should be reviewed alongside the Guildford Economic Regeneration Project (GERP) as it is understood that changes to the highway network are being considered within the remit of this project and this may require the managing down of through traffic in the town centre which could be achieved in part through the SMC.

PRIORITY - SRN7 and SRN8 - A3 northbound on and off slip roads at A247 Clandon Road (Burnt Common)

- 3.29 This new infrastructure was requested by SCC as part of the Local Plan process primarily to manage the impact of the former Wisley Airfield development on B2215 through Ripley. The slip roads are proposed to remove the rat-running traffic that currently travels up to the Ockham interchange and put that traffic back on the A3 at the most appropriate point using the major road network to achieve it.
- 3.30 The scheme offers significant benefits to B2215 through Ripley and the adjacent lanes but as recognised during the examination for the Local Plan there is a potential increase in traffic through West Clandon as traffic diverts back onto the A247 rather than using the rat-running routes through the lanes. In order to mitigate this impact, the Council put forward a traffic management scheme for A247 at West Clandon known as LRN24 – A247 Clandon Road/The Street (West Clandon) traffic management and environmental improvement scheme.
- 3.31 In addition, scheme SRN2 – M25 Junction 10/A3 Wisley Interchange ‘Road Investment Strategy’ will have an impact on Ripley as RHS Wisley traffic accessing from the south is predicted to travel through Ripley. Other developments in the Send area such as Garlick’s Arch are likely to add to the traffic impact. Highways England predicted in the evidence for the DCO examination that without the Burnt Common slip roads traffic flows are likely to increase on B2215 Ripley High Street by 74% between 2015 and 2037. This is due to general growth outside of GBC, GBC Local Plan growth and the SRN2 DCO scheme (Table 4.1 of Highways England 9.16 Transport Assessment Supplementary Information Report). This is clearly a significant increase that officers consider needs to be managed through the provision of the Burnt Common slips.

- 3.32 An Option Agreement has been completed with the landowners where the new slip roads would be located which has a time limit.
- 3.33 There is within RIS2 a mandate for Highways England to develop a scheme for the RIS3 pipeline known as A3/A247 Ripley south. The details of this improvement have not been formulated by Highways England and officers assume that this scheme relates to potential new north facing slips at the A3/A247 junction at Burnt Common.

PRIORITY - LRN19 – New road bridge and footbridge scheme to enable level crossing closure on A323 Guildford Road adjacent to Ash railway station

- 3.34 This is a scheme that is currently being developed by the Council and received planning consent in January 2021. The purpose of the scheme is to draw traffic back onto the A323 locally that currently and will in the future be rat-running along unsuitable lanes in the absence of the scheme. It also enables the development sites to be properly planned so that development traffic uses the new road bridge rather than diverting onto unsuitable lanes and roads.
<https://www.guildford.gov.uk/ashroadbridge>
- 3.35 Importantly, it will enable the removal of a level crossing which if the sites had been developed without the bridge then the chance would have been lost, probably for good.
- 3.36 This scheme will enable the delivery of 1,750 homes in the early stages of the Local Plan.

4. Developer Led Infrastructure Schemes

- 4.1 Whilst this note picks up on the top five schemes that we consider needs intervention by the Council and which are potentially required for the delivery of the Local Plan and growth within the borough, there are a number of other schemes that should be delivered by developers as part of their strategic site allocations. In the absence of the SRN1 A3 Guildford scheme, these highway and transport infrastructure measures will be even more important to manage down as much as possible the vehicular impact from these developments. We deal with each site in turn:

Former Wisley Airfield – strategic allocation (A35)

- 4.2 The former Wisley Airfield site is likely to have the highest proportion of car users out of any strategic site due to its location next to the A3 and M25. However, there is still the opportunity to manage down the vehicular trips from the site using the requirements as set out in the Local Plan allocation:
- (5) A significant bus network to serve the site and which will also serve Effingham Junction railway station and/or Horsley railway station, Guildford and Cobham. This will be provided and secured in perpetuity to ensure that residents and visitors have a sustainable transport option for access to the site

4.3 A significant bus network BT2 and BT3 would provide residents with an alternative form of transport to using the car and therefore reduce the dominance of the car. The frequency of the bus services will be key to its success as will the funding mechanism and this is still under negotiation between the developer and SCC.

