
Cranbrook Plan 2013-2031 Examination

Additional information
for Cranbrook Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Devon County Council Statement:
Revised request for public transport S106 contributions
from the Cranbrook Expansion Areas

Statement Prepared 14th July 2020

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1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 This statement is a revised request by Devon County Council (DCC) for public transport S106 contributions from the Cranbrook Expansion Area developments. It is submitted as an additional statement relating to consideration of the Cranbrook Infrastructure Delivery Plan (Cranbrook IDP) as part of the Cranbrook Plan Examination. This information has been provided at the request of various parties participating in the Cranbrook Plan Examination. It is provided without prejudice.
- 1.1.2 This statement supersedes the 'Public transport' section of the Devon County Council section 106 transport request (June 2018), listed as Cranbrook Plan Submission Document Cran028. It also provides an update to relevant sections of Devon County Council's (DCC) Cranbrook Plan Examination statements for Matters 6, 10, 13 and 14.

2. Background

- 2.1.1. In line with section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), DCC believes that sustainable transport is required to support the proposed development at the Cranbrook expansion areas. DCC's S106 transport request (June 2018) requested a contribution of £8,380,000 towards enhancing public transport provision to Cranbrook, to be used flexibly to help deliver a package of measures including enhanced bus services, enhanced rail frequency and a second rail station. At the Cranbrook Plan Examination, a number of parties asked DCC to reconsider its request for S106 contributions relating to public transport arising from the Cranbrook expansion areas.
- 2.1.2. The Cranbrook Infrastructure Delivery Plan (version 1 January 2019, Cran029) was submitted with the Cranbrook Plan Submission Draft for independent examination by the Secretary of State. This identified a Cranbrook Expansion Area (CEA) cost for public transport of £8,970,000 including £8,380,000 for public transport (as requested in DCC's s106 June 2018 transport request) and £590,000 for electric vehicle charging (not requested by DCC). The Cranbrook IDP has since been superseded in full by Revision 2 (January 2020) and then in part by Revision 3 (February 2020). The January 2020 update increased the public transport CEA cost by £283,140 to include indexation for bus enhancements, and the February 2020 revision reduced it by £590,000 as the electric vehicle charging cost was omitted because it is a policy requirement.

3. Planning for rail improvements and bus provision

- 3.1.1. As stated in Devon County Council's June 2018 S106 request, there is a focus on public transport measures to provide extra transport capacity and mitigate the impact of Cranbrook expansion area development on the east-west corridor. As such, and consistent with our position at the Local Plan hearings and policies in the NPPF, to accommodate development DCC is seeking contributions towards sustainable infrastructure to encourage a significant shift to non-car modes. Central to this are improvements to public transport.

- 3.1.2. Our original June 2018 S106 request was based upon DCC's Axminster to Honiton Corridor Report in which a series of rail enhancement options were put forward, removing the trips from the highway network. However, since the Cranbrook Plan Examination, Network Rail has progressed future plans for the West of England line which puts delivery and funding of the rail enhancements DCC previously requested in question. Network Rail has just published a West of England Line Study setting out a series of work packages for future rail investment¹. It is expected that this would include the option of a Whimple to Cranbrook passing loop and additional platform at the existing station (enabling a half hourly service) which the study prefers over delivery of a second Cranbrook station. Whilst Network Rail proposes to consider the potential for a second station in any future, more detailed timetable analysis, it makes clear that it is the responsibility of the third-party promoter (ie. DCC) to take forward this scheme. The proposed passing loop would mean that a second Cranbrook station would need 2 platforms, significantly increasing the cost.
- 3.1.3. In the light of this planning for wider rail improvements, DCC has revisited its request for S106 contributions from the Cranbrook expansion area development to fund a second station. In the absence of developer funding towards a second station, the mitigation proposed for the Cranbrook expansion areas would be based upon enhanced bus provision, walking & cycling, shared mobility and travel planning. This is considered to be deliverable sooner, with greater certainty and more cheaply than a rail-based approach. It is recognised that bus services continue to play an important role in the overall transport strategy for travel into Exeter. This is evidenced through investment along London Road (bus lanes), bus priority measures at J29, possibilities of bus measures through employment areas such as Sky Park and a Park and Change that is to be constructed off the Tithebarn Link Road.
- 3.1.4. The existing Cranbrook bus provision is a day-time 20-minute frequency, with some buses running on a half hourly basis. The original S106 request provided further analysis on the impact of enhancing bus services, with the outcome of removing 40-50 peak hour vehicle trips. With this in mind and if the relief of the peak hour trips removed by rail is eliminated, it is proposed that a significant upgrade to bus services must be provided.
- 3.1.5. The proposed mitigation is to increase the fleet of buses significantly allowing an operator to optimise routes through Cranbrook, maximising existing bus infrastructure already in place and to link into other public transport hubs, including the existing Cranbrook train station. It is expected that suitable provision for buses throughout all expansion parcels is provided by any applicant including bus stops capable of displaying real time data provided at regular intervals throughout the town as advocated by Draft Policy CB9. This will allow DCC to continue to encourage the best possible provision in terms of route coverage, period of operation and frequency. The detailed breakdown of costs and route options are provided in the table below.
- 3.1.6. These philosophies are in line with the draft Exeter Transport Strategy², which aims to work with operators to achieve a modern, reliable and low carbon bus route. It is also recognised that these enhanced bus services link into the refinement of bus routes into Exeter itself where enhanced bus priority measures on key corridors such as Heavitree Road and Pinhoe Road are to be considered.

