



7 January 2021

**Agenda Item:6**

## **REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE**

### **A614/A6097 MAJOR ROUTE NETWORK – SCHEME UPDATE**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update on the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the scheme which has now been submitted and to seek approval for ViaEM to lead the delivery of the scheme; and to begin the consideration of minimal land purchases to keep the project progressing after programme entry whilst undertaking the necessary future statutory processes.

#### **Information**

2. As part of the Transport Investment Strategy, the Government has committed to creating a Major Road Network (MRN). The current MRN includes both the A614 and A6097 and improvement of this road corridor will;
  - reduce congestion;
  - support economic growth and rebalancing;
  - support housing delivery;
  - support all road users; and
  - support the Strategic Road Network.
3. The A614 / A6097 improvements accord closely with the Nottinghamshire County Council objectives in terms of supporting economic growth along the corridor, principally through enabling the regeneration of the former Thoresby colliery site, delivering traffic relief to adjacent roads within Ollerton Village, providing safe access to the village of Bilsthorpe from the A614, and accommodating forecast employment and housing growth in Calverton, Gedling, Newton and Bingham at the southern end of the improvement corridor. All of which will help to support a thriving local economy and minimise the impacts of transport on people's lives, as well as improving access to and enabling new employment opportunities including the visitor economy.
4. In October 2018 the Government agreed in principal to provide MRN monies (provisionally £18m) in the first tranche of funding subject to the submission of a satisfactory OBC. This report details the progress made in the development of the scheme and highlights the most recent submission of the OBC to the Department for Transport.

#### **Scheme Details and Objectives**

5. The package of measures within the Scheme includes six junction improvements along the A614 and A6097 in order to increase traffic capacity so that both future residential and employment traffic can be accommodated whilst also reducing journey time delays. The six junctions are physically within the Districts of Newark & Sherwood and Rushcliffe

but the whole A614 and A6097 route passes through the Borough of Gedling and extends into Bassetlaw District. There are a number of both committed and allocated development sites located in close proximity to the Scheme. The junction improvements are identified below:

- Ollerton Roundabout – the intersection of the A614 / A616 / A6075 roundabout.
- Mickledale Lane junction – the A614 / Mickledale Lane crossroads.
- White Post roundabout – the A614 / Mansfield Road roundabout.
- Warren Hill junction – the A614 / A6097 priority junction.
- Lowdham Roundabout – the A6097 / A612 Nottingham Road / Southwell Road roundabout, and
- Kirk Hill junction – the A6097 / Kirk Hill crossroads.

6. Key objectives that will be achieved by the Scheme include:

- Unlocking major development sites;
- Removal of peak period traffic congestion which will bring significant journey time benefits to commuters and local businesses; and
- Improve road safety for all users.

7. The scheme is an important part of NCC's strategy to support growth and investment in Nottinghamshire. It will enable the Strategic Road Network and local roads to operate more efficiently by reducing congestion, improving the reliability of journey times whilst also providing increased capacity at key junctions which will help facilitate economic growth in the area.

8. The package of measures outlined is considered to provide real economic momentum, especially during the current pandemic, in and around the corridor of interest. As an example; the Thoresby Colliery site is earmarked for 850 new houses and will deliver 2.3 hectares of employment land which will bring new jobs to the local area. Other key sites that will be enabled by the Scheme include; land to the north of Petersmith Drive, Ollerton which has been allocated 305 new houses, land in Newton which has been allocated 500 houses and land to the north of Bingham for 1,000 houses and 15.5 hectares of employment development.

9. The A614 serves a dual-economic function: facilitating regular commuter/ business trips and longer distance traffic movements, and also being an important corridor for the visitor economy which is forecast to grow in the future. In keeping with this and recognising the need to maximise the visitor economy, the Authority has improved other junctions on the A614 route in recent years. As follows:

- the A614 / B6034 (Rose Cottage) junction was upgraded from a priority T-junction to a signalised junction with works complete in February 2013.
- the A614 / A617 Lockwell Hill roundabout junction was enlarged in September 2013.

10. The original scope of works had included for the provision of a new signalised junction at the Deerdale Lane exit from Bilsthorpe. Following a detailed analysis of the proposals including; the scale of utility diversions and an assessment of the safety works that have already taken place, the scheme has not been able to be included in this package of works.

11. Overall, the provision of measures for the A614/A6097 are considered to be beneficial in terms of impacts on the local highway network and on transport grounds. An expert

analysis has shown the benefit to cost ratio is high, with a transport Benefit Cost Ratio of 3.08 (that is a £3.08 return for every £1 spent). The benefits of undertaking the Scheme are very high.

## **Construction Delivery**

12. The OBC details a full range of procurement options which are considered to secure best value. The approach in the OBC builds on NCC's strong track record in delivering major transport schemes, with a clear understanding between contractor and authority of how they work and what their processes are. This is not just in terms of roles, but also agreed standards, mechanisms and clarity over risk and risk allocation and transfer throughout the design and construction phases.
13. The County Council's suggested preferred construction route for the six junctions forming the A614 / A6097 MRN Scheme is through Via EM, utilising the existing Highways Service Contract (HSC). The preferred route provides best value and brings a unique local ownership and responsibility to its delivery. Via EM is currently in Year 5 of a ten year contract and the construction programme falls well within this period.
14. Via EM is proposing a local mixed economy approach using in-house operational teams and sub-contractors. As local provider to NCC, Via EM has demonstrable experience in successful delivery of traffic signals, street lighting and electrical installations, civils and drainage work while also having the ability to draw on existing established frameworks for expertise in the delivery of specialist areas, such as pavements and traffic management.

