



## Briefing Report

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| <b>Title:</b>               | <b>UPDATED AYLESBURY TRANSPORT MODEL: AUTHORISATION</b>  |
| <b>Date:</b>                | <b>03 March 2020</b>   |
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### SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek authorisation to use the updated Aylesbury Transport Model (2020) for the purposes of assessing the impacts of major schemes and development proposals on the Buckinghamshire highway network.

### RECOMMENDATION

That;

- 1) **The Aylesbury Transport Model (2020) is formally authorised for application by BCC. This will include:**
  - a) **Using the model to assess planning applications around Aylesbury, including undertaking charged model runs for developers**
  - b) **Supporting the development of a Full Business Case for the South East Aylesbury Link Road in Aylesbury; and,**
  - c) **Informing the business cases for additional major schemes within the Aylesbury orbital strategy**

### I. BACKGROUND

The Transport Strategy Service keeps a suite of transport models. These are used for various purposes including assessment of the impacts of planning applications on the highway network, local plan evidence and transport scheme business cases. For several years BCC has made some of its transport models (those that are sufficiently detailed) available to developers for their transport assessments for a nominal charge.

In January 2014 BCC commissioned a model to cover the Aylesbury area for the purpose of supporting a business case for Stocklake Link Road and Eastern Link Road (South). Whilst the existing Aylesbury model is fully compliant with the Department for Transport's Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) standards for the purposes of a business case for those schemes, it required updating in order to attain the TAG compliance appropriate for a Full Business Case for the SEALR scheme. This 2020 model now includes a Variable Demand element and will replace the 2014 Aylesbury model.

It is also intended that the Aylesbury Transport Model (2020) will have an ongoing use for the assessment of the impacts of development sites in the Aylesbury area. It has therefore been developed with consideration for these purposes as well.

## 2. ASSESSMENT OF FITNESS FOR PURPOSE

The model is constructed in a manner consistent with Department for Transport TAG guidance and exceeds their criteria for calibration and validation of models in a number of areas. It was shown to be representative of traffic conditions within the modelled area and is therefore considered suitable for the purposes of assessing planning applications and business case appraisals in the study area.

In addition to the model meeting the TAG criteria, further confidence in the ability of the model to represent current traffic conditions was sought from the modelled journey times along the A413, A4010, B4443, A41 and A418, as well as other roads in the modelled area. This demonstrated that the model reflects observed levels of congestion and traffic flow at key points to a high degree of accuracy.

A secondary purpose intended for the model is that it can be used for other more general assessments of impacts of various transport and development schemes around Aylesbury, and it is considered that the model is fit for this secondary purpose as well<sup>1</sup>.

## 3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

As with the use of any traffic forecasting model it is possible that it might generate forecasts of highways impacts which may not be wanted or supported by Council policy i.e. outcomes from the model could be contentious, especially if considered against previous assessments. The outputs for instance, might show that a development cannot go forward (e.g. some site allocations in local plans are not viable), or that an already consented site might have unacceptable impacts on the transport network.

This could present a reputational risk to the Council and must be carefully managed. In this context, the modelling alone should not form the key decision making tool. It should form part of an assessment process that considers the wider context. These relationships would primarily be managed by the Highways Development Management team in liaison with Transport Strategy and Jacobs.

Democratic Services have advised that the authorisation of the use of the model does not constitute a key decision requiring Cabinet Member or Cabinet approval. Legal advice has also been sought, which indicated that the sign off process was a matter of officer discretion. Service Director approval is therefore being requested to sign-off this model for use.

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<sup>1</sup> Note for larger scale schemes, (i.e. those of a similar size to SEALR and the other orbital link road schemes) it is recommended that an initial assessment of the extent of the scheme's impact in terms of reassignment (through the use of the existing Countywide model) and a detailed assessment of the model's validation in the vicinity of the scheme should be undertaken before the model can be said to be fit for purpose for use as an evidence base for a major scheme appraisal.