

Agenda Item 2019/066 – A12 ECC Housing Infrastructure Fund Bid

Overview

The County Council have proposed a new route for the improvement of the A12 between Marks Tey and Kelvedon (Junctions 23 to 25). This has been submitted to Government as a Housing Infrastructure Funding bid routed to enable the proposed additional housing to be provided on the proposed Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community and these proposals have appeared 'out of the blue' in the Gazette.

The proposals and a plan of the route appeared in the Gazette on Wednesday 27th March (copy attached). This was the first time that Marks Tey Parish Council had seen the proposals and no prior discussions had been undertaken with the Parish Council nor, to my knowledge, the wider community. The report says that the HIF bid was led at the County Council by Cllr Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure who is also one of our three Colchester Borough Council Ward Councilors.

The proposed HIF route sees a widened A12 continue on its current path through Marks Tey in the cutting in front of the London Rd shops and housing and Old London Rd housing where it will be increased from 2 lanes each way to three lanes each way and then it diverts southward from the existing road roughly between the Parish Hall and Andersons, south of the London Road turning circle.

As no consultations have been undertaken nor are currently immanent on this route (presumably because it is not known if the HIF bid will be successful), but it is now in the public domain, we should ensure that Marks Tey residents and businesses in London Road and Old London Road are aware. I understand that following a Government decision on the HIF bid (possibly in about 2 months time) Highways England will do a re-consultation on these additional options for the final route of the proposed widened A12.

Background

I attach a plan of the suggested route of the HIF bid overlain on an OS plan of the area between Marks Tey and Kelvedon and also a larger detail of the Marks Tey area. This plan plots as accurately as I can the other proposed routes from Highways England and from Colchester Borough Council's Development Proposals Document. I also include on the plans what an A12 route to the back of Marks Tey could look like using the same highway curves as on the formally proposed routes. It should be noted that all of these routes should be considered as indicative and very likely to change in detail. The Highway England and CBC routes have been formally consulted upon and the Parish Council have submitted comments which are available on our website.

Parish Councillors will be aware that the improvement of the A12 between Boreham and Marks Tey was included in the Road Improvement Schemes 1 programme (2015-2020) and that Highways England undertook a consultation in 2017 on possible routes. For the Marks Tey to Ferring section, two alternatives were proposed:

- A 4 to 6 lane expansion on the existing line of the A12
- A new 6 lane carriageway a short distance to the south of the existing line (option 1)

Both alternatives continued the existing line of the A12 through Marks Tey adjacent to the shops and housing on London Road and Old London Road with this cutting being increased from 4 lanes to 6 lanes despite Option 1 being labeled the 'Marks Tey Bypass'. Because of this Marks Tey Parish Council commented that we could see no advantage (to Marks Tey) of the relocated new road as it continued the existing separation disturbance to the village and putting it so close to the existing A12 seemed poor land use anyway.

The Highways England proposals announced in 2017 were scheduled to commence before end of March 2020. However, this was always unlikely in terms of design time and the need to obtain the equivalent of planning permission. The scheme has now been guaranteed as a funded carry forward by Government as part of the RIS2 (20-25) programme but the continued debate will cause delays.

Colchester Borough Council's Development Proposals Document of November 2017 prepared for them by David Locke Associates and worked on in consultation with Marks Tey Parish Council proposed further detail on how the Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community might be undertaken. This included a plan for a re-routed A12 through the 'Copford Gap' and round the back of Marks Tey to allow more space for housing across the existing A12 which itself would become a de-trunked local distributor and rapid transit route. The proposals included as part of Marks Tey's representations, a new park adjacent to Long Green and a real Marks Tey southern bypass linking the Coggeshall bypass with the old A12.

On Monday 18th March this year, members of Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and our consultant, Rachel Hogger of Modicum Planning, met with CBC officers to further our Neighbourhood Plan. In a proposed agenda submitted 2 days before the meeting an update on the A12 was requested. At the meeting we were told that CBC could not share details of the HIF bid which then appeared in the press 9 days later.

