

Executive Decision Report

Leicester North West Major Transport Project Phase 2 (stage 1)

Decision to be taken by: City Mayor
Decision to be taken on: 25 May 2018
Lead director: Andrew L Smith



City Mayor

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: Fosse, Abbey
- Report author: Jo Aitken/John Dowson
- Author contact details: Joanna.Aitken@leicester.gov.uk 372834
John.Dowson@leicester.gov.uk 372826
- Report version number: V1

1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the City Mayor to construct the Leicester North West Major Transport Project (LNWMTP), Phase 2 (stage 1). This includes the junctions at Ravensbridge Drive/St Margaret's Way and Blackbird Road/Anstey Lane/Ravensbridge Drive.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The City Mayor is recommended to:

- i. approve construction of the LNWMTP Phase 2 (stage 1) highway infrastructure improvements, within the city boundary, as detailed in the report and subject to the approval of the Leicester and Leicestershire Transport Board (LLTB) on 24th May 2018.
- ii. note that the funding for the scheme will come from the Government's Local Growth Fund together with contributions from the City Council (as included in the 2018/19 capital programme) as described in the financial implications section.

3. Supporting information including options considered:

Background

3.1 The LLTB, comprising the City and County Councils and Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, was established to oversee devolved Government funding for local major transport schemes. The LNWMTP was prioritised by the LLTB for funding. An Assurance Framework requires the LLTB to assess and approve final scheme business cases prior to release of funding for each phase. A LLTB board meeting to consider approval of the Phase 2 (stage 1) project business case has been arranged for 24th May 2018.

3.2 The objectives of the LNWMTP Phase 2 (stage 1) are to:

- a) To improve the resilience, reliability and capacity of the Blackbird Road/Anstey Lane/Ravensbridge Drive and Ravensbridge Drive/St Margaret's Way junctions;
- b) To support improvements in road safety and reduce the number of accidents;
- c) To support regeneration and development in the Waterside area;

- d) To increase the level of walking, cycling and public transport trips along Ravensbridge Drive, Anstey Lane and in the wider Waterside regeneration area;
 - e) To reduce carbon emissions and contribute towards an improvement in air quality and a reduction in noise levels, particularly along the A50 Woodgate;
- 3.3 The first phase of the LNWMTTP was completed in July 2016 and included improvements to the A50 County Hall Roundabout, the A50 New Parks Way Roundabout and the junction of the A563 with Aikman Avenue. It also included provision of new and improved pedestrian and cycling facilities along the A50 corridor from the County Hall roundabout to the Brading Road junction, this included new and improved crossing facilities at the roundabout and junctions included in Phase 1 of the scheme.
- 3.4 The second phase has resulted from a Department for Transport, 'Early Assessment and Sifting Tool' (EAST) process which identified the three junctions of Fiveways, Blackbird Road/Anstey Lane/Ravensbridge Drive and Ravensbridge Drive/St Margaret's Way to be progressed.
- 3.5 The Phase 2 scheme has been re-programmed into sub phases for deliverability reasons with stage 1 comprising improvements to the Blackbird Road/Anstey Lane/Ravensbridge Drive and Ravensbridge Drive/St Margaret's Way junctions. The Phase 2 (Stage 1) scheme is wholly within the city boundary and will be managed and delivered by the City Council. Phase 2 (stage 2) will comprise work to realign the Fiveways junction and will be subject to further design and modelling.

Consultation

- 3.6 A comprehensive consultation exercise relating to the Phase 2 scheme was undertaken in April/May 2017. Leaflets were distributed to over 2,000 properties in the area, a press release was issued and there were social media updates as well as information on the City Council's website, an online consultation and a public exhibition.
- 3.7 From the online consultation, 74 responses were received and 4 responses by email. Of the 74 online responses, 42% live in the local area, 16 % work in the area, 63% travel to or commute through the area, 4 % work or run a business in the area and 30% visit the area regularly. With regard to mode of transport, of the 74 responses, 80% use a car, 25% use a bus, 38% use a cycle, 3% use a motorcycle, 5% use a taxi and 38% walk.
- 3.8 All concerns, objections and issues raised were noted and analysed and a report has been published online.
<https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/communications/leicester-north-west-transport-project/> The majority of concerns raised were in relation to the Fiveways junction and these will be reviewed in more detail in the next stage of the project. There were no negative comments received in relation to the proposed works at the other two junctions.

Highway Improvements and Construction

- 3.9 The plans of the scheme are shown at Appendix A

3.10 The Ravensbridge Drive/St Margaret's Way junction will be built up to remove the 'dip' in the road and it's alignment altered, this will improve visibility for all road users. An additional lane on the approach to the junction will also be installed to increase capacity. Signals will be renewed and the footpaths resurfaced, new landscaping and trees will also be planted in the area.

3.11 The Blackbird Road/Anstey Lane/Ravensbridge Drive junction will have an additional right turning lane installed leading from Blackbird Road into Ravensbridge Drive, a third lane will be installed on Ravensbridge Drive outbound on the approach to the junction and an additional outbound lane on Anstey Lane will be installed for a distance of approximately 50m to assist with capacity.

Project Funding and Value for Money

3.12 The estimated scheme cost is £4.33m, as identified in the business case. A project budget has been set at £5.0m to include a contingency suitable for a scheme of this size. The Transport Board is being asked to allocate £4.37m of Local Growth Fund money to Phase 2 to include fees, this has been ring fenced for the Leicester North West Transport Project for 2018/19, with the balance of the cost of the scheme (£0.63m) being funded by the City Council's contribution.

3.13 The target cost of the main contract works is being determined with the appointed contractor for the 'Early Contractor Involvement' phase of the scheme prior to letting of the main contract. The target price is expected to be submitted on 18th May 2018. The project is being funded from the Government's Local Growth Fund and the City Council's capital programme. Detail of funding is provided at Section 5.1.