- (6) An off-site cycle network to key destinations including Effingham Junction railway station, Horsley railway station/Station Parade, Ripley and Byfleet to be provided with improvements to a level that would be attractive and safe for the average cyclist

4.4 An off-site cycle network to key destinations will also reduce the amount of car trips but this is very much seasonal and weather dependent.

Gosden Hill strategic site (A25)

4.5 This site is an edge of urban area site and has the potential if properly developed to be a sustainable extension to the town. The requirements in the Local Plan that will help this to be achieved are:

- An improved junction on the A3 comprising the relocated A3 southbound off-slip, a new A3 southbound on-slip and connection via a new roundabout to the A3100, with associated infrastructure on the A3100 corridor within Burpham

4.6 This would not only assist the development users but the community of Burpham and Merrow by providing a new southbound on-slip to the A3. Currently southbound traffic predominantly uses the Dennis' roundabout on the A25 some distance to the west of the site which means that traffic has to use the A25 and merge on the A3 where there is currently persistent congestion. Removing that merging traffic will offer a significant benefit to the A3. The only downside is that the new access to the A3 may encourage some traffic to 'junction hop' to the Stoke interchange to access Guildford.

- (2) Deliberative process of consideration to be undertaken as part of the development management process of the potential opportunity to provide an all-movements junction of the A3 trunk road with the A3100 London Road, the B2215 London Road and the A247 Clandon Road. Land could potentially be required to be safeguarded for the provision of a connector road to the B2215 London Road/A247 Clandon Road

4.7 A new connector road to A247 Burnt Common particularly if the north facing slip roads are built would divert a lot of traffic away from A3100 at Burpham as there would be an alternative route. However, this is likely to be a long-term strategy outside of the Local Plan period.

- (3) Land and park and ride facility of a sufficient scale as required by projected demand and in order to operate without public subsidy in perpetuity

4.8 This would not only serve the site and therefore reduce car usage away from the site with destinations in the town centre, but it would also capture traffic heading

into the town centre from the north on the A3 which is potentially significant. The park and ride could reduce the demand for parking in the town centre and help free up the A3100 and A25 traffic corridors.

- (4) The provision of the eastern route section of the Sustainable Movement Corridor on-site, and a necessary and proportionate contribution to delivering the eastern route section off-site, having regard to the Sustainable Movement Corridor Supplementary Planning Document

4.9 This has previously been discussed under SMC benefits.

- (5) The provision of extended and/or new bus services to serve the site and which will also serve the eastern suburbs of Guildford and the town centre

4.10 This has previously been discussed under SMC benefits.

- (6) Permeability for pedestrians and cyclists into and from the development

4.11 This has previously been discussed under SMC benefits.

- (7) Land made available for Guildford East (Merrow) railway station, and necessary and proportionate contribution towards the provision of the station

4.12 This has previously been discussed under Guildford stations.

- (8) Other off-site highway works to mitigate the impacts of the development

4.13 Until the Transport Assessment has been completed, we do not know where the improvements would be located. However, the Local Plan transport assessment showed that there may need to be highway improvements along the A3100 corridor but that depends on whether Opportunity 1 is progressed.

- Opportunity – (1) Potential to provide a through route within the site to divert the B2234 to form a more direct link to the A3 at the improved junction

4.14 In the Strategic Sites SPD this is now a requirement to provide a southern access. Whilst it is considered by the Council and SCC to be essential for any planning application for the site, some of the wider benefits are that having an access from the south not only provides sustainable route options but also diverts traffic that is currently using New Inn Lane and A3100 to egress the A3 to a route through the site.

Weyside Urban Village strategic site (also known as Slyfield Area Regeneration Plan A24)

- 4.15 This site is being promoted by GBC and has a current planning application registered with GBC for determination.

Blackwell Farm strategic site (A26)

- 4.16 This site is similar to Gosden Hill in that it is an edge of urban area site and has the potential if properly developed to be a sustainable extension to the town. However, the site is adjacent to the most congested section of the A3. The requirements in the Local Plan that will help this site proposal to be achieved are:

- (1) Vehicular access to the site allocation will be via the existing or a realigned junction of the A31 (see Policy A27), and from the site to Egerton Road, preferably via Gill Avenue

- 4.17 See the comments on requirement (3) below.