Details of HIF Bid

The ECC HIF bid is part of a larger ECC HIF bid to Government available here: <https://www.essexhighways.org/highway-schemes-and-developments/bids-and-funding/housing-infrastructure-fund.aspx> . It is

understood that HIF bids are limited to £250m each and this may limit what is bid for.

The current ECC HIF bid A12 route continues the CBC proposals to increase land across the old A12, between Marks Tey and Feering, to allow for housing but also modifies it. The ECC preferred route for a re-located A120 is south of Kelvedon, further south than assumed in CBC's DPD document, joining at a reformed Junction 23 (Kelvedon south). A new Junction 24 (north Feering) would be created to pick up traffic to/from Tiptree and the new road would be 8 lanes (4 lanes each way) around Kelvedon (Jn 23 to Jn 24). The new road would then be 6 lanes (3 lanes each way) from Kelvedon to Marks Tey (jn 24 to Jn 25) where it would pick up the existing 6 lane A12 to Colchester.

However, this would, like the Highways England proposals, pick up the line of the existing A12 to the south of Marks Tey and increase the 4 lane road and cutting adjacent to London Road and Old London Road to 6 lanes. It also proposes to move Junction 25 from the London Road roundabout to south of Marks Tey. This could have a significant effect on the businesses in London Road.

Implications

The HIF proposals seem to create the possibility of increased housing adjacent to Marks Tey without alleviating any of the problems that the A12 inflicts upon Marks Tey:

- separation of parts of Marks Tey;
- environmental impacts of the A12 on Marks Tey in terms of noise and air quality pollution

There will be Marks Tey residents and business who will be adversely and positively affected with each of these proposals, and the Parish Council's view has been that all options should be consulted upon so that these people can express a view. The Copford Gap route proposals are vigorously opposed by Copford and some Marks Tey London Road residents but the continuation and expansion of the A12 through Marks Tey affects some 15 to 20 businesses and over 50 residences who are within 100m of the proposals and they need to be aware. Less than 5 residents within 100m could be affected by a Copford Gap solution, who, of course, also need to be aware.

Proposals.

- I intend to circulate this report to the Marks Tey business and residents on London Road and Old London Road (the people most affected by these proposals) so that they are all aware of the situation.
- I intend to write to Highways England including the report and requesting that all options be explored in any further consultation on A12 routes.
- I intend to write to CBC and ECC protesting in strongest terms to finding out about these proposals through the press and ask for their intentions on future consultation.

The Parish Council may wish to modify the message or restrict this communication.

Warning

All of the above are based on non direct information. They are suppositions based on publicly available data. No reasons for or against a particular view have been communicated

Allan Walker.

Chair, Marks Tey Parish Council.

7th April 2019 updated 6th May 2010

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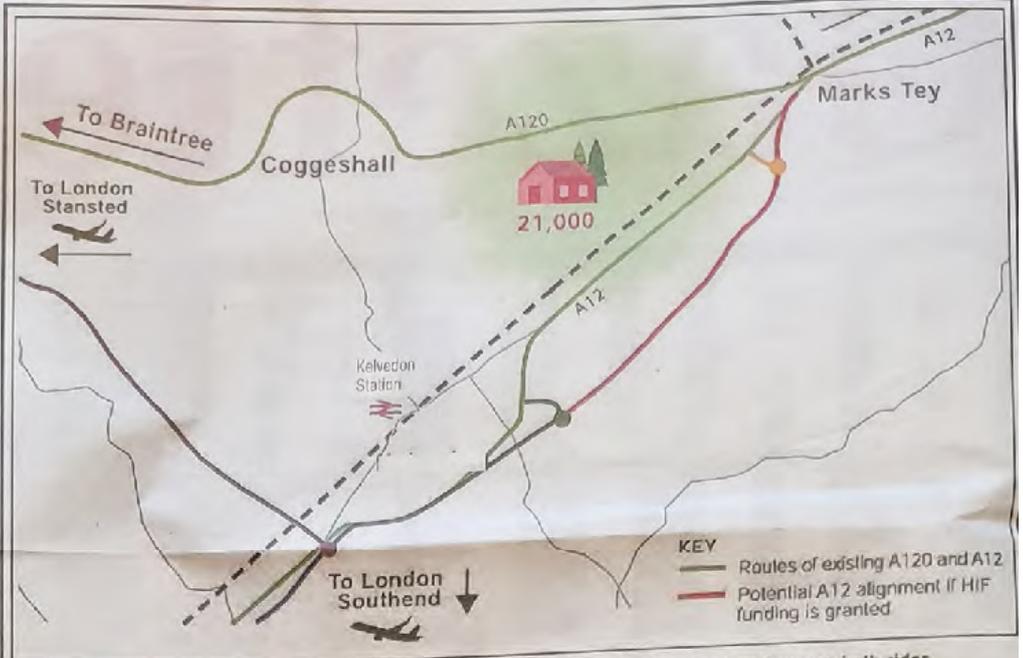
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* SOURCE: E Teimer, based on 1 insert and 1 week online.