3.14 The scheme business case has been developed in accordance with DfT guidance. It is being assessed by independent consultants as required by the LLTB Assurance Framework process and is due to be considered for final approval at an LLTB meeting planned for 24th May 2018.

Project Programme

3.15 Construction will commence at the Ravensbridge Drive/St Margaret's Way junction and the City Council is currently considering the coordination of traffic management for this scheme and other roadworks in the area. Commencement of the project is expected later in the summer period. Work to the Abbey Gate junction will follow this. The contractors will then move to the Blackbird Road/Anstey Lane/Ravensbridge Drive junction, where work is expected to take place in phases later in the year/early 2019 subject to traffic management considerations.

4. Details of Scrutiny

The Leicester North West Project has previously been considered by the Economic Development Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission on 10th August 2017 as part of the Economic Action Plan 2016-2020.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

- 5.1.1 The overall LNW programme is estimated to cost £19.1m (spread over 6 years from 2015/16 to 2020/21) and forms part of the Council's capital programme. Of the £19.1m, £16.2m is being funded by the Government's Local Growth Fund. The remaining £2.9m is match funding, split between Leicester City Council (£1.5m) and Leicestershire County Council (£1.4m).
- 5.1.2 Expenditure to date on the whole programme is £9.9m leaving £9.2m for the remainder of the programme. The project budget for Phase 2 (stage 1) as detailed above is £5.0m which includes construction, fees, traffic management and contingency. This leaves approximately £4.2m for any future phase of work.
- 5.1.3 The Council is contributing £0.6m towards the remainder of the project, including phase 2 stage 1.
- 5.1.4 The LGF Grant is allocated on a yearly basis from Government and the 2018/19 allocation has been determined with funding already given to the LLEP. There is a risk, albeit thought to be very small, that a future government could adjust subsequent years' LGF allocations which would affect any future phase of work.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 37 4081

5.2 Legal implications

- 5.2.1 The scheme is being delivered using the Midlands Highway Alliance, Medium Schemes Framework 2 ("MSF2") and the contract and work package order are required to be signed and issued by 31st May 2018 as the MSF2 framework will lapse thereafter.
- 5.2.2 Whilst instructing officers have been working with legal services on the preparation of draft contractual documents, it is recommended that the terms of any external funding are forwarded to legal services to ensure that any external funding conditions are if appropriate, stepped down into the contractor agreement.

Nilesh Tanna, Solicitor (Commercial, Property and Planning) Extension 371434

- 5.2.3 The Council has general powers to undertake improvements to the highway (including widening and dedication of highways) pursuant to its powers contained in Sections 62 (2) and 72 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended). Specific powers in respect of works for the variation of carriageways and other works and contained in Part V of the Act. In considering the use of these powers and scheme proposals generally, the Council and officers will need to have regard to the requirements of the current statutory guidance published by the Department for Transport relating to the design, procurement and construction of highway works. Compensation may be payable to owners affected by or being able to demonstrate loss due to highway improvements if entitled under the relevant provisions of the Act.

5.2.4 Traffic Regulation Orders are required as part of the scheme and the statutory procedures will be followed and the outcomes of consultation have already been reported separately. The Council has powers to introduce traffic regulation orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and in accordance with Regulations. Officers have completed the statutory consultation requirements as required. Officers will need to have given due regard to the requirements of s.122 of the Act in respect of ensuring the safe and expeditious movement of traffic in making the proposals outlined in this Report. The Council should also ensure that it has the necessary consents and approvals in place (including where necessary any planning permission required) in order to progress the scheme, and with regard to any works to trees, to ensure these are carried out in compliance with its established policy on tree protection and works.

John McIvor, Principal Lawyer, ext. 37-1409

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

5.3.1 The scheme will facilitate walking and cycling journeys in the area through improvements to cycle/footways along Ravensbridge Drive linking up other cycle routes and installing improved crossing facilities at these locations. Where infrastructure improvements lead to walking and cycling journeys being made in place of car journeys, this has an important role in limiting carbon emissions and improving air quality.

5.3.2 The scheme is designed to improve the capacity through the two junctions mentioned, resulting in reduced congestion. While this would reduce carbon and air pollution emissions arising from queuing traffic, any such savings could be offset by increased traffic throughput.

Duncan Bell, Senior Environmental Consultant, Energy and Environment

5.4 Equalities Implications

5.4.1 When making decisions, the Council must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (Equality Act 2010) by paying due regard, when carrying out their functions, to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not.

5.4.2 Decision makers need to be clear about any equalities implications of the proposed changes. In order to consider the likely impact on those likely to be affected by the recommendation and their protected characteristics, an equalities impact assessment has been undertaken on this phase of the scheme.

5.4.3 Protected groups under the Equality Act are age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

5.4.4 As with any changes to infrastructure and the layout of the city/ road networks,

there is potential for unintended negative impacts for some users if accessibility and inclusive design principles are not adhered to, particularly where there are changes to pedestrian crossings, footpaths and kerbs. These issues must be considered in the decisions that are made in planning for the changes. Having said this, provided that accessibility is a key consideration in the planning process, it is likely that the proposed construction works to the junctions at St Margaret's Way and Blackbird Road/ Anstey Lane/ Ravensbridge Drive will achieve the objectives set out in this report and will have a positive impact across all protected characteristics with some specific benefits for users with the protected characteristics of age and disability.

Hannah Watkins, Equalities Manager Ext 37 5811

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None

6. Background information and other papers:

Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1 -2 scheme drawings

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a "key decision"? Yes

10. If a key decision please explain reason

The project cost exceeds £1m capital cost and will involve significant works to be implemented within two wards, Fosse and Abbey.