

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE ON 27 JULY 2022

REPORT

SUBJECT: Arun Transport Model Update

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DATE: June 2022

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AREA: Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report updates the Planning Policy Committee on the Arun Transport Model Phase 1 work commissioned in 2021 for the purposes of the evidencing the Local Plan update (when it resumes) transport impacts and necessary mitigation schemes.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Planning Policy Committee:-

1. Notes Progress on Phase 1 of the Arun district-wide Arun Transport Model
2. Agrees the A259 Local Model Validation Report (i.e. includes Arun district-wide ATM) be uploaded to the evidence web page to inform the Local plan Update when this resumes;
3. Notes that the work on the further phases of developing the ATM are paused until the Council resolves to resume the Local Plan update.

1. BACKGROUND:

1.1 In January/February 2021 Arun District Council (ADC) and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) commissioned joint work preparing a district-wide Arun Transport Model (Background Paper 1). This district-wide Arun Transport Model (ATM) has been developed using WSCC's work on the A259 SATURN Transport Model for the East Corridor Enhancement scheme between Bognor Regis and Littlehampton.

1.2 Arun's' share of the cost for developing the district-wide ATM was £53.5k. Such collaborative work will help to establish a cost-effective evidence base to support: -

- The outline and full business case for proposed upgrades to the A259 between Bognor Regis and Littlehampton known as the A259 East Corridor Enhancement scheme (A259 ECEs); and
- A district-wide ATM to allow future transport modelling for the Local Plan Update including testing of development options and mitigation

- The district-wide ATM will include a detailed area (i.e. Arun District including the local planning authority area as well as that area within South Downs National Park); a 'Buffer Network' including Chichester and Worthing; an 'External Area' - wider hinterland.

1.3 The adopted Arun Local Plan 2018 relies on the (now outdated) Arun Transport Study 2016, and the Enterprise Bognor Regis Transport Review 2017 both of which were based on a revalidated version of the older 2011 West Sussex County Transport Model. That model can no longer be reliably supported or validated by National Highways (NH) for future transport work because it uses outdated methodology and assumptions, and it would now be inconsistent with WSCC's current work on the A259 ECEs transport model.

1.4 The benefits in undertaking a scaled-up ATM, using the A259 ECEs work, includes not only economies of scale but also ensuring there is comparable modelling data for future planning purposes.

1.5 Comparatively, if ADC were to commission a whole new strategic transport model, the commission (from beginning to end) could cost in the region of +£200,000 and would take up significant officer time.

1.6 However, with slippage on the Local Plan timetable, there will be a need to ensure that the work on developing the district-wide ATM is kept as up to date as possible. This can be done through periodically collecting additional traffic flow data for validation minimising the risk of forecasting uncertainty. For example, since the A259 2019 base model assumptions were established, there has been a need to account for the impacts of post Covid-19 travel behaviour and now, emergent significant inflationary pressures impacting on travel choice. This can be done mostly by accessing data from:-

- WSCC's traffic flows database (monitoring at the permanent sites), along
- National Highways' "Webtris" data for the A27
- Traffic counts on roads near to Strategic Allocations if they are remote from any of the permanent traffic data sites but near to a site where data is collected for this ATM work.

1.7 Such validation will be captured in technical notes to address any areas of flow divergence and assist in interpreting the ATM model including calibrating individual junction models for those impacted junctions which require closer analysis. These top up costs above, are a relatively cost-effective way of maintaining the ATM compared to building a new one.

1.8 If there is further delay to the Local Plan or if more significant divergence in flow is found, then an intermediate step would be to refresh the model.

1.9 The A259 Local Model Validation Report has recently been approved by National Highways. This enables the model to be used on the basis that the whole District is within the calibrated/validated study area rather than just the A259 corridor between Chichester and Littlehampton (and parallel/connecting routes including A27/A284 and A29, B2233 and B2259). The base year model and reporting is now finalised.

Next Stage of ATM Development

- 1.10 Officers have budgeted a start of work in 2023/2024 on Phase 2 of the district-wide ATM. This would involve drafting and agreeing a brief with WSCC for the requirements set out in section 1.11 below.
- 1.11 Beyond the checks on changes to base model conditions since 2019 the next principal task on preparing the ATM for Local Plan use (rather than A259 transport scheme appraisal) will be to develop a revised 'reference case' forecast for the Local Plan. The 'reference case' will:-
- Replace TEMPro background growth assumption within ADC so that all planned/non-committed development within the local planning authority area, plus the windfall allowance is included in the Local Plan scenarios, so that the mitigation strategy should accommodate for all development in a planning authority area.
 - Update the uncertainty log and review the uncertainty log categories for committed development and transport assumptions to make sure that they are appropriate for the different nature of the study and if necessary, update totals again.
 - Develop a forecasting year which matches with end of Local Plan period.
- 1.12 However, the Council at the meeting of 13 July resolved not to lift the current pause to the Local Plan Update. This decision will therefore, also pause any further work on Phase 2 of the ATM. Once the Council's parameters for the Local Plan update are known, the next stage can recommence by agreeing a brief for the work (this will include the scope of the Local Plan update and the vision-based approach to new developments and generated travel demands, which the County Council is adopting through the new West Sussex Transport Plan).

Conclusions

- 1.13 The budget for Phase 2 of the ATM has been approved for commissioning in 2023. However, until the pause to the Local Plan Update is lifted, the next phase of the work cannot be commenced. This can only take place when the pause is lifted and the visioning and scoping the Local Plan has been agreed by the Council. Section 1.6 to 1.8 sets out contingencies for ensuring the ATM base model can be kept up to date in the interim period, through periodic validation. Nevertheless, it must be noted, that if the pause is prolonged into the longer term, these measures will be insufficient and a new ATM model will have to be commissioned, with the potential cost signalled in section 1.5 above.
- 1.14 Further progress reports will be put before the Planning Policy Committee in 2023.

1. PROPOSAL(S):

That the A259 Local Model Validation report work be banked as evidence to support the Phase 2 of ATM model development, when the pause to the Local Plan Updated is lifted.

2. OPTIONS:

To note progress on Stage 1 of the district-wide ATM and agree the A259 LMVR report be uploaded as evidence to the Local Plan web pages.

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		x
Relevant District Ward Councillors		x
Other groups/persons (please specify)		x
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial	x	
Legal		x
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		x
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		x
Sustainability	x	
Asset Management/Property/Land		x
Technology		x
Other (please explain)		x

6. IMPLICATIONS:

The development of an Arun Transport Model incurs significant costs although a scaled up ATM using the A259 Transport Model is a cost-effective way of procuring robust evidence to support the update of the Arun Local Plan (when this resumes) and any transport mitigation required to support development. Appropriate budget provision has been made to enable this.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To ensure that the future update to the Arun Local Plan is supported by a robust transport infrastructure and mitigation evidence when the Local Plan update resumes.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Background Paper 1 :23 February 2021 Planning Policy Sub-Committee - Item 6. Arun Local Plan Update – Evidence Base:-

<https://democracy.arun.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=182&MId=1329>

Background Paper 2 : Arun ATM - A259 LMVR Report

<https://www.arun.gov.uk/transport-planning-policy>