## **Progress to Date**

15. Progress to date has focussed on the work required to inform and develop the OBC and this has included assessment of junctions' options, updating land requirements and commencing junction modelling following receipt of traffic flows.
16. Following extensive additional work, detailed design, ongoing liaison with the Department for Transport and further consultation, the OBC was submitted to the DfT ahead of the end of December 2020 deadline. The funding however, is still subject to approval of the OBC and a Full Business Case (FBC) will be required to be submitted, following completion of all statutory procedures as required for the Scheme.
17. NCC has the overall responsibility for land acquisition, design, procurement, construction and delivery of the Scheme and Via East Midlands Limited (Via EM) have been instructed to undertake these tasks on our behalf.
18. In order to deliver and construct the six identified schemes, third party land will be required and a budget will need to be set up to accommodate future land transactions when the OBC has been approved. Whilst every endeavour will be made to acquire parcels of land by negotiation, it is standard practice that Compulsory Purchase Powers are progressed simultaneously to reduce project risk.
19. Communications have commenced with key stakeholders. Land registry searches and land valuation work is ongoing and will be updated once modelling and option assessments have been completed. Geotechnical and ecology work is being commissioned to support the design and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) that will be required as part of the planning application processes.

20. As part of the detailed design process, including taking on board comments received through stakeholder engagement, consultation and receipt of more detailed utility diversion works to deliver the amended designs, the overall cost of the package is £28.6million. The revised package has had to include for a new scheme at the southern end (Kirkhill crossroads) which addresses issues raised around the Lowdham junction and provides significant additional benefits to this project.

## **Planning**

21. Planning permission will be required for the construction of the A614/A6097 scheme and will be sought early 2021.

## **Other Options Considered**

22. There have been numerous options considered for each junction and extensive traffic modelling has been undertaken to assist in the decision-making process. An Options Assessment Report has been submitted to the DfT alongside the OBC which outlines the process of option development throughout the preliminary design stage.

## **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

23. The A614/A6097 scheme will contribute to economic growth and investment in this part of Nottinghamshire and will deliver significant journey time savings and improvements in respect of the highways.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Finance Implications**

25. The latest cost estimate for the package of measures is currently £28.6 million. The bid to the DfT is for a contribution of £24.4 million with the remainder being funded by S106 / CIL / NCC contributions. The promoter of the Thoresby Colliery redevelopment site at Edwinstowe (Harworth Group Plc) has already provided a s106 contribution of £1.3 million towards the scheme, and a further £200k has come from development in Ollerton. The DfT allocation is only provisional at this stage and all costs incurred prior to Full Approval are done so at risk and met by NCC.

26. It should be noted that the previously approved local contribution of up to £4million has not been increased. The current level of required NCC match is £2.7m.

27. Under the terms of the OBC, the DfT will require the County Council Section 151 Officer to confirm that NCC accept responsibility for meeting any costs over and above the current contributions totalling £28.6million to deliver all six junction improvements. This is applicable prior to construction as part of the business case approvals and once in

contract, i.e. to cover the costs of construction once in contract and costs exceeding the budget available.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

It is **RECOMMENDED** that Committee:

- 1) Endorse the update on Outline Business Case submission for the scheme and next steps in project delivery; and
- 2) Approve in principle for Via East Midlands to lead on the delivery and to consider the appropriate steps towards acquiring land, once programme entry has been confirmed.

**Adrian Smith**  
**Corporate Director – Place**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:** Kevin Sharman 0115 977 2970

### **Constitutional Comments (EP 21/12/2020)**

28. The recommendations fall within the remit of the Communities and Place Committee by virtue of its terms of reference. Any proposed land acquisitions will require the prior approval by the appropriate Committee.

### **Financial Comments (GB 21/12/2020)**

29. The main risk to the Council with regard to this project is that the DfT require Nottinghamshire County Council's Section 151 officer to confirm that the Council accepts responsibility for meeting costs over and above the current DfT contribution. The overall cost package to complete the project currently stands at £28.6m. The bid to the DfT is for a contribution of £24.4m and, in addition, section 106 contributions of £1.5m have been agreed. This leaves a potential funding gap of £2.7m. Efforts will be made to close this funding gap as the project progresses and the financial costs and contributions become more clear. All costs incurred prior to DfT approval are done so at risk and will be met from existing capital budgets.

30. There will be a requirement for a variation to the capital programme through the usual approval processes once the DfT funding is confirmed. At that stage, total project costs and funding streams will need to be identified and a Latest Estimated Cost report submitted for approval.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Report to Policy Committee 12 September 2018 - Major Infrastructure Improvement Scheme
- Report to Policy Committee 17 October 2018 – A614 / A6097 Major Infrastructure Improvement Scheme
- Report to Communities and Place Committee 4 April 2019 – A614 Major Route Network – Scheme update, compulsory purchase order and side roads orders

- Report to Policy Committee 22 May 2019 A614/A6097 Major Route Network – Scheme Update and Funding Agreements.

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

Bingham East	Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan
Bingham West	Councillor Neil Clarke
Muskham and Farnsfield	Councillor Bruce Laughton
Ollerton	Councillor Mike Pringle
Sherwood Forest	Councillor John Peck
Southwell	Councillor Roger Jackson