■ Realignment - the A12 would be moved eastwards under the proposals and widened to four lanes on both sides

£229m bid to help with A12 overhaul

COUNCIL bosses are hoping to secure hundreds of millions of pounds in funding to help with a major revamp of the A12 and pave the way for garden communities.

Essex County Council has announced it has submitted a bid for £546 million from the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund to help with three key transport projects in the county.

County Hall would split the money between improving the A12 between Kelvedon and Marks Tey, the A120/A133 link road in East Colchester, and the proposed Chelmsford North East bypass.

The A12 improvement scheme would be the most expensive of the three projects, with council bosses stating they would put £229 million of government funding towards the scheme.

By ALEX GIDDEN
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Key to the proposals is the realignment of the A12 between junction 24 at Kelvedon and junction 25 at Marks Tey.

County Hall plans to move the entire road eastwards to open up more land for the proposed West Tey garden community.

The improvements would also see each side of the realigned stretch of the A12 extended to four lanes to alleviate traffic and ease congestion once the new A120 is built near to junction 21 at Kelvedon.

Further changes would see the notoriously busy junction 25 at Marks Tey, where the A120 begins, ripped up and completely redesigned.

David Finch, Essex County Council leader, says securing funding from central govern-

6 We want to ensure that the right infrastructure for all modes of transport is in place to support growth

ment will move the projects forward and ensure the correct infrastructure is in place before new homes are built.

He said: "Housing is one of the biggest issues the nation faces and how we provide homes for the next generation is a challenge that we cannot avoid. However, simply building new housing estates is not the answer."

"We must build the right homes, in the right locations, with the right infrastructure, if we are to create real communities and inspire econom-

ic growth. Essex is leading the way on housing and these bids are testament to our future commitment."

If the proposed West Tey garden community gets the go-ahead it will see 24,000 homes built.

However, a Government planning inspector rejected the plans put forward by Colchester, Tendring, Braintree and Essex councils last year.

Kevin Bentley, Essex County Council's deputy leader, is confident of securing government funding for the three projects.

He said: "These bids are about delivering homes to create great places to live in a sustainable manner."

"We want to ensure the right infrastructure for all modes of transport is in place to support growth in the region."

£99m for bus scheme and park & ride

ESSEX County Council has bid for £99 million for a "rapid transit system" - a fancy name for bus lanes or train line - between the proposed East Colchester garden town and Colchester's Hythe.

It says up to 7,600 homes could be built on the Tendring/Colchester border, close to Essex University, in

