

Project Title:	South Wokingham SDL Extension
Client:	Lightwood (and Nicholas King Homes)
Project No/ Document Reference:	James Overend
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Proposed SDL Extension Bus Strategy - RevE

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document sets out a finalised Bus Strategy proposal for the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Extension (SDLE). It has been prepared at the request of Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) to sit alongside the draft Heads of Terms and future Section 106 Agreement for Priors Farm, promoted by Lightwood. It also relates proportionally to Pearces Farm and Pudner applications.
- 1.2. It is consistent with the previous Bus Strategy proposal (dated 03 June 2026) and the initial Bus Strategy Update (March 2026) which each contain supporting illustrations and descriptive context to this sharpened proposal. These previous documents provided information on what was believed to be the current thinking on SDL plans for buses; and then Abley Letchford's proposals for the SDLE.
- 1.3. This strategy is specifically prepared for:
 - Inclusion within S106 Heads of Terms
 - Providing a costed and viable bus service proposition

Figure 1 Existing 108 Route (light blue)



2. Key Assumptions

- 2.1. An existing and established Bus Route (108) operates a service between Bracknell Station and Jennett's park to the east of the SDLE (**Figure 1**).



2.2. As before, it is assumed that the SDL is aiming to secure a shuttle to/ from Wokingham town centre and Rail station to help serve that allocation.

3. Preferred Bus Strategy Proposal for the SDLE

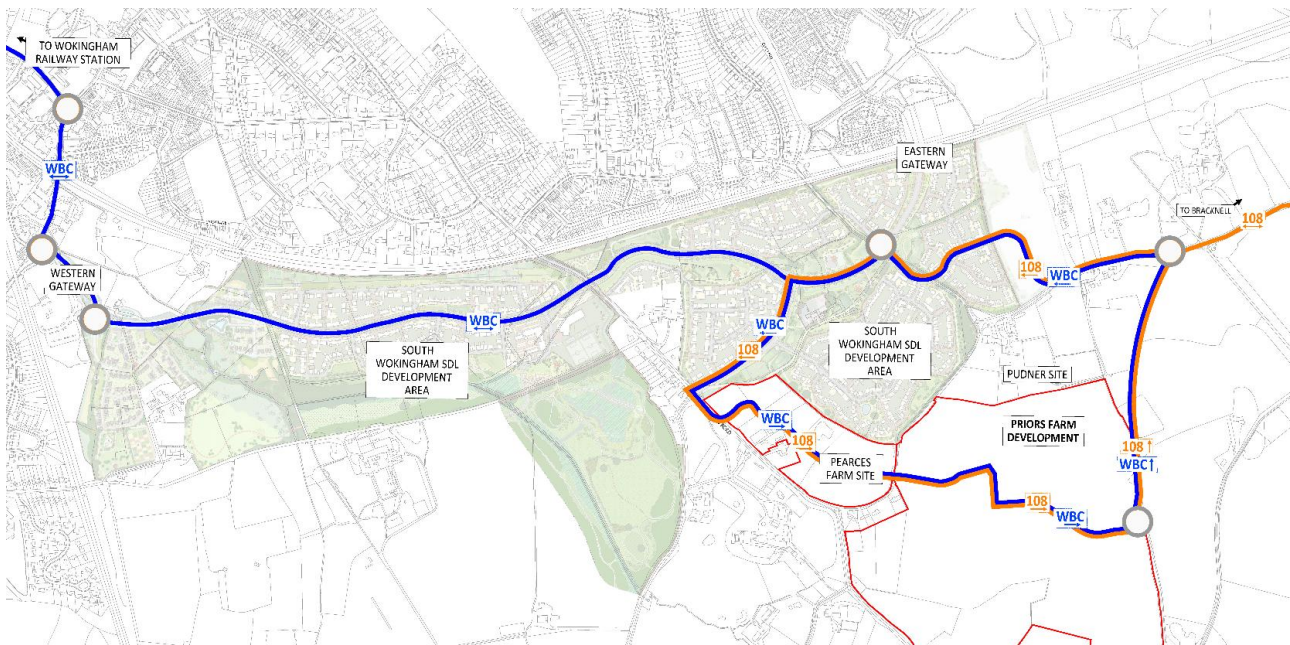
3.1. To complement the SDL, the SDLE strategy establishes a service focused on providing direct connectivity to/from Bracknell Town Centre and Rail Station by the extension of the existing 108 Bus service that currently turns within Jennett's Park to the east of our site.