- (3) A through vehicular link which will be controlled is required via the above accesses between the A31 Farnham Road and Egerton Road to provide a new route for employees and emergency services to the Surrey Research Park, the University of Surrey's Manor Park campus and the Royal Surrey County Hospital, as well as a choice of vehicular access for the new residents/occupiers. This will reduce impact on the A31/A3 junction, in advance of the delivery of Highways England's A3 Guildford scheme

- 4.18 The benefits of the through vehicular link between A31 Farnham Road and Egerton Road are set out in the requirement above. This link has the potential to remove several hundred vehicles an hour from the section of the A3 between A31 and Egerton Road which is the most congested part of the A3 network. The removal of this traffic will also occur on Egerton Road and Gill Avenue providing some headroom to accommodate development traffic from Blackwell Farm.

- (4) The provision of the western route section of the Sustainable Movement Corridor on-site, and a necessary and proportionate contribution to delivering the western route section off-site, having regard to the Sustainable Movement Corridor Supplementary Planning Document

- 4.19 This has previously been discussed under SMC benefits.

- (5) The provision of extended and/or new bus services to serve the site and which will also serve the western suburbs of Guildford and the town centre

- 4.20 This has previously been discussed under SMC benefits.

- (6) Permeability for pedestrians and cyclists into and from the development

- 4.21 This has previously been discussed under SMC benefits.

- (7) Necessary and proportionate contribution towards the provision of the Guildford West (Park Barn) railway station
- 4.22 This has previously been discussed under Guildford stations.
- (8) Other off-site highway works to mitigate the impacts of the development
- 4.23 These are not known yet but would likely include improvements to Gill Avenue, Egerton Road, and the A31 Farnham Road.

Other infrastructure schemes

- 4.24 The above discussion does not include a number of schemes in the Infrastructure Schedule. They are schemes that will be the responsibility of stakeholders such as Network Rail, Highways England, or Surrey County Council.
- 4.25 Some of the smaller schemes may be delivered through S106 contributions or through the Community Infrastructure Levy when it is adopted.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 The Lead Councillor, John Rigg has been consulted as have Corporate Management Team and Executive/Management Team Liaison Group. A report was also taken to Executive Advisory Board on 9 August 2021. The schemes are in the Infrastructure Schedule for the Local Plan and therefore are publicly available already. No public consultation has taken place on the priorities set out in this report.

6. Key Risks

- 6.1 The key risks are that funding is not currently available for some of the schemes being prioritised in this report and stakeholders may not support the priorities although one of the purposes of this report is to gain support from Executive so that discussions can begin with stakeholders.
- 6.2 In addition, no transport modelling work has been undertaken to determine whether delivering these priority schemes will allow the amount of growth proposed in the Local Plan to be delivered.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 It is considered that approval of this report will not have financial implications as the costs of producing this report and liaison with stakeholders will be met by the existing budget. However, with the exception of the M25/A3 J10 and Ash Road Bridge schemes each project will have significant financial implications for the Council, as there is no capital budget for any of the projects and the Council will need to apply for external funding to deliver them.
- 7.2 In addition, there is currently no revenue budget to undertake the feasibility work on the remaining SMC phases, Burnt Common slip roads and Guildford East (Marrow) station.

- 7.3 If the Council wishes to pursue and fund the delivery of these schemes then a project mandate and outline business case will be required for each scheme which will act as the 'bid' to the Council to be considered for funding as part of the Council's budget setting process for 2022-23. Given the current financial situation of the Council and the fact officers are currently projecting a medium term budget gap of £6million any revenue bid for feasibility funding will require additional savings to be made under the Council's savings strategy to fund the project feasibility work.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 As there is currently no budget allocated to this, Full Council decision may be required if budget is to be allocated to the matter prior to the next Budget Council meeting.
- 8.2 Contracts for the feasibility study work will need to be procured in line with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules. Contracts should be put in place to deliver the studies.
- 8.3 Section 106 payments must be spent in accordance with the terms of the relevant Section 106 agreement. A full business case should be developed for each scheme prior to applying for external funding. If external funding is granted it must be spent in accordance with the relevant funding agreement
- 8.4 Surrey County Council and Highways England are the relevant highways authorities and their support is fundamental to bringing forward the highway infrastructure schemes. Network Rail and any third party landowners affected by the schemes should be engaged early. Title reviews will be required at an early stage so ownership issues and title restrictions are factored into the scheme.