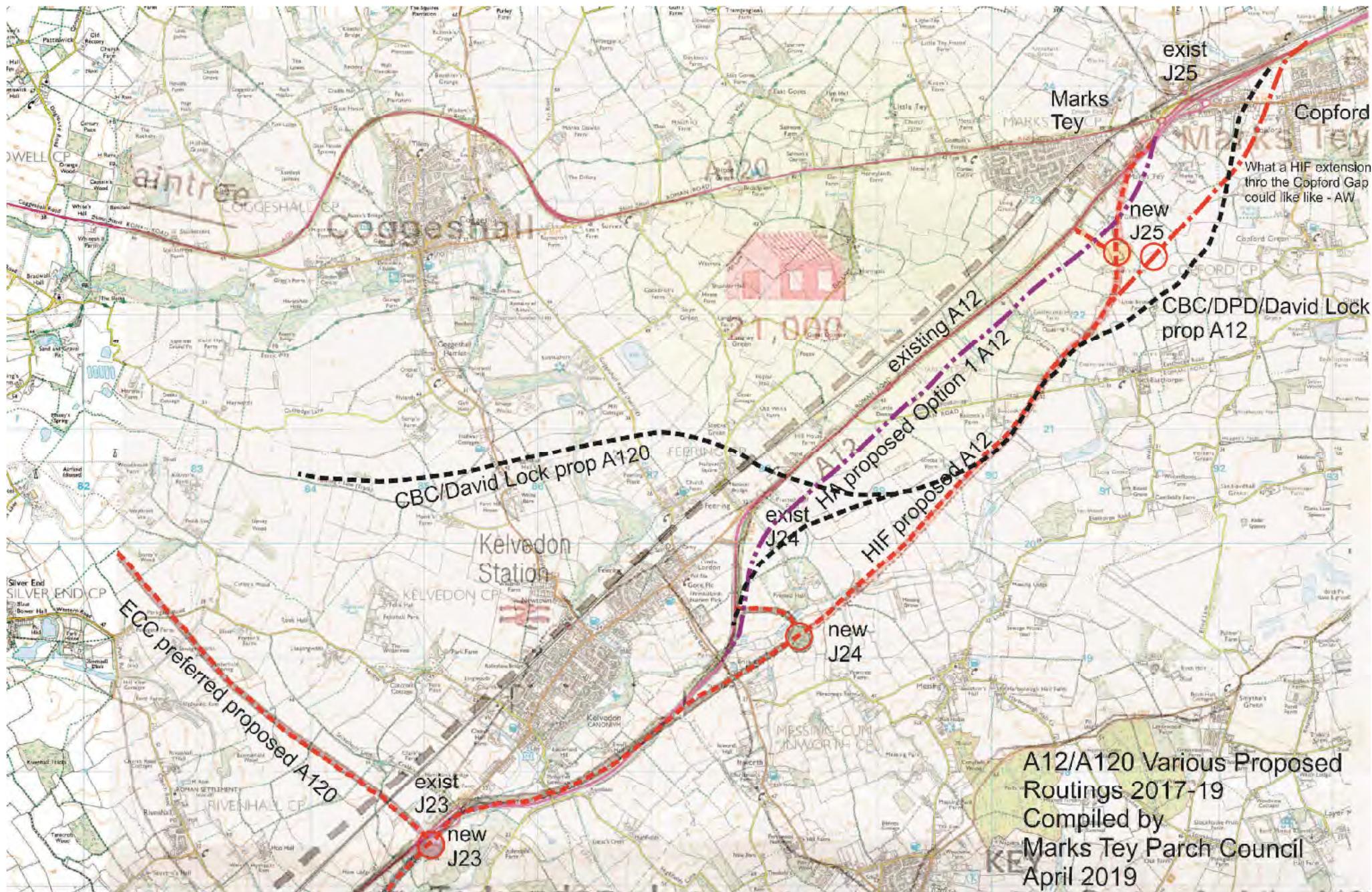
the next 30 years. The council says frequent, high-quality, reliable, public transport on "key routes" will "enable housing growth" and reduce the reliance on cars.