3.2. The extension will utilise new highway infrastructure within the SDLE and the southern area of the SDL, west of the existing Route 108 (**Figure 2**).

3.3. The preferred Routing Strategy comprises:

- A westward extension of the existing Route 108 service from its current western terminus, looping through the SDLE development and returning towards Bracknell.
- Extend beyond Jennett's Park
- Enter SDLE via Old Wokingham Road
- Circulate through:
 - Pearces Farm
 - Priors Farm spine road
- Return to Bracknell via the same or complementary route

Figure 2: Proposed Extension to Route 108 (Gold)



3.4. A bus priority improvement measure on the recently constructed SWDR to assist movement through the left turn towards EHRd (S).



- 3.5. A bus priority measure at Crowthorne Road across Downshire Way, which would require a localised diversion is also possible, although this is flexible and interchangeable with other priority measures, subject to future consultation with neighbouring authorities and bus operator at the detailed stage.

Key Principles & Benefits

- 3.6. The strategy is centred on the existing Route 108 service between Bracknell and Jennett's Park, rather than the former "station-to-station" concept.
- 3.7. Key benefits, include:
- Prioritisation of Bracknell as the primary trip attractor (on the firm assumption that the SDL is 'dealing' with Wokingham town centre)
 - Avoidance of extended cross-town bus routing (reducing delay and reliability risk)
 - Creation of a shorter, more commercially robust extension
 - Largest potential to achieve a viable modal share
 - Limit impact from the SDLE on key highway routes between the site and the A329 and other routes into Bracknell, that may suffer from increased peak hour congestion in future years
- 3.8. This proposal is also considered to reflect:
- Operator preference for contained, reliable routes
 - Evidence that longer inter-town routes are more vulnerable to delay
 - A more efficient use of S106 subsidy
- 3.9. Other advantages, include:
- Maintains direct Bracknell connectivity
 - Minimises increase in route length, versus station-to-station option
 - Reduces requirement for additional buses
 - Improves reliability and passenger attractiveness to increase chances of growing and retaining passenger demand
 - Aligns with Operator preferences

Service Specification

- 3.10. Frequency:
- 30-minute (Mon–Sat daytime)
 - 60-minute (Sunday)
- 3.11. Hours:
- Approximately 07:00 – 20:00
- 3.12. Accessibility
- Bus stops located along spine road
 - Target: → 400m walking distance for majority of dwellings



4. Phasing and Delivery Triggers

4.1. Service delivery tied to:

- Completion of primary spine road
- Occupation threshold (critical mass of >200 dwellings)
- Final access arrangement delivery

4.2. Early phases:

- Served via existing services/ stops external to site
- No requirement for early subsidy drawdown

5. Operational Requirements

5.1. Compared to the station-to-station option, this approach:

- Reduces additional journey time impact
- Maintains efficient cycle times

5.2. Vehicle Requirement

- Shorter diversion enables: Lower Peak Vehicle Requirement (PVR)
- Assumption: 1 additional vehicle (PVR) compared with 2 vehicles that would be estimated for longer SDL-integrated route

6. Cost & Revenue Assumptions

6.1. Cost assumptions are derived from the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) Cost Monitor, which provides a nationally representative dataset covering approximately 67% of bus mileage in Great Britain, and indicates average operating costs more than £220,000 per vehicle per annum for a 5-year timespan with ongoing annual cost inflation of approximately 4%.

6.2. Local authority supported service tenders within Berkshire further demonstrate that annual subsidy requirements of this magnitude are consistent with prevailing market conditions.

- Cost per vehicle: £230,000 – £260,000/year.
- Vehicle requirement: 1 PVR
- Est'd working assumption: £240,000/year

6.3. Total S106 Bus-Service Funding Envelope (5 Yr):

- £1.40 million

6.4. Contingency

- Recommended: 10% allowance
- Included within the retained **£1.40 million** envelope



10-Year Build-out and 8-Year Subsidy s106 Support, Patronage and Revenue Profile

Commentary

- 6.5. The allocation is deliberately front-loaded to reflect vehicle mobilisation, service launch, promotional activity and immature early patronage. The final two columns show the residual annual subsidy after deducting forecast development and existing-area gross fare revenue. Actual drawdown remains subject to procurement, the tendered net cost, agreed indexation, monitoring and the Section 106 provisions.

