

CESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO : Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	17 September 2012
Report of:	John Nicholson – Strategic Director, Places and Organisational Capacity
Subject/Title:	Motion on A500/J16 junction
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr. Rod Menlove - Environmental Services Portfolio Holder

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report considers the Notice of motion on the Congestion experienced at Junction 16 of the M6 (proposed by Cllr D Brickhill to Cabinet for determination.
- 1.2 The motion reads:

"The Chief Executive of this Council be instructed to write immediately to the Highways Minister, and to local MPs, expressing this Council's concern in the strongest possible terms at any further delay in addressing the need for remedial work to ease the serious congestion at Junction 16 of the M6 and seeking an assurance that works can commence to the M6/A500 junction before the end of 2012."

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Council continues to work with the developer and the Highway Agency to secure an agreement of both the design and delivery of the improvement scheme at the earliest opportunity.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 As part of the planning permission for the Basford West scheme (ref P03/1071) the developer is required to upgrade the roundabout at junction 16 and widen the A500 approach from Crewe to deal with increased traffic from the development site. In the short term this improvement will also benefit existing traffic flows benefitting both local businesses and residents alike.
- 3.2 This upgrade consists of:
- Improved and widened slip roads off the M6 at junction 16;
 - Traffic lights to better manage traffic flow around the junction 16 roundabout, with the roundabout widened to three lanes;

- Provision of additional lanes on the A500 approach to junction 16 over a length of approximately 600 metres;
- 3.3 The developer is fully committed to the improvements, has undertaken a tendering exercise and has nominated a preferred contractor to deliver the scheme.
 - 3.4 The contractors initial delivery programme shows a construction period of 7 – 8 months.
 - 3.5 In order to deliver the scheme it is necessary for the developer enter into agreements with Cheshire East Council as Highways Authority for the A500 and with the Highways Agency (HA) as the authority for the Motorway network.
 - 3.6 The developer's latest build programme involves a start on site late October 2012. However, there are still some potential issues between the developer and the HA that need to be resolved, which suggests this date may slip back.
 - 3.7 The necessary agreements with CEC are well advanced and it is considered that there are no impediments to meeting the developers target timetable.
 - 3.8 There are, however outstanding issues to still be resolved with the Highways Agency – these include:
 - ◆ The design of the scheme may require “departures” from HA design criteria. This process is ongoing, with negotiations taking place between the developer's designer and the HA team to determine which aspects of the design, if any, require sign off through the HA's formal “departures” approvals process.
 - ◆ The junction lies at the boundary of two different Highways Agency regional offices. This requires different teams and consultants to manage the design and delivery stages and has lead to additional complexity in the co-ordination of this scheme with other planned works.

CEC staff continue to be involved in supporting the dialogue between the HA and the developer and continue to engage, at a senior level, with Highway Agency personnel.

- 3.9 Given the issues described above, it seems likely that construction will not commence by October 2012 as anticipated by the developer. Further updates will follow as the position on these issues becomes clearer.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All wards in the South of the Borough, including Shavington & Haslington.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Cllr David Brickhill
Cllr John Hammond
Cllr David Marren

6.0 Policy Implications including

- 6.1 Delivery of strategic employment sites as allocated in the Local Plan which will benefit the 'All Change for Crewe' programme.

7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Director of Finance and Business Services)

- 7.1 The recommendation does not have a financial implication.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 The Borough has a legal duty to manage the public highway under its control including the co-ordination of third party works. There is a s106 agreement with the developer that requires improvements to Junction 16 of the M6 before construction of the buildings on the Basford West development can commence. Furthermore the developer is in the process of negotiating a s278 agreement in relation to those improvements with the Council. The S278 agreement will relate only to those works for which the council is the Highway Authority – specifically the widening works on the A500.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The Basford West development supports the economic growth of Crewe and is a key employment allocation. Until the works at J16 are delivered Basford West cannot implement their planning permission.
- 9.2 Until the J16 works are delivered the initial benefits of reduced traffic congestion on the A500 corridor will not be realised.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 Not applicable

11.0 Access to Information

- 11.1 The background relating to this report can be reviewed by contacting the report writer:

Name: Paul Griffiths
Designation: Principal Transport Officer
Tel No: 01270 685879
Email: paul.griffiths@cheshireeast.gov.uk