¹ Available at <https://cdn.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/West-of-England-Study-Continuous-Modular-Strategic-Planning.pdf>

² Available at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay/consultations/the-exeter-transport-strategy/>

- 3.1.7. In summary, it is recognised that a second station may be delayed and therefore alternative public transport measures are required to reduce the impact on the highway network. The proposed strategy provides, in consultation with Stagecoach, a comprehensive bus network which could be used to serve forthcoming Cranbrook expansion parcels. It is believed that an enhanced bus network, linking into existing public transport infrastructure, represents the best way forward in the absence of a second Cranbrook railway station.
- 3.1.8. Whilst DCC accepts that it may not be possible to deliver a second Cranbrook station within the next few years, we think that delivery of a second station remains a longer-term aspiration in order to support sustainable travel at Cranbrook.
- 3.1.9. All other S106 items (walking/cycling, shared mobility and travel planning) remain the same as our existing June 2018 Section 106 transport request.

4. DCC's revised public transport request for the Cranbrook expansion areas

4.1. Summary of the revised request

- 4.1.1. Having considered the above factors, DCC is changing its request for S106 contributions for public transport arising from the Cranbrook expansion areas to the following:
 - a. concentrate more on provision of enhanced bus provision to serve the expansion areas (cost of £6,128,000 for 5 years, further details below).
 - b. provide £250,000 to undertake feasibility work for a second station to provide the basis of a potential future bid for Government/third party funding to deliver it.
 - c. S106 provisions to secure the land for a future second Cranbrook rail station in perpetuity.
- 4.1.2. It is considered that this new combination of measures represents a package of public transport improvements that can be delivered with greater certainty, within a shorter timescale and more cheaply in order to mitigate the impact of the Cranbrook expansion area development. The total cost of these measures is £6,378,000 as of June 2020, and indexation would be required from this base date.
- 4.1.3. Further detail of DCC's revised public transport request are as follows on pages 5 and 6.

4.2. Enhanced bus provision

Bus enhancement measure	No extra buses (£135,000 per bus pa)	Cumulative bus total	Cost pa £	Cost for 5 years £
<i>Existing provision providing an almost twenty-minutes service, but with a couple of thirty-minute gaps. The present evening service runs every 30 minutes until 2110 and hourly to 2310. The current Sunday service operates hourly.</i>		8		
Increase the frequency to every fifteen minutes , providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> two double deck journeys and two single deck journeys per hour from Cranbrook, a total of around 226 seats per hour. This is based on the existing route and running times; and 2 two alternative routes within Cranbrook each with a thirty-minute frequency, to allow time for diversions from the existing route and an extension of the service beyond the present terminus. 	3	11	405,000	2,025,000
Increase the frequency to ten minutes and separate the through journeys to Honiton and Axminster. This option would allow for two or three alternative routes within Cranbrook and allow the journeys from Axminster and Honiton to operate along London Road (giving a more direct route and adding a fourth route through Cranbrook). Provides flexibility over the size of bus for all Cranbrook journeys, allowing double decks to be used on any journey. Maximum seats per hour would be 526 from Cranbrook.	5	16	675,000	3,375,000
Increase evening buses to a twenty-minute frequency. The cost is for the additional drivers and mileage to run four buses (rather than two buses at present).	0	16	93,600	468,000
Increase Sunday buses to a twenty-minute frequency. The cost is for the additional drivers and mileage to run four buses (rather than one bus at present).	0	16	52,000	260,000
Total	8	16	1,225,600	6,128,000

4.3. Feasibility work for a second Cranbrook station

- 4.3.1. DCC accepts that further feasibility work into a second Cranbrook station would need to be undertaken to consider in more detail timetabling and design issues in the light of the proposed passing loop. DCC has previously commissioned a Feasibility Study of a second Cranbrook rail station (carried out by Jacobs, November 2015 with Addendum July 2016) which covered Governance for Rail Investment Projects (GRIP) stages 1 and 2.
- 4.3.2. This feasibility study would need to be updated and extended to cover GRIP stages 3 and 4 (option selection and single option development). A S106 contribution of £250,000 is requested to fund this work. This additional feasibility work is needed to provide the basis of a potential future bid for Government/third party funding to deliver it.

4.4. Securing the land for a future second Cranbrook rail station in perpetuity

- 4.4.1. Provisions to secure the land in perpetuity for a future second rail station at Cranbrook would need to be included within the S106 agreement for the expansion area where the land is situated (Cobdens).