Funding profile and residual subsidy

- 6.6. Patronage growth is not assumed to arise from population growth alone. A defined proportion of the early-year support allocation may, subject to the Section 106 purpose and WBC procurement arrangements, support targeted promotion of the enhanced Route 108 service. Measures may include residential travel planning, personalised travel advice, new-resident information packs, introductory ticket initiatives, timetable and digital publicity, My Journey activity, local community engagement and monitoring. These measures are intended to accelerate awareness and use, improve farebox recovery and reduce longer-term subsidy dependence.

Travel planning and service promotion

- 6.7. The appraisal separately considers additional patronage from approximately 700 existing dwellings (net) within the catchment of the extended route. Uptake is introduced progressively from service commencement at 5%, 15%, 30%, 45%, 60%, 75%, 90% and 100% of mature demand across the eight support years, reflecting the time required to change established travel behaviour. Actual uptake should be validated through operator electronic ticket-machine data, fare-stage information and Travel Plan monitoring.

Existing population demand

- 6.8. Gross fare revenue is assumed at £2.00 per boarding passenger hypothetically from Year 1, although is not recognised until Year 3, subject to index rate of 4% per annum. The assumption is an average revenue yield, not an advertised passenger fare, and is intended to reflect the mix of single, return, period, discounted and concessionary travel and any applicable reimbursement. It should be reconciled with operator and reimbursement evidence at procurement and during monitoring. The 4% fare-yield indexation is an appraisal assumption and should be reviewed against the appointed operator's achieved revenue, national fare policy and reimbursement arrangements.
- 6.9. Development-related patronage is estimated using the agreed modal-share benchmarks and 253 equivalent weekdays per annum. The core case equates to 100 daily passenger boardings at full occupation in line with the modest TA modal share for buses. Therefore, a sensitivity case is included to reflect 200 daily boardings at full occupation. Newly occupied dwellings are not assumed to generate mature demand immediately. Each annual completion cohort contributes 50% of mature demand in its first year of occupation, 75% in its second year and 100% from its third year onwards. No development patronage is credited before the Year 3 service trigger.



Patronage and revenue methodology

- 6.10. The extension of Route 108 is assumed to require one additional Peak Vehicle Requirement (PVR) to maintain the proposed 30-minute Monday to Saturday daytime frequency while accommodating the increased route length through the SDLE. The Year 3 allocation therefore provides for the cost of making an additional vehicle available, whether through operator fleet deployment, lease, contract hire or other procurement arrangement, together with associated driver recruitment and training, engineering support, timetable registration, operational commissioning, ticketing and passenger-information integration, and route-launch activities. The precise vehicle and contractual arrangements will be determined through WBC procurement and operator tendering; the strategy does not assume that the developer directly purchases or owns a bus.

Additional vehicle requirement and service mobilisation

- 6.11. For appraisal purposes, the 1,150-dwelling SDLE is modelled over an approximately ten-year build-out period, broadly consistent with the forecast development programme referred to elsewhere within the application documentation. Delivery is deliberately moderated during the early years, with occupation reaching the critical mass threshold of approximately 200 dwellings at the end of Year 3. Commencement of the enhanced Route 108 service is assumed at this trigger, resulting in an eight-year support period from Year 3 to Year 10. The funding profile is deliberately front-loaded because the greatest subsidy requirement is expected during mobilisation and the early years of operation, before occupation, patronage and fare revenue mature.



Table 1 - Build-out profile, service trigger and funding basis

Year	Annual S106 support allocation (£)	Dwellings built	Cumulative dwellings	Development patronage: 1% (boardings/year)	Farebox yield (£/boarding)	Development gross revenue: 1% (£/year)	Existing-area additional patronage (boardings/year)	Existing-area gross revenue (£/year)	Development patronage: 2% (boardings/year)	Development gross revenue: 2% (£/year)	Residual subsidy: 1% + existing (£/year)	Residual subsidy: 2% + existing (£/year)
Year 1	–	40	40	0	2.00	0	0	0	0	0	–	–
Year 2	–	60	100	0	2.08	0	0	0	0	0	–	–
Year 3	275,000	100	200	2,970	2.16	6,425	770	1,666	5,940	12,849	266,909	260,485
Year 4	250,000	120	320	5,170	2.25	11,631	2,310	5,197	10,340	23,262	233,172	221,541
Year 5	220,000	140	460	7,920	2.34	18,531	4,620	10,809	15,840	37,061	190,660	172,130
Year 6	190,000	150	610	11,000	2.43	26,766	6,930	16,863	22,000	53,533	146,371	119,604
Year 7	160,000	150	760	14,245	2.53	36,049	9,240	23,383	28,490	72,098	100,568	64,519
Year 8	130,000	150	910	17,545	2.63	46,176	11,550	30,398	35,090	92,352	53,426	7,250
Year 9	100,000	130	1,040	20,625	2.74	56,453	13,860	37,937	41,250	112,907	5,610	0
Year 10	75,000	110	1,150	23,375	2.85	66,540	15,400	43,838	46,750	133,080	0	0



Main Additions from Previous Bus Strategy

6.12. Mobilisation allowances have been added for:

- driver recruitment and training;
- engineering support;
- timetable registration;
- operational commissioning;
- ticketing and passenger-information integration; and
- route-launch activity.