9. Human Resource Implications

- 9.1 No HR implications apply.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 10.1 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report.

11. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 11.1 The support for these improvements should assist with reducing carbon emissions, energy use and improving air quality although Environmental Impact Assessments may be required on a project by project basis to determine the specific impact.
- 11.2 Executive is reminded that a section of the A3 through Guildford exceeds air quality limits for Nitrogen Dioxide emissions. Any development that comes forward will have to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the relevant authorities that they will not significantly exacerbate emissions.

12. Executive Advisory Board comments

12.1 A similar paper to this Executive Report was taken to Executive Advisory Board (EAB) on 9 August 2021. In conclusion, it was agreed that the Executive be advised that:

- the EAB supports the five priority highway and transport schemes critical to the delivery of the Local Plan in principle.
- Guildford West station should be prioritised over Guildford East station.
- Local Plan infrastructure project AM2 (Comprehensive Guildford Borough Cycle Network) should be included as an additional priority scheme.

13. Summary of Options

13.1 The options available to the Executive are as follows:

1. Support the five priorities;
2. Not support the five priorities;
3. Wait until further transport modelling has been undertaken to demonstrate with a higher degree of evidence and therefore confidence what the key priorities are.

13.2 Supporting the five priorities now will enable officers to engage with stakeholders to gain their support and will enable discussions to commence regarding how potential funding of these schemes can be achieved. Support for these schemes will also assist with future transport modelling of them as there is a risk that the highway authorities (Surrey County Council and Highways England) will not support modelling highway and transport schemes that do not have stakeholder support and an outline funding plan.

14. Conclusion

14.1 Corporate Programmes Team has highlighted five highway and transport schemes that are likely to be critical priorities to the Local Plan maintaining its housing trajectory and continuing to be up to date. They have been named 'priority schemes' and are in no particular order in this report.

14.2 As the A3 through Guildford scheme no longer forms part of the Government's Road Strategy Local Plan Policy ID2(2) requires the Council to review its transport evidence base to investigate the consequent cumulative impacts of approved developments and Local Plan growth including site allocations on the safe operation and the performance of the Local Road Networks and the Strategic Road Network.

14.3 The highway and transport Schemes that are likely to be critical to the Local Plan (in no particular order) are as follows:

- SRN2 – M25 Junction 10/A3 Wisley Interchange 'Road Investment Strategy' scheme

- NR2 and NR3 New rail stations at Guildford West (Park Barn) and Guildford East (Merrow)
- SMC 1-6 - Sustainable Movement Corridor
- SRN7 and SRN8 - A3 northbound on and off slip roads at A247 Clandon Road (Burnt Common)
- LRN19 – New road bridge and footbridge scheme to enable level crossing closure on A323 Guildford Road adjacent to Ash railway station

14.4 The report sets out a commentary as to why we consider these schemes to be important. We have also highlighted some of the difficulties that the schemes may create in terms of wider issues that would need resolving as part of their future delivery. Some of the schemes have funding from various sources whilst other schemes have no funding.

14.5 Executive Advisory Board supported the five priorities but recommended that an additional priority be added which is cycling improvements across the borough to improve accessibility. We would comment that we have no problem with adding a sixth priority to the recommendations but would advise that for the Local Plan strategic sites cycling improvements are part of the policy requirements anyway and that these are included in the Infrastructure Schedule. In addition, the SMC will include cycling improvements.

14.6 We have had an initial meeting with Surrey County Council to discuss the five priorities which they were very receptive to and supportive of and they are looking to align them with their own priorities moving forward.

14.7 The Executive is asked to approve the highway and transport infrastructure schemes set out in this report that are considered to be priorities and therefore critical to Local Plan delivery as currently envisaged. Should the Local Plan be reviewed or amended, the list of schemes may also require amendment accordingly.

15. Background Papers

None.

16. Appendices

Appendix 1: Extract from the Local Plan Infrastructure Schedule highlighting highway and transport schemes.