It uses the Belfast Rapid Transit Glider, modern buses on bus lanes, as an example of what could be achieved. It adds there will be a new park

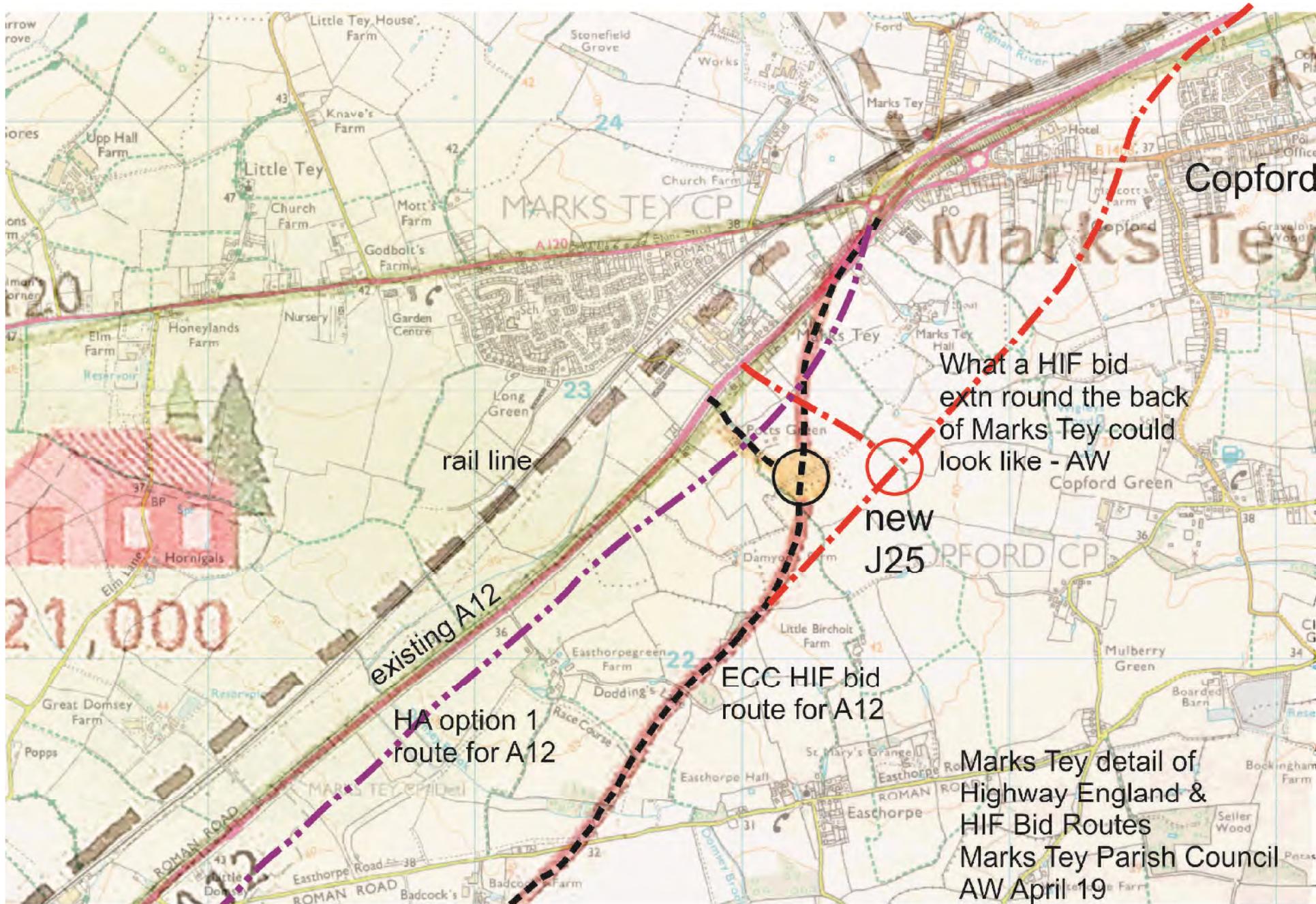
and ride. It continues, linking the A120 and A133 with a new road will "unlock land to provide housing", "improve connectivity" and relieve congestion around Essex University.

A bid of £218 million has been made for the Chelmsford North East Bypass and Beauharnois Railway Station project.





A12/A120 Various Proposed Routings 2017-19
 Compiled by
 Marks Tey Parish Council
 April 2019



What a HIF bid extn round the back of Marks Tey could look like - AW

new J25

ECC HIF bid route for A12

HA option 1 route for A12

Marks Tey detail of Highway England & HIF Bid Routes
 Marks Tey Parish Council
 AW April 19