6.13. Applied development-patronage maturation factors separately to each annual occupation cohort:

- 50% in the first year of occupation;
- 75% in the second year; and
- 100% from the third year onwards.

6.14. Retained:

- the ten-year build-out;
- service commencement at 200 dwellings in Year 3;
- the eight-year support period;
- 253 equivalent weekdays per annum;
- the 1% and 2% development scenarios;
- the £2.00 average operator farebox yield indexed at 4%;
- the 700-existing-dwelling catchment; and
- the gradual existing-community patronage uptake profile.

6.15. Added a dedicated Travel Planning and Service Promotion section covering:

- residential travel planning;
- personalised travel advice;
- new-resident information packs;
- introductory ticket initiatives;
- timetable and digital publicity;
- My Journey activity;
- community engagement; and
- passenger monitoring.

6.16. Recalculated all annual:

- development patronage;
- development gross revenue;
- existing-area patronage;



- existing-area gross revenue; and
- residual subsidy figures.

6.17. The £1.40 million profile is an appraisal basis for negotiation and remains subject to WBC procurement, operator tender returns, monitoring and agreed indexation.

6.18. The total S106 bus-service funding envelope remains at c.£1.40 million. It is allocated as:

- Year 1: Nil
- Year 1: Nil
- Year 3: £275,000
- Year 4: £250,000
- Year 5: £220,000
- Year 6: £190,000
- Year 7: £160,000
- Year 8: £130,000
- Year 9: £100,000
- Year 10: £75,000

Table 2 - Heads of Terms Costings

Transport item	Current / proposed figure	Approx. total	S106 status
Bus Stop Contribution (Pair) 1	£75,000	TBC	Existing draft S106 obligation; amount and trigger to be agreed. These figures represent 4 bus stops that the scheme will require. Contribution 1 includes mobility hub.
Bus Stop Contribution (Pair) 2	£20,000	TBC	Existing draft S106 obligation; amount and trigger to be agreed.
Public Transport Strategy / Bus Service Contribution	Pearces Farm - £200,000 Priors Farm - £1M Punder - £100,000	WBC - Between 1.3 – 1.4 million	Existing draft S106 obligation intended to support the enhanced bus service; quantum and phasing to be agreed. Based on £1083 per dwelling
Bus Priority / Downshire Way-Crowthorne Road provision & at SWDR/Easthampstead Road	Proposed capped allowance of £250,000-£300,000 indexed	£300,000 (WBC suggest 3-400k)	Proposed monitor-and-manage item, only to be drawn upon where agreed bus-performance triggers demonstrate intervention is required.



7. S106 Contribution Framework

Delivery Mechanism

- WBC to procure service
- Thames Valley Buses (or equivalent) operator
- Delivered via Enhanced Partnership

Summary Position

- 7.1. The cost assumptions applied within the SDLE Bus Strategy are:
- Directly informed by national industry data (CPT Cost Monitor)
 - Supported by government statistical evidence (DfT)
 - Consistent with real local authority-supported service contracts (Berkshire comparators)
- 7.2. Accordingly, the proposed Section 106 framework retains a total bus-service funding envelope of £1.40 million across the eight-year support period. Funding is front-loaded to secure vehicle mobilisation, service commencement and early demand promotion, then reduces as occupation, patronage and fare revenue increase. The profile is an appraisal basis for negotiation and remains subject to WBC procurement, operator tender returns, monitoring and agreed indexation provisions.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. The preferred strategy is:
- Extension of Route 108 westwards, forming a loop into the SDLE and returning to Bracknell.
- 8.2. This approach is:
- More operationally efficient
 - Lower cost to developers
 - More attractive to operators
 - Easier to secure through S106
- 8.3. The strategy provides:
- Direct access to Bracknell employment and services
 - High-value sustainable transport provision
 - A clear and deliverable S106 solution